

2022-2023

Northern Neighbours NPLC Annual Report



Written and submitted by:
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Administrator
Arlene McCorry,
Lead Nurse Practitioner
Northern Neighbours
NPLC
2022-2023

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Message from the Chair:



This has been a busy and exciting year for our small and mighty board. After our strategic planning retreat in April 2022, we spent the first few months of our board term finalizing our strategic priorities and supporting the development of a work plan that will put our priorities into action. We are working to make sure that the structure of our board meetings, and any board-level decisions, are rooted in our strategic priorities.

Like so many other rural health care services, the Northern Neighbours NPLC has the added pressure of trying to recruit health care professionals to fill hard-to-fill positions in our clinic. We are so proud of our existing team of staff who, with the support of our strategic partners, have worked against tremendous pressures to get us through the COVID-19 pandemic. While continuing to go above and beyond to meet the needs of the communities we serve, our team has managed to continually grow our clinic, take on new clients, add new services; and they are doing this all while working without a full team.

Our strategic priorities remain to ensure that our small clinic continues to grow and continues to provide meaningful and accessible services to the communities of Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg and White River, as well as the surrounding communities. We acknowledge that there is a lot of work to be done with respect to Truth and Reconciliation, breaking down the barriers of systemic racism within our communities, and building strong bonds with our partners, friends and family in both communities.

Aligning with our strategic plan and mandates, we have dedicated ourselves to is working on improving access to mental health and addictions care. We acknowledge that the first step to building a strong plan is through talking to the community. In early 2023, we had the opportunity to consult with individuals and residents, business and health care partners that live in and/or serve White River and Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg. The purpose of the consultation process was to get a better idea of the current landscape of the mental health and addictions crisis in our communities, and to identify the needs of those most affected. This work puts us in a much stronger place to seek out further growth.

The leader is one who, out of the clutter, brings simplicity... out of discord, harmony... and out of difficulty, opportunity.”

Albert Einstein

In the past four years, I have had the opportunity to work closely with all the board members and staff at the Northern Neighbours NPLC. While this is my last year on the Board, I am confident that you will be in good hands moving forward.

Thank you! Miigwetch! Merci!



Northern Neighbours NPLC Staff



Arlene McCorry – Lead NP



Carolyn Burton – Clinic Administrator



Mandy Larouche – Nurse Practitioner



Nancy McLeod – Receptionist



Nathalie McCaig – Registered Practical Nurse



Shivani Bharad – Registered Practical Nurse



Tara Hart – Receptionist



Chrishanna Beckford
Counsellor/Outreach Worker

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success”

Henry Ford

NNNPLC Board of Directors:



Shawn Dookie – Board Chair



Lynne Thibeault - Director



Crystal Pirie - Director



Tina Forsyth - Director



Shelly Livinaston - Director



Charles Alderson - Director

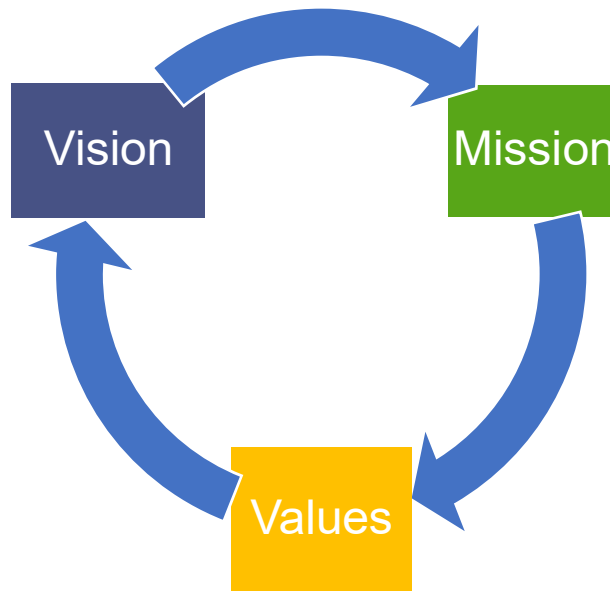


Patricia Anlehart- Treasurer

Mission Vision and Values:

Vision:

We aim to provide integrated, holistic care that is collaborative and coordinated to meet the needs of the people we serve.



Mission Statement

The Northern Neighbours Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic is committed to providing comprehensive primary healthcare to the communities of White River and Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg with compassion and and pride to facilitate optimal health and wellness.

Values

The patient is our primary focus.

We treat all individuals with respect and dignity regardless of race, culture, or background.

We function as an inter-professional team.

We will remain current in their respective fields.

We are committed to comprehensive and compassionate care.

History

The Township of White River and Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg were acutely aware that access to primary health care within each respective community was a priority and a right. It is important to note that the Township of White River is in the Algoma District and Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg is in the Thunder Bay District. Leaders from each community ignored the invisible boundary that historically and continues to serve as a barrier. The leaders of each community formed a team dedicated to finding a solution to the poor access to primary healthcare.

In late 2017, the team developed and submitted a business plan for Interprofessional Primary Care Funding. In January 2018, The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) advised the team that the submission for funding was approved. The residents of both communities would no longer have to travel one (1) hour, in often dangerous conditions, to access primary health care.

The NNNPLC Funding Agreement became effective January 01, 2018. The first fiscal year for the NNNPLC would be referred to as our expansion year. During the expansion year the clinic became incorporated on August 30, 2018. After the incorporation, recruitment of the following positions ensued.

- 1 FTE Lead Nurse Practitioner
- 1 FTE Clinic Administrator
- 1 FTE Nurse Practitioner
- 1 FTE Receptionist
- 1 FTE Administrative Assistant
- 1 FTE Registered Nurse
- 2 Collaborating Physicians

Since the onset of this alliance, access to primary healthcare within each community continues. The Northern Neighbours NPLC will continue to provide access to primary healthcare, and we are committed to adding to our services when the need(s) arises.

Service and Program Delivery:

Optimizing services and program delivery to the communities of White River (WR) and Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg (NN) is, and has been, a priority for the Northern Neighbours Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic (NNNPLC). The COVID pandemic and the struggle to maintain a full complement of staff have been barriers to this commitment. This past year has seen a somewhat return to normalcy in the health care system as the unprecedented pandemic recedes into our memories. There are positive and negative aspects which we continue to navigate.

As we began the 2022-2023 fiscal year, there was a return to in-person primary care. As noted in our annual stats, some clients continued to seek virtual care (telephone calls primarily) while others preferred face-to-face care. The positive finding that came out of COVID was the recognition that many issues can be dealt with very effectively by virtual interaction. Many days throughout the winter when providers were unable to come to clinic due to weather or road closures, they were still able to connect by phone thus avoiding cancelled clinic time and rebooking.

Northern Neighbours NPLC staff and board held their first two-day strategic planning workshop facilitated by Ann Marie Bourgeault of “Bourgeault Consulting”. It was an excellent day of networking and developing our goals for the future.

Staffing has continued to be very fluid. We started the new fiscal year on a downward turn but by the end of the year, we were optimistic again. We continue to have the services of a physician from Wawa who comes to White River once a month. Our full time Registered Nurse (RN) resigned to take a position in Sault Ste Marie in June 2022. Our full time Social Services Worker (SSW) resigned due to personal issues in April 2022. This is reflected in the decreased total number of patient encounters.

We were able to recruit a Social Worker (SW) to provide counselling virtually one day per week starting in September. A Social Services Worker (SSW) was hired in January and has *hit the ground running*. She is working closely with SW and has instituted several programs.

A Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) was hired in February 2023. She has completed the Registered Nurse (RN) program and will transition to the full time RN position upon completion of her licensing exams and registration with the College of Nurses.

The hurdle now with staffing will be to hire a full-time Nurse Practitioner as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition when our long-time current lead Nurse Practitioner retires. This is anticipated to happen within the next

year. NNNPLC has enlisted the services of “People First Human Resource” Recruiting Services to help with this daunting task.

Several programs and events took place this past year. Our second NP and one staff nurse continues to travel to Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg weekly. The return to *in-person* clinic time in Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg meant the return of the convenience of foot care and phlebotomy in that community. Clients are slowly embracing these programs again.

Some of the ongoing primary care services at Northern Neighbours NPLC include:

- access to early antenatal care,
- childhood wellness assessments and immunization,
- adult wellness and screening
- gynecology minor procedures (IUD's endometrial biopsy)
- cryotherapy for wart and other skin lesions
- allergy, B12, other injections
- BP monitoring
- Foot care

Additional services include:

- Phlebotomy
- STOP (smoking cessation program)
- Prenatal Nutrition Program
- Supportive goal-based counselling.
- Community outreach in-home wellness visits for elderly or at-risk clients.
- Community exercise program “Soup to Tomatoes”

Looking Ahead:

There are a few exciting events planned. We also anticipate some changes again to our staff. It is always exciting to see what the new year brings as we endeavor to provide new programs and participate in events.

Plans are in the works to sponsor a “Move Your Body” kids summer fun day in July which will be open to children age 4-12 from both communities.

The Northern Neighbours NPLC continues to support continuing education and training by providing placement opportunities for nurse practitioner students through Athabasca University and Lakehead University. We will continue to foster these relationships with these post secondary educational institutes. It is our vision that in doing so, students will get a sense of small town and remote medical practice. Students may then see our small towns and remote areas for future consideration when they graduate.

We remain optimistic that this coming year will see the successful recruitment of a new NP. While we are happy that our lead NP has chosen to retire, it will leave a void, she is loved by staff and patients.

The provision of Primary Care Services in our communities is due to the successful collaboration with our community partners and allied health providers. There are well established relationships with the surrounding area pharmacies (Marathon, Hornepayne and Wawa), hospitals and diagnostic facilities (Wawa, Manitouwadge, Marathon, Thunder Bay and Sault Ste Marie) as well as the numerous specialists which we access for consults and referrals daily. Northern Neighbours NPLC is an active member of the Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic Association which provides ongoing support and networking.

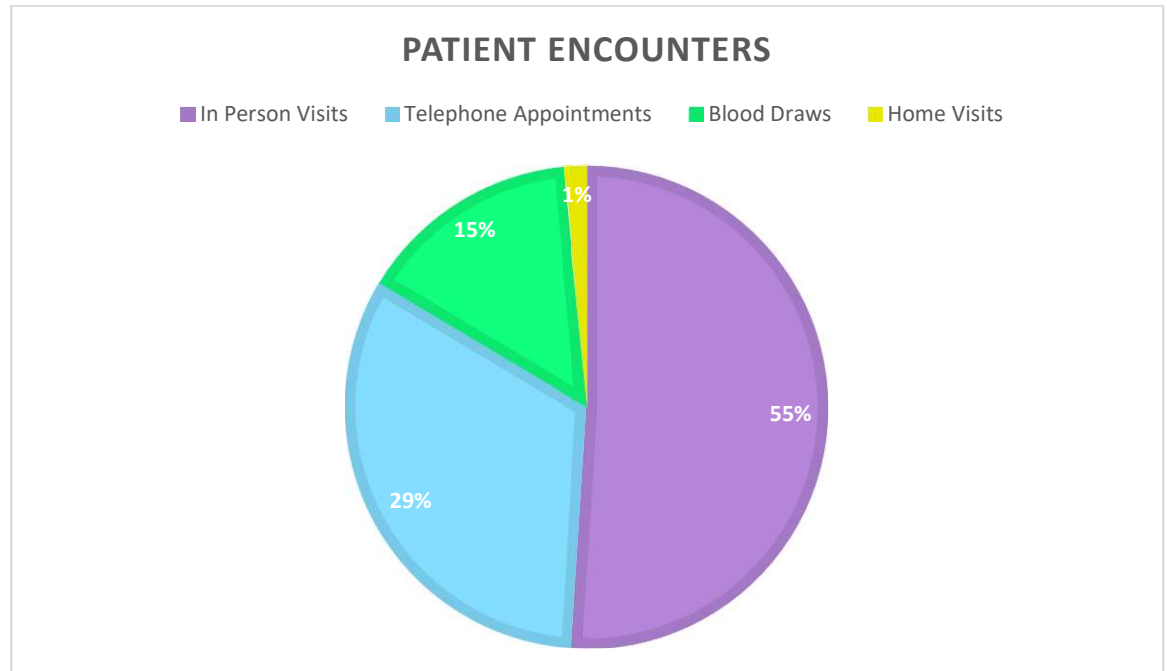
Although not seamless, our ongoing efforts to provide quality primary health care to our residents of Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg and White River have been successful. We look forward to continuing to establish our presence in each community and to improve access to services for our clients.



Operational Performance:

Over the course of 2022/2023 fiscal year, Norther Neighbours Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic had:

3018 patient encounters
2209 in person visits
789 phone calls
538 phlebotomy draws
35 in home visits



Some of the other ongoing primary care services include:

- access to early antenatal care,
 - childhood wellness assessments and immunization,
 - adult wellness and screening
 - cryotherapy for wart and other skin lesions
 - allergy, B12, other injections
 - BP monitoring
- Other services include:
- Phlebotomy
 - STOP – smoking cessation program.
 - Prenatal Nutrition Program.

Plans are nothing; planning is everything.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Strategic Goals

Our team successfully navigated the challenges of operating during the pandemic years. Of the many things learnt, our ability to work as a team and provide patient focused health never wavered.

As we approach our fifth (5th) operating year, we will do so prepared with a Strategic Plan. On April 22nd and 23rd, 2022, the Northern Neighbours NPLC hosted a Strategic Plan Retreat in White River, Ontario. The retreat was well attended by NNNPLC staff and the NNNPLC Board of Directors. The following strategic goals represent the objectives that the NNNPLC aim to achieve in the coming years.

Collaboration

Goal: *Explore methods to increase collaboration and partnerships with surrounding communities, industry, and health service providers.*

- Build a needs assessment.
- Explore partnership efficiencies.
- Improve collaboration with Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg.
- Explore expectations.
- Engage in dialogue.
- Create relationships.

Staff from NNNPLC participated in Aboriginal Days in June 2022 as well as the NN Community Health Fair in July 2022. Both events were well attended and gave NNNPLC the opportunity to be seen in the community and answer any questions that arose.

Early in 2023, staff also attended the International Women's Day dinner sponsored by the community Social Services.

The staff of NNNPLC were fortunate to sit with the Traditional Healer, Randy Sewap, to discuss their role in the aboriginal culture. It was a very enlightening opportunity.





The NNNPLC hosted an all-day event to promote cultural awareness among service providers. The presenter, Sandi Boucher, from Thunder Bay who is a well-known indigenous author and speaker on reconciliation and healing. She presented "The 15 Missing Pieces" program. Service providers from Wawa, Marathon, Terrace Bay, White River, and Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg have been invited to participate. The following are comments from the participants:

This seminar was very well presented and thoroughly [sic] enjoy the day. Skillful, knowlegable,[sic] inspirational, and engaging.

Thank you so much. I really enjoyed this session & will continue this journey of reconciliation.

Very much enjoyed the session today. The speaker was very knowledgeable and passionate about the subject and presented it well. Thank you!

Great presentation. Engaging. Inclusive & informative

Great knowledge obtained at this semiar [sic]. Well worth it!!

I really enjoyed the flow of the workshop, it helped for me to apply this not only to my work but my personal life as well. Thank you :)

Very engaging and informative. Thank you for hosting.

I absolutely love the us [sic] of the "OUCH" word to acknowledge the fact that something inappropriate has been said. Thank you for being you.

Thank you for opening my eyes and helping me on my journey.

Slides were good but could have been brighter for the full effect. Lots of reference to Thunder Bay. More group work activities after lunch. Carb crash.

So much gratitude! Thank you for a wonderful day of learning. I am leaving feeling I have some direction and some hope! B

IT WAS AMAZING, LEARNED SO MUCH, THIS WILL MAKE ME A BETTER ME



Statement of Operations and Net Assets

For the year ended March	2023	2022
Revenue		
Province of Ontario	\$ 858,505	\$ 761,275
Province of Ontario – OTN	31,706	31,707
Other	---	20,000
Total Revenue	890,211	812,982
Expenditures		
Advertising and Promotion	2,979	3,650
Audit and accounting services	12,031	11,761
Benefits	91,874	104,162
Computer Leasing	2,621	2,720
Fees and Memberships	18,787	18,454
General Consulting	6,319	4,417
Insurance	14,318	13,667
Interest and Bank Charges	1,806	1,936
IT Software/Hardware	18,699	8,772
Legal and advisory services	4,029	22,789
Medical supplies and clinical travel	47,365	5,150
Occupancy costs	16,674	11,987
Office Supplies	10,454	7,007
Professional Development	7,713	6,294
Recruitment and Retention	21,280	20,000
Repairs and Maintenance	34,501	23,245
Salaries – Health Providers	331,045	286,349
Salaries – Management and administration	155,226	198,049
Salaries – OTN	31,707	31,707
Telephone	8,787	7,797
Travel and meetings	---	233
Total Expenditures	838,215	790,146
Surplus of Revenue over Operating Expenditures	51,996	22,836
Amortization of Capital Assets	(95,153)	(98,156)
Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions	95,153	98,156
Settlement of funds from the Province of Ontario	(51,996)	(22,836)
Annual Surplus (Deficit)	\$ ---	\$ ---

Community Support

At the Northern Neighbours NPLC every Wednesday is recognized as casual dress day. The staff come to work, dressed casually and donate staff money to support our local charities.



Carolyn Burton, Clinic Administrator is presenting a cheque in the amount of \$125.00 of the staff donation fund to the Harmony Club. Accepting the funds is Rollie Walsh.



On behalf of the White River Figure Skating Club, Maranda Lethbridge is accepting \$125.00 of the staff donation fund.



The Northern Neighbours NPLC Staff donation fund, spread the holiday cheer by donating to the local food bank.

No one has ever
become poor
from giving.

Anne Frank

2nd Annual Snow Sculpture Contest

The Northern Neighbours Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic (NNNPLC) in collaboration with the Township of White River hosted the second annual snow sculpture contest during the White River Winter Carnival. This year's theme was "Transportation". Our aim was to coordinate an event that would:

- Promote physical activity;
- Promote family/friend togetherness;
- Promote team building;
- Promote our love of winter; *and*
- Remind us of our inner-child and to just have fun!

Soon various modes of transportation began to appear! The winners of the Snow Sculpture Contest are:

1st Place St. Basil's Catholic School



2nd Place Raiche Family



3rd Place Rice Family



We want to thank all the teams for your participation, your sculptures were fantastic! For more photos of this event, please visit our website: nnnplc.ca

Acknowledgements:

As the global pandemic recedes as a recent memory, the staff of the Northern Neighbours NPLC reflected on the challenges we faced. We recognize that we could not have accomplished navigating the pandemic without partnerships, support, feedback, and a skilled staff that operates as a professional family.

The staff of the Northern Neighbours NPLC are to be applauded. They are dedicated, patient focused, hardworking, and genuinely care about the overall state of our patients and each other. Their skills and dedication are an inspiration.

We are tremendously fortunate to have such an esteemed Board of Directors and we value their guidance, support, and dedication. They have gifted us their time and above all else, time is the most precious of all assets. Your dedication to enhancing access to primary health care is to be commended, and your leadership an inspiration, we thank you.

The leadership of Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg are to be praised for their guidance and support. They hold their community in the highest regard and are sure to assist with advice on how we can best achieve the delivery of primary health care.

The Mayor and Council of the Township of White River are to be applauded for the continued recruitment investment. This year they will offer housing as a recruitment incentive for the new Nurse Practitioner. Their commitment to the recruitment and retention of health care professionals is unwavering.

Finally, and most importantly, Arlene McCorry is deserving of our utmost esteem. Arlene provided 19 years of NP services to the Township of White River and she is cherished. This incredible tenor is the very reason we were successful in becoming the NNNPLC. Our gratitude is immeasurable, thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

“I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.”

Mother
Teresa