



For Immediate Release

May 27, 2024

Maamwesying Ontario Health Team and St. Joseph's General Hospital Elliot Lake Sign Collaboration Agreement

Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services Inc., as a core partner of the Maamwesying Ontario Health Team, and St. Joseph's General Hospital Elliot Lake, held a signing ceremony on May 24th, 2024, at the St. Joseph's General Hospital Cafeteria, in Elliot Lake. This agreement aims to integrate Indigenous cultural knowledge and traditional practices into the healthcare system, thereby improving access to and awareness of Indigenous Health Services available in the Northeast region.

The Maamwesying Ontario Health Team, announced in October of 2022, is dedicated to seamlessly integrating health care services for clients in the communities of Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, Sagamok Anishnawbek, Serpent River First Nation, Mississauga First Nation, Thessalon First Nation, Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation, Michipicoten First Nation, Chapleau Cree First Nation, Chapleau Ojibwe First Nation, and Brunswick House First Nation, as well as the urban Indigenous population in Sault Ste. Marie.

"This partnership marks a significant step forward in our mission to create a healthcare system that truly respects and incorporates Indigenous knowledge and practices," said Carol Eshkakogan, Chief Executive Officer of Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services Inc. and Chair of the Maamwesying Ontario Health Team Leadership Council. "By working closely with St. Joseph's General Hospital Elliot Lake, we are reinforcing our commitment to delivering culturally appropriate care and ensuring that Indigenous communities have the resources and support they need to achieve optimal health outcomes."

The collaboration between Maamwesying Ontario Health Team and St. Joseph's General Hospital Elliot Lake is driven by a vision to provide coordinated and seamless health care, ensuring optimal outcomes for Indigenous patients, clients, and communities. This collaboration aims to improve access to quality care to improve outcomes and enhance patient care that is equitable and culturally safe, while actively involving Indigenous health leaders and advisors in the planning, design, delivery, and evaluation of public health services to enhance the satisfaction and experience for patients, caregivers, and providers.

"Today marks a significant milestone as we come together in partnership with our Indigenous brothers and sisters. This collaboration with the Maamwesying Ontario Health Team is not just an agreement; it is a commitment to walk side-by-side, honouring the wisdom and traditions of Indigenous communities," stated Jeremy Stevenson, Chief Executive Officer at St. Joseph's General Hospital. He continued, "Working together as one for the well-being of all, we will strive to create a future where health equity is not an aspiration but a reality. In partnership, we will ensure that St. Joseph's General Hospital stands as a first-class healthcare centre, prioritizing the well-being of every individual, including those who are Indigenous. By building on mutual respect and shared knowledge with Maamwesying's leadership, we are laying the foundation for healthcare for generations to come."

By signing this agreement, Maamwesying Ontario Health Team and St. Joseph's General Hospital Elliot Lake are committing to work together to create culturally safe spaces within the healthcare system and support the design and delivery of health programs and services so Indigenous patients have the support they need to access the right care at the right time.

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