



 SUMMER

 NIIBIN

 σΔΛ²

 2024

Making Changes

Chiefs & Elders discuss First Nations Authority and Control over Health

www.slfnha.com

Stories of Hardship

New Mental Health Report combines stories with data as crisis worsens in First Nations

Honouring Legacies

Hostels get new names that reflect the hard work of the present and the history of the region

Fun in the Sun

New campaign promotes wellbeing, safety, and togetherness

Thunder Bay Clients

If you need a ride and are not a Wequedong Client, SLFNHA will drive you!



Sioux Lookout **First Nations** Health Authority

Mission

Transforming the health of Anishinabe people across Kiiwetinoong by providing community led services and a strong voice for their community health needs.

How to get a ride:

- Locate a Meno Weecheeheeway **Patient Navigator or SLFNHA** Van at the airport
- Go to the SLFNHA office in the Superior Inn (formerly Victoria Inn) (2nd Floor - Port Arthur Room)
- Look for the vans with a SLFNHA Logo
- Call the dispatch number







Transportation Dispatch: 807-695-5138

Operating Hours: Monday to Friday 6AM - 2AM Saturday and Sunday 7AM - 12AM

Scan the OR code to find out how to contact a Meno Weecheeheeway Patient Navigator.



Vision

Resilient and healthy Nations supported on their path to wellness.

Values

We value respect, relationships, culture, equality, and fairness. We work to protect the Anishinabe teachings of love, courage, respect, wisdom, truth, honesty, and humility.



ioux Lookout rst Nations ealth Authority

www.slfnha.com



Message From JANET GORDON Chief Operating Officer N iibin means summer in the Anishininiiw language. The communities we serve use this time to fish, be outside, play games, and gather for music and gospel festivals. It is an opportunity to re-connect with each other. It is also a time for Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) frontline staff to be there to support community events and situations when needed.

On June 24, 2024, SLFNHA released the *Anishininiiwug Ajimoowin Animisewiinan: Health Status Report*. This report is a response to the crisis in mental health and substance use communities are facing. Many will find triggering data in the report, but it is important to state this is what we need as a catalyst for change. More so, we want to highlight the humanity in the report. It is not just numbers, it is people. We want this report to be a flagship that points the direction forward. There has been no pause to the outcry for help and SLFNHA is mobilizing to respond.

SLFNHA is also excited to announce a new partnership with Eagle Lake First Nation and Kenora District Services Board to develop a Family Healing Lodge in Eagle Lake. The goal is to see healing through treatment of addictions, mental health challenges, and restoring families. We aim to achieve this through a culture-based family approach to healing. This also ties to SLFNHA's mission to transform the health of Anishinabe people across Kiiwetinoong by providing community-led services and a voice for community needs.

Finally, to address the mental health crisis, SLFNHA is hosting a Mental Health and Addictions Forum in Winnipeg, Manitoba on November 26-28, 2024. With these new steps forward, we are hopeful and we remain committed to supporting the 33 communities we serve.

Community direction and engagement is the foundation for any new initiative, and we want to hear your voice. I would like to conclude with this final message: **you are not alone, and we will move forward together.**

Neeganinabin – look forward.





OTIPACIMO is produced and published by the SLFNHA Communications Department.



61 Queen Street PO Box 1300 Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1B8



- 6 New mental health report highlights epidemic level crisis in Kiiwetinoong
- 8 SLFNHA, Eagle Lake, KDSB partner to establish regional healing lodge
- 9 SLFNHA Board of Directors forms new executive
- 10 Community leaders and Elders gather to discuss authority and control over health
- 12 SLFNHA unveils new names for hostels
- 14 Celebrating Indigenous Peoples Day
- 16 Fun in the Sun Campaign
- 18 Love Your Language

Front cover: Weagamow Lake Photo by Nick Bresson



Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority

> 981 Balmoral St. Suite 200 Thunder Bay, ON P7B 0A6

All rights reserved. The contents of this pubication may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of SLFNHA.

> Inquiries, questions, comments, and story suggestions can be directed to:

communications@slfnha.com

Printed by: Catspaw Printing

New mental health report highlights epidemic level crisis in Kiiwetinoong

As an immediate response to the persistent crisis in mental health and substance use issues, SLFNHA is announcing the release of *Anishininiiwug Ajimoowin Animisewiinan: Health Status Report*.

Using first-person stories, backed by data and research, the report emphasizes the unresolved intergenerational trauma, as well as socioeconomic factors including geographical remoteness, that have contributed to an environment where anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and suicide, and addiction have a deep hold on the communities of Kiiwetinoong.

This Report also shows that mental health and substance use issues have worsened with time and there has been an inadequate response from the provincial and federal governments of Canada from the numerous states of emergency called in recent decades:

- The average unnatural death rate for the Sioux Lookout area First Nations communities is 3.2 times higher compared to the provincial average rate. Furthermore, the rate of suicide by hanging in the Sioux Lookout area First Nations is an alarming 15 times higher compared to the Canadian resident rate.
 Office of the Chief Coroner
- Suicide by asphyxia acc ounted for 38% of all unnatural deaths. But, alarmingly suicide by asphyxia accounted for 70.5% of unnatural deaths among 10-14 year olds and 76.2% 15-19 year olds. – Anishininiiwug Ajimoowin Animisewiinan: Health Status Report

"Although difficult, the information shared in this report is critical for the sake of enhancing the regional knowledge base about mental health and Anishininiiwug Ajimoowin Animisewiinan Mental Health and Substance Use Report



substance use," says Janet Gordon, Chief Operating Officer, SLFNHA. "First Nations across the country are disproportionally affected by states of poor mental health and addiction. Colonial structures and practices have threatened the legacy of our Indigenous traditions and languages and have directly jeopardized family stability through the removal of children from families, loss of parenting skills, and intergenerational trauma. Through the personal stories shared in the report, we learn how these losses have grave impact upon the people in SLFNHA-served communities. Every data point is a community member"

Scan the code to read

the full report online or visit www.slfnha.com See next page

From previous page

SLFNHA is grateful for the courage and resilience of the community members who shared their own deep-rooted trauma through their stories in this report. The stories and data outlined in the report are designed to be used as a tool and resource for First Nations to strengthen advocacy and lobbying efforts and to lead to the creation of First Nations defined policies that are First Nations-centred and evidence-based.

In September 2023, Sioux Lookout area First Nations Chiefs-in-Assembly declared a public health emergency and social crisis to address the urgent issues facing Sioux Lookout area First Nations communities.

Anishininiiwug Ajimoowin Animisewiinan is an Oji-Cree phrase that has two translations. The literal translation is "First Nations' Stories of Hardships", or "Hard Things in Life". The other translation is the one set within the cultural context of this report, "Stories About the Bad State We're In".





Meno Weecheeheeway Patient Navigators are ready to serve you

Please contact us if you require any of the following:

Translation services in OjiCree, Cree or Ojibway

Advocacy and liaison services while accessing health care

Support before, during or after your medical appointments

Assistance navigating through the Indigenous Services Canada Non-Insured Health Benefits Program

If you have experienced any incidents or have concerns and complaints



Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority | 7

SLFNHA, Eagle Lake, KDSB partner to establish regional healing lodge

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA), Migisi Sahgaigan, and the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) marked the beginning of a partnership to build a Healing Lodge in Eagle Lake First Nation. The three organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the community on Wednesday, June 26, 2024.

"SLFNHA is excited to embark upon this journey with Eagle Lake First Nation and KDSB to work towards this community-driven solution to support healing and wellness for community members. We are committed to

bringing services closer to home and developing approaches to healing that are grounded in the culture, tradition, and values of the communities," says Sonia Isaac-Mann, CEO and President of SLFNHA.

The Healing Lodge will provide mental health support services with a specific focus on drug and alcohol treatment to the 33 First Nation communities supported by SLFNHA. The partners have a shared vision for a Healing Lodge for First Nations that will provide space for healing from intergenerational trauma and its deep-rooted effects. The goals are to see healing through the treatment of addictions, mental health challenges, and restoring families. This will be achieved through a culture-based family approach to healing.

"Eagle Lake has had a long-time vision of building a healing lodge that is based on culture and family to support healing and wellness," says Chief Bernadette Wabange of Migisi Sahgaigan. "We have been wanting to do this for our community but also to share and support other communities in the region. This partnership will allow us to realize this vision."



Sonia Isaac-Mann, SLFNHA CEO & President, and Chief Bernadette Wabange, Migisi Sahgaigan, at the Special Chiefs & Elders Meeting on June 25-26, 2024.

"The support and healing our communities need will require communities and organizations working together to create a continuum of care," says Henry Wall, Chief Administrative Officer for Kenora District Services Board. "A continuum that provides wrap around supports, has post treatment programs and is community and culturally driven. The KDSB is excited to announce our partnership with Eagle Lake First Nation and Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority. Through this work and partnership, we will have a partnership that other communities can model after."

This MOU establishes an agreement between Eagle Lake First Nation, SLFNHA, and KDSB to work together in collaboration to plan and develop a Family Residential Healing Lodge in Eagle Lake First Nation that is culturally-based with a family approach to healing and wellness.

This relationship emphasizes one of the many recommendations and findings outlined in the newly released *Anishininiiwug Ajimoowin Animisewiinan: Health Status Report*, which highlights the ongoing mental health challenges and substance use issues.

SLFNHA Board of Directors forms new executive

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) is pleased to announce the new executive for its Board of Directors, as voted by board members at a meeting in June 2024.

The new Executive members are:

- Cynthia Fiddler, Chair Sandy Lake First Nation Representative
- Michelle Kakegamic, Vice-Chair Keewaytinook Okimakanak Representative
- Tanya Bottle, Secretary/Treasurer Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation Representative

The board is also comprised of the following Directors and Elder:

- Howard Meshake, Director Shibogama First Nations Council Representative
- Samuel J. Mckay, Director Kitchenuhaykoosib Inninuwug Representative
- Allan Jethro Tait, Director Windigo First Nations Council Representative
- Thomas Spade, Elder

The SLFNHA Board of Directors is made up of representatives from Tribal Councils and independent communities in the Sioux Lookout area.





SLFNHA Board of Directors new executive members. From left, Tanya Bottle, Cynthia Fiddler, and Michelle Kakegamic.

The Board sets the Health Authority's policies and directions and ensures these are implemented and followed. The strategic plan, implemented by the board members and SLFNHA management, sets the overall direction for the organization. The executive director is accountable to the board for delivering the strategic plan and for stewardship of resources.

Moose Hide Campaign

On May 16, 2024, SLFNHA staff in Sioux Lookout (far left) and Thunder Bay (left) participated in walks for the Moose Hide Campaign to take a stand against violence and undoing the effects of Residential Schools.



Community leaders and Elders gather to discuss First Nations Authority and **Control over Health**

The Sioux Lookout area Chiefs Council on Health (CCOH), with support from SLFNHA, recently hosted a Special Chiefs & Elders Meeting to discuss First Nations Authority and Control over Health.

The meeting was held in Migisi Sahgaigan from June 25-26, 2024, and included Chiefs, Elders, Health Directors, Tribal Councils, Nishnawbe Aski Nation, and Grand Council Treaty #3, with presentations from special guests.

The goals of the meeting included:

- Further developing the Chiefs Council on Health (CCOH) 5-point strategy on First Nations Authority and Control over Health.
- Learning and sharing experiences in Health Transformation in the different areas and with various groups.
- Seek feedback and direction on the CCOH **Proposed Process.**

In 2023, two special joint meetings were coordinated with participation of Elders, the SLFNHA Board, CCOH, and Tribal Councils. The focus of the meetings was to discuss Health Transformation and to help determine how to move forward in the region. From these discussions, elements of a strategy were put into a draft Position Statement.

At the SLFNHA 2023 annual general meeting, the Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution #23-07 adopting the Position Statement and the recommendation to host the Special Chiefs & Elders meeting on Health Transformation to further develop the full position paper and a strategy.

The CCOH and SLFNHA would like to extend their appreciation to Migisi Sahgaigan for being a warm and welcoming host.









Scan the code for more information about the gathering or visit www.slfnha.com



Family members of the Sandy Lake Five were present at the naming ceremony on June 19, 2024.

SLFNHA unveils new names for hostels

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) announced new names for Hostels 2 and 3 at a ceremony on June 19, 2024.

This significant event marks an exciting chapter in SLFNHA's ongoing commitment to provide meaningful and relevant services to communities.

The new names for Hostels 2 and 3 have been carefully selected to truly represent the hard work and history that has taken place to provide reliable health care to communities (see below).

SLFNHA was happy to share this important event with community members, family members of the Sandy Lake Five, the Community Healthcare Champions, and staff. We take great pride that the chosen names reflect and honour our history and communities.

"SLFNHA is dedicated to ensuring that our services not only meet the needs of our communities but also honour and uphold our culture and ways of being. As we look forward, we are committed to seeing these services continue to grow and serve the communities with the highest level of health care," says Sonia Isaac-Mann, CEO and President.

SLFNHA now has 309 beds at three locations in Sioux Lookout to accommodate the growing number of clients accessing medical services.

Miigwetch to everyone who contributed to this significant milestone.

Hostel 2

Niyanan Nengo Saaga'iiganiiwinwag Kabayshewekamik

In honour of the five Sandy Lake community members that went on a hunger strike in the 1980s for better healthcare in the north.

Hostel 3

Mashkikii Odanohkiik Kabayshewekamik

This name represents surrounding people in medicine, healthcare providers, helpers, and workers.

Community Healthcare Champions

With the naming of Hostel 3 as Mashkikii Odanohkiik Kabayshewekamik, SLFNHA is honouring the many healthcare champions in the communities supported by SLFNHA. We are happy to recognize the three individuals below.

If you know of a healthcare champion in your community, let us know and send an email to communications@slfnha.com



Cindy serves as Nurse in Charge in her community. She returned to the community after obtaining her nursing degree and strives to provide excellence in healthcare for her community members.

Connie Kakegamic

Connie has been a real champion throughout the years. She works diligently and concisely in her role as a Community Health Representitive. Always present and quick to laugh, she is the backbone of her community.



With unwavering dedication, Bernadette served as Community Healthcare Representative from 1996 to 2002, before assuming the pivotal role of Health Director for an impressive 15 years. Now serving as Chief, she proudly stands as the third woman to lead the community, continuing her legacy of tireless service and exemplary leadership.

Cindy Sakakeep Kingfisher Lake First Nation

Sandy Lake First Nation



Chief Bernadette Wabange Migisi Sahgaigan



The Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) proudly celebrated Indigenous Peoples Day on June 20, 2024, at Onaman Ziibi Camp. This event, now in its second year at the camp, epitomized SLFNHA's dedication to preserving and honouring Indigenous cultures while fostering a strong sense of community unity.

SLFNHA's annual celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day serves as a vital occasion to honour the rich cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples. This year's event took place at Onaman Ziibi Camp, a location renowned for its natural beauty and cultural significance. The celebration commenced at 11a.m. and concluded at 4:30 p.m., featuring a diverse array of activities designed to engage and educate participants about Indigenous traditions and values.

The day's festivities began with a communal barbecue prepared by Kyle and Grayce, offering a delightful selection of food, including hamburgers, hot dogs, and vegan options. Indigenous community chiefs, members, and SLFNHA staff

gathered to share a meal, fostering a sense of camaraderie and community spirit.

The afternoon featured a series of engaging activities. A tug of war competition, organized by Onaman Ziibi, brought out the competitive spirit in teams from various departments. The Real Property and Anishinaabewaadiziwin departments partnered to host an archery event, adding an exciting element to the outdoor activities. Additionally, the Primary Care Team hosted a forest therapy walk, and the HR department facilitated a balloon toss game, both contributing to the day's enjoyment and engagement.

Bobbie Christink led a session on tobacco tying, providing participants with the opportunity to learn and practice this significant cultural tradition. This activity offered a meaningful moment of cultural education and reflection for attendees.

A notable highlight of the day was the performance by Sean Morrisseau, also known as "Native Pool Boy." Though he did not have his guitar, his storytelling



and comedy captivated the audience, adding a special touch to the celebration and enhancing the cultural experience.

The event was meticulously organized, with contributions from various SLFNHA departments and volunteers ensuring its success. The use of gazebos, barbecues, and well-coordinated prize distributions reflected the collaborative spirit of the organization.

The presence of Indigenous community chiefs and numerous community members underscored the strong ties within our community. Their participation and support made the event a true reflection of SLFNHA's commitment to cultural preservation and community unity.

SLFNHA is proud to have hosted a successful enthusiasm and community spirit in the years to celebration of Indigenous Peoples Day, reinforcing come. our dedication to honouring Indigenous cultures. Mark your calendars for next year's celebration as We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who we continue to honour and celebrate Indigenous participated and contributed to this event. We look heritage with the same spirit of unity and pride. forward to continuing this tradition, fostering an



environment where Indigenous cultures thrive, and building on this year's success with even greater

Fun in the Sun

Promoting wellbeing, safety, and togetherness

The Safe Communities at Approaches to Community Wellbeing (ACW) is pleased to announce the "Fun in the Sun" campaign.

This is a vibrant health promotion initiative running from July through August 2024 targeting all age groups. This campaign is dedicated to promoting healthy and active lifestyles, recreational safety, and the prevention of injuries, while encouraging festivity and togetherness.

SLFNHA's Adult and Child Health Status Reports showcase a significant burden of injuries in communities served by SLFNHA. According to the reports, injuries were the leading cause of death between 1992 - 2014 with 599 deaths including both unintentional and intentional injuries (SLFNHA, 2019). Preventing injuries is one of the main focuses of this campaign.

We recognize that the summer months provide an opportunity for families and individuals to come together, connect with the land and water, and participate in activities that enhance health and well-being. Considering this, we have created a series of engaging activities designed to celebrate family and community spirit, promote safety, health, and wellbeing, and encourage outdoor activity and social interactions.

Educational Outreach and Promotion

Throughout the summer, we will travel to various communities to participate in their annual summer events. These gatherings provide a perfect platform to share and celebrate the essence of community togetherness. We hope to attend events such as pow wows and other festivals, summer camps, barbeques, and sporting events.

The "Fun in the Sun" campaign aims to enhance these experiences with our educational and promotional activities. We will be providing content on important topics such as water safety, road safety, tick safety, sun safety, emergency preparedness, fire safety, and food safety. This information will be circulated through our social media platforms, community events, and other outreach programs to ensure that everyone has access to the resources they need to stay safe and healthy.

Additionally, other program areas within the ACW department will focus on other areas of health and wellbeing related to the theme of the campaign including ecotherapy and physical wellness. We are also planning activities geared towards community members who may be off reserve during the period. Communities can also request the presence of SLFNHA staff to have "Fun in the Sun" be integrated into their annual summer events.



16 | **OTIPACIMO** Summer | Niibin | $\sigma \Delta \Lambda^{\circ}$ 2024





Resources for Safety

To empower individuals and families to take control of their health and safety during recreational activities, we have a variety of resources for distribution which include:

- Tick kits to help prevent and manage tick bites.
- Bike and ATV helmets to ensure safety while riding or driving motorized vehicles.
- Coolers to keep food fresh and safe.
- Tents and fishing gear for fishing, camping, and other land-based activities.
- Broad brim hats, baseball caps, sunscreens, and bug sprays for protection against the sun mosquitoes and other insects.
- First aid kits for cuts, bruises, bites, and other minor injuries.
- Other supplies to enable a safe and active lifestyle.



Niibin Photo Contest

We are also offering a Niibin (summer) photo contest for a chance to win great prizes! You can submit photos in one of three categories: 'Summer Scenery' (e.g., trees, water, fishing, playing sports), 'Safe Communities' (e.g., wearing a lifejacket, helmet, blaze orange), or 'Connection to the Land' (e.g., medicinal plants, gardening, gathering). Prizes for each category include:

Summer Scenery:

- 1st place: Canon DSLR Camera package
- 2nd place: Vlogging camera,
- 3rd place: Photography pocket manual and \$50 gift card

Safe Communities:

- 1st place: Canoe paddle, bike helmet, life jacket, and tilly hat
- 2nd place: Thermacell mosquito repellent device, sunscreen, tick removal kit, and tiger balm
- 3rd place: \$100 Tim Horton's gift card

Connection to the Land:

- 1st place: Fishing rod and gear
- 2nd place: Herbal medicine book, blueberry cookbook, and herbal teas
- 3rd place: \$100 Canadian Tire gift card

To participate, you must be a community member from one of the 33 communities supported by SLFNHA. Submit your photos by emailing **acwinfo@slfnha.com** with the subject line "Niibin Photo Contest" and include your community's name. **The deadline for submissions is August 23, 2024, at 4 p.m. CST. Winners will be announced on August 30, 2024.**





Δα Γά Λ <u>ά</u>· Π ζ Δ· ² Anishinaabewaadiziwin

5Pጋ° PCJJJJ

Saa-kih-toon-kit-anishinabemowin Love Your Language



Paakahatowewi-toohaan Baseball

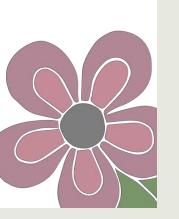


LL₂ Ciimaan Boat



<u>Υη</u><u></u><u></u><u>γ</u><u>γ</u><u>γ</u><u>γ</u><u>γ</u>

Ishkooniwiwin Schooling



ϤϤϽϥΛϥ Anishinaabewaadiziwin

σαΔ.»/

Niinawind Who We Are

Guided by traditional values, protocols, and practices, the Anishinaabewaadiziwin (Way of Life) department supports SLFNHA's vision of "resilient and healthy Nations supported on their path to wellness" by honouring and respecting the traditions and cultures of the communities and upholding their teachings, beliefs, and values.

The Anishinaabewaadiziwin department is committed to providing professional services by exhibiting:

Kanawenimowewin Compassionate Care

Witanohkimitowin Working Together

Minoyawin Good Health

Anishinaabewaadiziwin also follows the 7 Grandfather Teachings of truth, respect, humility, love, courage, honesty, and wisdom.



Anohkiwitamakewinan

Services

Traditional Teachings & Activities



Traditional Healing & Healing Circles

ΔοιιρΔιας ϧϒϲͽϧϧϒ

Anohkiwinan Kapiminishahikatekin Goals

Creating a safe healthy environment for all clients and communities through respect, compassion, trust, love, and fairness.

Implementing Anishinaabewaadiziwin's traditional healing and wellness practices, protocols, and circle of care to clients and communities accessing services.

Promoting educational and traditional teachings to all SLFNHA staff.

Implementation of the Traditional Healing and Wellness Model, the protocols and practices.

Delivery of youth-based initiatives at the community level.

Development and implementation of trauma-informed care through a traditional perspective lens.





Or visit www.slfnha.com





Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority

www.slfnha.com

Connect with us on:

