

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

**THE THREE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES OF NORTH SIMCOE MUSKOKA POOL
EFFORTS TO OFFER HEALTH SERVICES IN FRENCH**

MIDLAND, ON. Tuesday September 26, 2017 – CHIGAMIK, BARRIE and SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY Community Health Centres (CHCs) have been working together since the beginning of 2017 to improve access to French language services across the entire North Simcoe Muskoka (NSM) Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) territory.

It is the first time in Ontario that community health centres within one LHIN territory have partnered for the improvement of services in French.

This cooperation led to the development of a health promotion program, and the first workshop on chronic diseases and pain offered in French will be in Barrie on October 2, 2017. Facilitators will include Jéréon Claude Ntibabaza Nigene, health promoter for NSM LHIN located at CHIGAMIK CHC, Lyne Audette, physiotherapist working out of Barrie CHC, Marie Hartman, health promoter with South Georgian Bay CHC, and Chantal Newburn, registered nurse working with CHIGAMIK CHC.

This success comes after many years of discussions between North Simcoe Muskoka Francophone communities and all three community health centers serving the area. Supporters of this initiative include Entité 4, NSM LHIN, and with financial support received through the Canada Ontario Agreement on French Language Services.

Many other French language health promotion programs and services are planned over the next few months. All three community health centres, the health promoter and the French language health system navigator, Céleste Lalonde, covering NSM LHIN invite Francophones to contact them for more information and encourage them to participate.

-30-

For more information, contact Jéréon Claude Ntibabaza Nigene (Tel.: 705.527.4154 x 232) or Céleste Lalonde (Tel.: 705.527.4154 x 258)

QUOTES

“We are very pleased to partner with the Barrie CHC and South Georgian Bay CHC to offer even more French language services across North Simcoe Muskoka. Our goal is to improve the health and wellbeing of our Francophone clients by steering them towards services that will take their language and culture into consideration.” – David Jeffery, Executive Director, CSC CHIGAMIK CHC

“The Barrie CHC is delighted to partner with the North Simcoe Muskoka CHCs to enhance service delivery to the Francophone community. The enthusiasm and creativity of the staff at all three CHCs will enable the development of unique programming to meet the needs of this historically underserved population.” - Christine Colcy, Executive Director, Barrie CHC

“South Georgian Bay CHC is humbled by the opportunity to be a part of this collaborative service. Being able to offer equitable access for Francophone residents is very important to the three organizations and the launch of this collaborative model is a great start to offering this service.” – Heather Klein Gebbinck, Executive Director, South Georgian Bay CHC

“By working together, the three community health centres are sending a clear signal to Francophones about being committed to developing innovative service models, which address the needs of the community. The launch of this unique model has come to fruition through discussions between community representatives and health service providers for the benefit of Francophones throughout North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN territory.” – Estelle Duchon, Executive Director, Entité 4

“The North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN is excited about the partnership between the Community Health Centres in our region. When our health service providers work together to provide better care for our Francophone population, they are making care in our region more equitable and accessible.” – Jill Tettmann, Chief Executive Officer, North Simcoe Muskoka Local Health Integration Network