



Wabun Sun

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Wahgoshig First Nation Presented With Ambulance

WAHGOSHIG FIRST NATION, Ont. - A new ambulance vehicle was presented to the recently trained first response medical team in Wahgoshig First Nation. The vehicle was provided through a provincial initiative that takes into consideration communities that are half an hour away from an ambulance service and have more than fifty incidents per year.

This is good news for Wahgoshig First Nation as it means that an ambulance is now based in the community. In addition, the community now has a first response team in place. Previous to this, ambulance and special emergency care had to be called from Matheson which is at least half an hour away.

"This is great. Now we have immediate care whereas before we had to wait at least half an hour or more for emergency care. Now our first response team with the ambulance will be able to provide emergency care that rises to another level over just first aid," said Susan Chokomolin,

Coordinator for the First Response Team and Housing Coordinator for Wahgoshig First Nation.

In fact, the addition of the ambulance and the newly trained response team is a positive initiative for the area. Wahgoshig will be servicing its own community with the ambulance and response team and at the same time if a dispatcher has need to call in the Wahgoshig service for an emergency in the area, they can do so.

"Everyone in the community is happy to see this service and I congratulate Susan and her team as well as Tom Hunter of the Ministry of Health for assisting in bringing the ambulance to Wahgoshig First Nation," said Chief Paul McKenzie, Wahgoshig First Nation.

The ambulance is fully equipped and the response team trained to operate it. Ministry of Health representatives Tom Hunter, Regional Training Coordinator for Northeastern Ontario and Frank May, Regional Instructor for First Response



WAHGOSHIG FIRST NATION WAS RECENTLY PRESENTED WITH AN AMBULANCE. FROM L-R (FRONT ROW) ARE ANNE GUNNER, EVELYN BLACK, JEAN LEMIEUX, WABUN TRIBAL COUNCIL HEALTH DIRECTOR; LIZ BABIN AND SUSAN CHOKOMOLIN. SECOND ROW L-R: FRANK MAY, TOM HUNTER, PAUL CHOKOMOLIN, NATHALIE ELLISON, CHIEF PAUL MCKENZIE, HENRY MATTHEWS AND PAT CHOKOMOLIN.

Teams delivered the vehicle and provided some instruction on its operation.

"I am very happy with

the great job that the community of Wahgoshig is doing to make life better for their members. The ambulance service and the

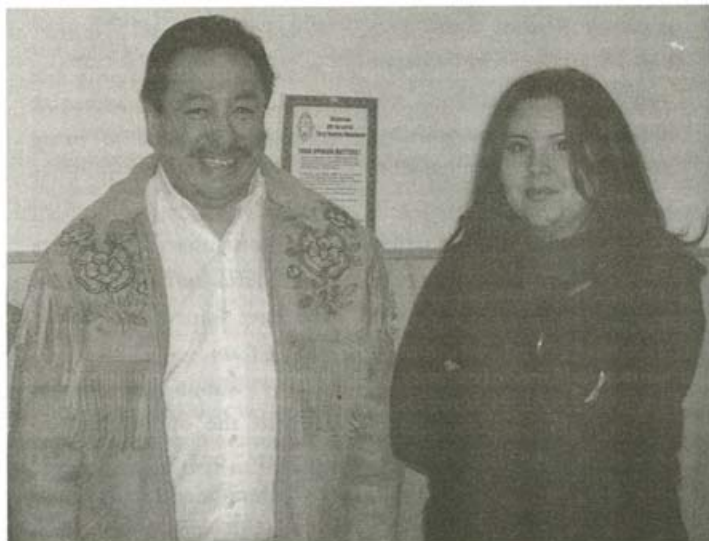
response team will improve the quality of life in Wahgoshig," said Jean Lemieux, Health Director for Wabun Health Services.

Jennifer Constant A Role Model For Wabun First Nation Youth

Jennifer Constant, of Mattagami First Nation, is the featured First Nation Youth for this issue of the Wabun Sun. She is a dedicated and hard working individual who is actively involved in local initiatives in her community

as well as taking part in regional developments for First Nation people.

Currently, she is the Governance and Education Jurisdiction Community Research Coordinator in Mattagami FN.



JENNIFER CONSTANT IS ASSISTING HER COMMUNITY IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE CURRENT NAN SELF GOVERNANCE PROCESS. HERE WE SEE HER WITH GRAND CHIEF STAN BEARDY OF NAN AT A RECENT PUBLIC MEETING ON THE PROCESS IN TIMMINS.

Her position is one of several pilot projects that have been set up in a number of First Nation communities as part of the ongoing Self Governance Negotiations that are taking place between Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) and the Federal Government. She started this contract position in November 2001. Constant is gathering feedback on the process from community members and is also working with Barney Batisse, Tribal Council Community Research Coordinator who is bringing together input and direction from the First Nation communities that are part of Wabun Tribal Council.

She is happy to be part of this process and enjoys participating in the development of First Nation government.

"I want to get involved in First Nation initiatives such as this. This process will ultimately impact First Nation people so I feel that it is important to take part in developments such as the NAN Self Governance Negotiations. I enjoy working on First Nation initiatives, especially on initiatives that deal with the development of education and betterment of our First Nations," said Constant.

Constant is also a member of the Mamo-Wichi-Hetiwin Employment & Training (MAMO) Board of Directors and sits as a Youth Representative and Secretary. Constant was appointed to this position in March 2000. In addition she took an active role during MAMO's major event, Workforce 2000 in April 2001. She acted as Master of Ceremonies along with Ernie Sutherland of Mushkegowuk Council and Five Nations Energy, during the three day event.

Recently, she joined an Aboriginal Addictions Steering Committee which was started by local First Nation agencies and organizations in Timmins. The new committee also works in partnership with non-Native organizations to deal with addiction abuse in the First Nation community.

In October 2001 she completed a condensed one year Police Foundations Program from the Toronto School of Business. She also received training as a Youth Worker Assistant in her community for a year through a MAMO funded program. During this training she produced a Career Development Day in the community and worked hard to provide

interesting and creative activities for youth in Mattagami FN. Constant has also worked as Senior Youth Intern with the Community Access Program in Mattagami FN.

She is active in dealing with issues that affect youth in her community. Currently she is working with others to start a Youth Council that will deal with issues in the areas of employment, recreation and the culture and traditions of Mattagami FN.

"Wabun Tribal Council is very proud of all of the good work accomplished by Jennifer Constant. She is a great role model for all of our young people and we are looking forward to a great future for this bright young woman," said Shawn Batisse, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

In the future, she hopes to further her education and become more involved in First Nation development. Constant enjoys reading, drawing, the creative arts and volunteering her time to activities for youth in the community's recreation centre. She is a First Nation Ojibway person and a member of Mattagami First Nation.

Featured Elder Of The Issue - Marie Boucher



Marie Boucher is the featured elder for this issue of Wabun Sun. Boucher, a First Nation Ojibway, is a traditional elder from Matachewan First Nation. She is a member of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) Elders Committee. As a member of this elders committee she attends regular NAN Chief's Meetings and conferences along with other elders from the committee. Recently, Elder Boucher also joined another elders committee, which was started by

the Wabun Tribal Council Health Department.

"We are very fortunate to have many well respected elders in Wabun Tribal Council communities. Elder Marie Boucher has been a great assistance to her community of Matachewan First Nation and to Nishnawbe-Aski Nation," said Shawn Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council.

Elder Boucher does a lot of traveling as part of her role as an elder. In late January she was invited to attend a NAN Education Conference. She is often called upon by her own community and others to assist with elder duties that include spiritual guidance, advice and support and encouragement.

She believes that an elder is someone who shares his or her life experience with others.

"An elder is someone who shares their wisdom and

knowledge to help others. As elders we must draw from our life experiences to assist our leaders who must make important decisions for our people. I am one of the youngest elders in the NAN Elders Committee so I look to those in the group who are older as my leaders. I grew up with many elders around me that I could talk to and even today I continue to look to others for assistance when I need it," said Boucher.

She sees elders as having an important role to play in First Nation communities.

"Many people come to me with their difficulties and hardships in the community. I try to do my best for my people by talking to them and sharing the knowledge I have gained. I do not have a degree in counselling but I share my own life experiences with people," explained Boucher.

She hopes to see her community grow and develop in the

future and to be able to provide more employment opportunities for her people. The teaching of her people's culture and language is also important to Boucher.

"Our people must not forget our past. The language and traditional teachings of our culture are very important for our people and especially our youth," said Boucher.

Boucher was born in Matachewan and was raised on her family's hunting and trapping ground near Nest Lake, now known as Sisenney Lake, 20 kilo-

meters from Matachewan First Nation. She grew up on her family's traditional territory until she was six when she attended public school in the town of Matachewan. Today she lives in the town of Matachewan but still holds residence in the Matachewan First Nation in the summer months. She is a traditional person and Pipe Holder and shares life with her husband Aime Boucher and a large family. She is a member of Matachewan First Nation and has some knowledge of the Ojibway language.

Pauline McKay Enjoys New Position



Mattagami First Nation recently hired a new health care worker for children's health in the community. Pauline McKay is the new Healthy Babies / Healthy Children Community Coordinator for Mattagami FN. She started her new position in October 2001. McKay's position is part of the Healthy Babies / Healthy Children program which has its own office building in the community. Eileen Boissonneau, Community Health Representative supervises the program.

McKay's main role has to do with early childhood intervention and she offers assistance and education to parents with young

children that are new born to six years of age. The goal of the program is to provide parent support and assistance to help create a healthy environment for young children. McKay conducts educational sessions with new parents, those with children and people planning on having their own children three times a week at the community's Binogesh Centre. She educates participants on proper nutritional needs for their children, teaches new mothers how to prepare baby foods and feed their small babies and as well she promotes children's safety in the home. In addition, she works closely with Wabun Health Community Health Representatives (CHR) and Community Health Nurses (CHN).

As part of the development of the program McKay also attends information workshops and events to learn more about children's health. Recently she attended an HIV/AIDS workshop in Thunder Bay that featured new information on children's health and how to help them stay healthy. McKay explained that the Healthy Babies/Healthy Children program

is an important service for her community.

"This is a great program for our children. It gives us the opportunity to help parents give their children a healthy and positive start to their lives. In the near future I hope to start conducting workshops and home visits to parents with children to inform them on additional support services, health services and other programs," said McKay.

She enjoys her involvement with young children and their parents in the community. McKay has a lot of life experience and also draws her knowledge as a mother who has raised her own family. She has two daughters, Sheryl McKay and Christine McKay and is a new grandmother to newborn Nolan Naveau. In addition, she recently completed educational upgrading through the PACE Centre in Timmins.

McKay is a First Nation Ojibway person and originally from Mattagami First Nation. In her spare time she enjoys playing BINGO and spending time with her new grandson.

Reflections

by Shawn Batise, Executive Director



We are starting this new year off with a few changes in the format of Wabun Sun. In response from community members and Wabun Staff we will now focus a little more on the historical aspects of who we are and culture and traditions.

You will notice an historical story based on an interview with Elder Theresa Memegos on Chapleau Ojibwe First Nation in this issue of Wabun Sun. This type of article provides us the opportunity to promote our individual community history and gives us the chance to share our past. We have also decided to include some aspect of cultural or traditional teaching in coming issues. We believe that it is very important that we encourage our people to become more aware of our culture and traditions so articles will reflect this belief in the Wabun Sun from now on.

In keeping with this emphasis on culture and traditions we will also be featuring stories on elders in our

communities. In this issue you will notice that we have featured Marie Boucher an elder from Matachewan First Nation.

Also in this issue you will see an important story on the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Self Governance Negotiation process. Wabun Tribal Council has been providing ongoing consultations with its First Nations and will continue to do so to make sure that we all have sufficient information to move forward with this process.

Wabun Sun will continue to promote the good work that people are doing in their communities with articles on projects and people. In this issue you will also note an article that covers the delivery of an ambulance to Wahgoshig First Nation. Congratulations to all the people in the community who worked hard to bring this service to their First Nation. We have also profiled two new community workers from Mattagami First Nation who have joined our Wabun Health team.

Wabun Sun provides us with the opportunity to promote our communities and community members and to stay in touch with each other. We intend to do more of this in 2002 thanks also to the direction and encouragement of our Wabun Chiefs.

Historic Process On Self Governance Will Determine Future

TIMMINS, Ont. - The Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) Self Governance Negotiation Committee held its first ever off-reserve public meeting at the Timmins Native Friendship Centre, January 23. The information and public consultation meeting drew more than 100 people from the Timmins area. Many Wabun community members were present. The NAN Committee was joined by government of Canada negotiators to explain to local First Nation people what the process of self governance is all about. Consultations will be ongoing in Wabun First Nations on this important matter.

Grand Chief of NAN, Stan Beardy explained that NAN is involved in two areas of sectoral negotiations on behalf of its First Nations. These areas are governance and education jurisdiction.

"We are here tonight with the federal negotiators to bring you information and to get your input on this process. What we are doing in this process will impact you and your children directly for many years to come. I believe as a NAN leader it is important for us to take this journey together as a stepping stone to nationhood," said Grand Chief Beardy.

He also explained that this self governance negotiation process has nothing to do with the First Nation Governance Act that the federal government is currently trying to impose on First Nations.

"It is important to remember that with this process we are exercising our inherent right to self government. When we signed our treaties we never gave up our right to self government. We also never gave up our lands and resources and as part of this process we have to talk about building an economic base for our First Nations," said Grand Chief Beardy.

Currently, the NAN Self Governance Negotiation Committee is in a preparatory stage. This stage of the self governance process is focused on information gathering and research from NAN First Nations on how the people want their education and governance systems to work. As part of this stage, the NAN Self Governance Negotiation Committee is also providing information to its First Nation people. There are four stages to the process including: the preparatory stage, the framework agreement stage, the agreement in principal stage and the final agreement.

"In our original plan we did not have a preparatory stage but we decided that we needed to educate people on our own history and to ensure that we communicate to everyone what this process means. We need to decolonize our people and empower them with knowledge to be able to make an informed decision on governance," said Chief Negotiator Dr. Emily Faries (Ph.D.) for NAN.

She pointed out that she has been involved in the process since 1997 and that the decisions

made on governance and the education jurisdiction will determine the future of First Nation people. She also noted that it is the people who will decide the final outcome of this process.

"I am reminded every day when I see children how important this process is and that we are striving to make a better future for our youth. They are the ones that we are doing this for as they will be our future leaders. I am very happy to see so many people here tonight who are interested in these negotiations as we need your input to make our decisions," said Dr. Faries.

Grand Chief Beardy explained that the preparatory stage is valuable in terms of communicating with the people of NAN. He noted that it is important not to hurry the process so that people really understand the issues and can make informed decisions.

"We service a large area and we must communicate in four languages to our people including Cree, OjiCree, Ojibway and English. This is a challenge for us and it will take time and a major commitment by the federal government to make sure that this process is a success," said Grand Chief Beardy.

The Chief Federal Government Negotiator, Stephen Smart called the process historic. He explained that input from First Nation people and the communities is very important in terms of deciding what type of government the people will decide on.

"This is an historic process and we must take our time with it. It is the people of NAN who will have the final say on what the final product will be. NAN has a very large territory and merits special attention because of its many fly-in remote communities," said Smart.

He also suggested that he would like to be involved in some workshops in regard to the process. He stressed that as much as possible be done to find out what the people have in mind and to do this through a slow process that requires a lot of thought and research.

Barney Batise, Community Research Coordinator for Wabun Tribal Council facilitated and organized the Timmins event. He commended the committee for travelling long distances to communicate with the people. In opening the event he quoted the great Chief Tecumseh who said 'who has the right to give or take the land'.

Other members of the NAN Negotiating Team in attendance included: Lawrence Baxter, Assistant Negotiator, NAN and Terry Waboose, Director of NAN Process Coordination Unit. Other Federal Government representatives included Catherine Green, Senior Government Relations Officer, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and Brian Perreault, Government Relations, INAC. NAN Governance Negotiation Steering Committee



HELPING THE PEOPLE THROUGH THE PROCESS OF NAN SELF GOVERNANCE ARE FROM L-R ARE: TERRY WABOOSE, DIRECTOR OF NAN PROCESS COORDINATION UNIT; LAWRENCE BAXTER, ASSISTANT NEGOTIATOR, NAN; JASON BATISE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL SERVICES ADVISOR FOR WABUN TRIBAL COUNCIL AND CHIEF NEGOTIATOR DR. EMILY FARIES (PH.D.) FOR NAN.



COMMUNICATING WITH NAN FIRST NATIONS AND THE PEOPLE OF NAN IS FOREMOST ON THE MINDS OF THE NAN SELF GOVERNANCE NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE. HERE WE SEE FROM L-R ARE: BRIAN PERREAULT, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, INAC; BARNEY BATISE, COMMUNITY RESEARCH COORDINATOR FOR WABUN TRIBAL COUNCIL AND CATHERINE GREEN, SENIOR GOVERNMENT RELATIONS OFFICER, INAC.



MANY WABUN COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED THE NAN SELF GOVERNANCE NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING AT THE TIMMINS NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE, JANUARY 23.

member Jason Batise, Economic Development and Technical Services Advisor for Wabun Tribal Council was also on hand, as was Special Advisor to the NAN Grand Chief, Mike Cachagee of Chapleau Cree First Nation

The opening and closing prayer was given by Elder Peter Sackaney and translation for the elder and speakers was provided by Chris Metatawabin. All participants and presenters were welcomed to the Timmins Native Friendship Centre by its Executive Director Monica Lafontaine and Jocelyn Formsma Board Youth Representative.

Our Language, Our Culture

Here are some useful Ojibway words with translation into English. We thank Elder Theresa Memegos of Chapleau Ojibwe First Nation for supplying Wabun Sun with this knowledge of the language. Please note that in the written Ojibway language the double letter is emphasised

AANIIN - Hello, a greeting
 NAAMAADIBIN - when you are asking a person to sit down
 NAANIIBAWIN - when you are asking a person to stand up
 BOODAAWAN - asking a person to make a fire
 GISINAA - it is cold, commenting on the weather
 ZOOKIPIN - it is snowing, commenting on the weather

Betty Wheesk New Intervention/Prevention Worker



vention, how to care for one's self and how to lead healthier lifestyles. She does this through education and awareness programs with community members of all ages including elementary and preschool level students and adults including elders and expecting mothers. Wheesk is also active in encouraging cultural and traditional activities in the community as part of the program's aim to create a healthy environment for everyone.

In addition she works closely with Wabun Health which provides resources and assistance when it is needed. This assistance includes help with travel arrangements for clients, skill development through training and also guidance with client care and service.

Wheesk has a great deal of knowledge from many years of education and experience in her involvement in the areas of health services and addictions abuse. She was previously employed in her community as NNADAP worker from 1998 to 2000. During this time she also graduated with top honours in the Native Community Worker - Healing and Wellness program pro-

vided through the Anishinabek Education Institute. This program was facilitated through Cambrian College in Sudbury. After her completion in this program she became an instructor in this course for some time and also provided student support to other college students who attended the program. In addition, she also completed a general vocation program and attended a Native Social Worker program at Northern College in Timmins. Recently, she also completed a year of study in a Criminology program at Nipissing University in North Bay.

Wheesk enjoys working with the people in her First Nation and helping to create a healthier community. A major project that she is taking part in has to do with the development of a tradition PowWow to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of her First Nation.

"I enjoy working at the grassroots level and interacting with people. It also feels good to be actively involved in the traditional and cultural events in our community. We all look forward to making the PowWow a success this summer," said Wheesk.

In addition, she is part of a new woman's drum group which was recently started in the community. She is an active volunteer and in her spare time she also enjoys producing traditional native arts, crafts and beadwork and creative writing.

She is originally from Mattagami FN. Wheesk is a First Nation Ojibwe person and a member of Mattagami FN. She is also a mother to three sons Johnathon, 13; Kory, 12 and ten year old Leiland.

Betty Wheesk is the new Intervention/Prevention Worker for Mattagami First Nation. She started her new position in January 2002. Wabun Health funds the position through its delivery of the National Native Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention (NNADAP) program in each of Wabun's communities. As an update to the NNADAP program, the name of the position of NNADAP worker was recently changed to Intervention/Prevention Worker.

Wheesk's responsibilities in this position are to provide awareness and education in addiction pre-

Elder Theresa Memegos Provides History Of Chapleau Ojibwe FN



knowledge of Chapleau Ojibwe FN but has also learned a great deal about the community from the Memegos family who have been part of the First Nation for many years. Elder Memegos pointed out that Chapleau Ojibwe FN was moved three times before it was permanently established at its present location. Originally the community was based on the shores of the Chapleau River. This first community had a large population and had several homes and buildings including an Anglican and Catholic Church.

"There was a fairly large community on the shores of the Chapleau River. It had more people with several family names such as Cheese and Quakegesic, as well as Memegos. Just before I arrived to this area the community had declined. The younger people moved to other communities and only a few older people lived along the river. In time these elders passed away until there was only about nine members in the community," said Elder Memegos.

She explained that before the decline, the people led a very traditional lifestyle. They came to this community only in the summers and lived with their families on their traditional trap lines and hunting grounds in the winter.

Through her father in law, Elder Memegos had learned that the Cheese family was a prominent family in the community. She said that Simon Cheese was known by the people as the first Chief of the First Nation but she does not know if the government at the time recognized him as a community leader. During this time there was a more traditional community leadership that was passed down through family ties.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPS

After the decline of the first community, the Memegos family found themselves alone in Chapleau Ojibwe FN. They moved away from the community to live up on higher ground which was more accessible to the roadway system and was closer to the hydro electric grid. There were a few homes established here and the

settlement had a population of nine members all of the Memegos family. It was at this point that Elder Theresa Memegos came to live in Chapleau Ojibwe FN with her brother Alex Jackpine and married Baptiste Memegos. They lived in this settlement for four or five years until the community was granted assistance for new housing. At this point the decision was made to move alongside the highway leading to the town of Chapleau where three new homes were built. This is the place where Chapleau Ojibwe FN is situated today. In this period people began moving back into the community.

In 1990, the community became one of the founding First Nations of the newly created Wabun Tribal Council. The community accomplished this through the efforts of past leaders including Chief Joanne Nakogee and Chief William Memegos.

REMEMBERING WHEN

Elder Theresa Memegos still visits the site of the first community from time to time to remember days gone by and her people's traditional way of life. She noted that this area would serve well as traditional grounds for her community.

"I often visit the site of the first community. There is a road leading down to this place and the view of the river and the water is beautiful. This is our traditional area and I hope that in the future we will be able to use it for traditional events such as our annual PowWow. There is a lot of open and flat space that would be good for this type of event and there are two small wells that can be accessed for use," said Elder Theresa Memegos.

Chapleau Ojibwe First Nation is an Ojibwe community. Elder Theresa Memegos explained that her family name of Jackpine was originally known in Ojibwe as Kicaandic which translates from Ojibwe to English as Jackpine. Memegos is an ancient Ojibwe word pronounced memegwes, meaning a traditional person who lives out on the land.

Health Matters



by Jean Lemieux,
Health Director

Welcome to this issue of Wabun Sun. All of us at Wabun Health would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and good health in 2002. I want to dedicate my column this issue to the wonderful work that all of our National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (NNADAP) program workers have been doing. Recently this program got a new name change in Mattagami FN and is now known as the Intervention/Prevention Worker Program. The change is in name only and the workers will be doing the same much needed job of assisting community members with their needs in the area of drug, alcohol and other addictions.

In discussing this program I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome back Betty Wheesk to this important and challenging position of Intervention/Prevention Worker for the community of Mattagami First Nation. Betty has a lot of experience in this area as she held the position of NNADAP worker in the past.

We are proud of the good work that all of our Intervention/Prevention and NNADAP Prevention Workers do in their respective communi-

ties. These people are all very dedicated and strive to help community members with addictions to come to terms with their problems and access help. Our workers also make sure that community members are made aware that there is help for anyone dealing with addiction issues. This work is very demanding and we understand how stressful it can be at times. I want to remind all of our workers that they are part of the Wabun Health Team and that we are here to support, encourage and assist our Intervention/Prevention Workers when they need it.

Wabun Health also plays a key role in assisting the workers in providing help in accessing treatment for clients when the need arises. Clients who have decided to access treatment are assisted through our Patient Transportation Program. This program is also a component of the Non-Insured Health Program. Other areas of assistance for clients include the Brighter Futures and Building Healthier Communities programs which are available within the First Nations. They can also access assistance through the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program and Brighter Futures/Building Healthier Communities.

We can get a lot of gratification through the work that our Intervention/Prevention Worker and NNADAP Workers are doing in their communities as people are provided assistance in dealing with addictions and living more healthy lifestyles. Every time someone is helped it leads to healthier families and in the long run healthier communities. We all benefit by the good work of our Intervention/Prevention Workers and NNADAP Workers.

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FIRST COMMUNITY

She has a lot of first hand