

## North West LHIN – June 21, 2010

### **Aging at Home Strategy – Enhanced Home Care**

Findings from a recent study *Setting the Balance of Care in Northwestern Ontario* (2008) determined that up to 50% of clients on the long-term care wait list at that time could be supported at home if appropriate services were available in the community to meet their needs. Seniors have also reported a desire to remain in the community for as long as possible rather than aging in a long term care setting.

#### **Programs for Community Living**

To build community supports throughout the region that enables individuals to remain at home, the North West LHIN has funded Programs for Community Living in:

- Terrace Bay/Schreiber
- Dryden
- Machin
- Red Lake
- The McCausland Hospital (Terrace Bay) and,
- Wilson Memorial General Hospital (Marathon)

These programs focus on providing lighter care needs to seniors such as Meals on Wheels, transportation to and from medical appointments, home making, meal preparation and social activities. Having these community supports in place fosters seniors' confidence that they can live independently at home in the community. In its first year, Programs for Community Living provided services to:

- 250+ clients in Terrace Bay
- 200+ clients in Marathon
- Additional meals for 150+ people in Thunder Bay, and
- Over 3750 rides to medical appointments for seniors throughout the region.

#### **Respite Services**

The North West LHIN also funded a pilot project run by Wesway that provides respite services to families in the District of Thunder Bay. Recognizing the impact of caring for a senior family member and the lack of respite services for seniors in the District of Thunder Bay, this project provides flexibility for caregivers to determine their own respite needs and priorities. The program:

- provided 11,800 hours of respite services
- served 62 families and,
- was offered in 15 communities along the North Shore and in the Greenstone area.

Recipients report that this service has helped avert caregiver exhaustion and prevent burnout, allowed senior caregivers to attend their own important medical appointments, and enabled families to care for their elderly loved-one(s) at home for as long as possible.