
North West LHIN – June 30, 2010

Aging at Home Strategy – Community

A key component to successfully aging at home is being able to access the appropriate level of health services in the right setting at the right time. This can be challenging where access to health services is limited. To improve access, the North West LHIN has invested in:

1. Outreach teams to provide comprehensive and continuous health care services to homebound elderly clients in Ignace and outlying areas,
2. Training for personal support workers in remote First Nation communities, and
3. Increased linkage to community support services for individuals with Alzheimers Disease

(1) Rural Geriatric Primary Outreach Program (Ignace and area)

This Nurse Practitioner-led program has helped seniors in the area age at home while reducing the need for ER visits and in-patient hospitalization. Over 300 in-home visits were made to over 37 individuals in the first year of the program (2008/09). The program provided:

- vaccinations
- wellness exams
- education on proper use of medications, and
- chronic disease management

(2) Training for Personal Support Workers in Remote First Nation Communities

Thirty Personal Support Workers from 16 remote First Nation communities were provided with hands-on physiotherapy training enabling both service providers and front line workers to feel confident about in-home follow-up programs and/or the use of telerehab. As a result, clients receive continued rehab support in their home or at the community nursing station via video consult instead of travelling out of their communities for further rehab treatments.

(3) First Link

Uncertainty in how to manage individuals with Alzheimers disease or related dementia at home can lead to early or unnecessary placement into long-term care. A LHIN-funded program, First Link, is addressing this challenge. The program encourages and empowers aging at home for seniors living with the challenges of Alzheimers or related dementia by providing services and support as early as possible in the disease process.

In the first year of the program, First Link has provided coordinated access to information, education and support to over 75 clients by enhancing partnerships and linkages between:

- primary care providers (i.e. family doctors)
- diagnostic and treatment services
- community service providers, and
- the Alzheimer society