

## **WEENEEBAYKO AREA HEALTH AUTHORITY**

Providing primary care medical and nursing services; pre-hospital care; mental health and traditional healing services; dental health services; rehabilitation services; diagnostic imaging; diabetes education and support services and home and community care support; the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA) is a unified, integrated First Nation Regional Health Authority located on the west coast of James Bay in Northern Ontario. We provide health care to the following six communities in the Mushkegowuk Territory:

### **MOOSE FACTORY, Ontario**

Moose Factory is home to the Moose Cree First Nation and is a community located on Moose Factory Island at the southern tip of James Bay. Founded in 1673 by the Hudson's Bay Company as a fur trading post, Moose Factory is one of the oldest English-speaking settlements in Ontario and is home to approximately 2,700 residents, most of whom are Moose Cree First Nation members. Moose Factory is only accessible by water in the spring, summer and fall seasons; ice road in the winter months and helicopter in between. Air Ambulance services are required to medevac patients to this regional facility from the catchment area. The Weeneebayko General Hospital provides regional health care services and is located in Moose Factory. It is a 37 bed facility with a staff of 12 full time physicians, who also provide medical services to each of the remaining five communities on a rotational basis. A full OR suite; emergency services; obstetrical services; general medical-surgical; pediatrics; alternative level of care and palliative care services are located in this facility; along with a wide range of outpatient and regional community based services, including diagnostic imaging; rehabilitation; laboratory, dental and audiology services; primary care outpatient clinics; diabetes programs; dental program and the traditional healing program. These services are provided at the Weeneebayko General Hospital and some are also provided in each of the communities in our catchment area.

### **MOOSONEE, Ontario**

Moosonee is located approximately 5 kilometres across the Moose River from Moose Factory on the mainland and is a recognized municipality within the Province of Ontario with a population of approximately 3,500 residents predominately from the James Bay regions various communities with a further transient population. Originally settled by the Revillion Freres as a trading post, Moosonee is the most urban of the six communities and hosts the Ontario Northland Railways "end of the line" as well as a deep sea port for transportation of materials to communities on the east and west coasts of James Bay. It is accessible by railway and air and connects to the more northern communities by ice road in the winter months. WAHA operates a 24-hour emergency setting Health Centre which also provides primary care 5/7 day services supported by the physician group at WGH; Primary Care Nurse Practitioners and Registered Nurses working in the expanded nursing role. Further support is available 24/7 by

telephone from the ER Physician at WGH. The James Bay Ambulance Service provides land-ambulance services to the community and the James Bay Mental Health program, a community-based mental health service is located here and provides support to community workers in each of the more northern communities and specialized services regionally. Various community agencies work with WAHA to support the traditional healing program's services to the residents in Moosonee.

### **FORT ALBANY, Ontario**

Located 150 kilometers north of Moosonee and accessible by air year round and ice road from Moosonee during the winter months, Fort Albany is home to the Fort Albany First Nation; with a population of approximately 1100 residents. An adjacent Island was originally settled by the Hudsons Bay Company as a fur trading post. The WAHA facility in Fort Albany is a 17 bed facility comprised of 9 chronic care and 8 acute care beds. Registered Nurses in the expanded nursing role and a Primary Care Nurse Practitioner are supported by rotating physician visits to provide medical services to the community members. Further support is available 24/7 by telephone from the ER Physician at WGH. James Bay Ambulance Service provides pre-hospital care and the James Bay Mental Health Program has a full time Community Mental Health Worker on site. The Fort Albany First Nation provides home and community support services through its Health Department and works closely with WAHA to support the Traditional Healing program services in the community.

### **KASHECHEWAN, Ontario**

Kashechewan is located 20 kilometers north of Fort Albany and is a community of approximately 1,700 residents who are members of the Albany Band. It is accessible by air year round and ice road from Moosonee in the winter. The community's health care services are provided by Health Canada's First Nations Inuit Health Branch which operates a Nursing Station supported by Registered Nurses in the expanded nursing role. Physician support is provided through WAHA and the physicians provide medical services on a rotating basis. Further support is available 24/7 by telephone from the ER Physician at WGH. The James Bay Ambulance Services provides pre-hospital care to the community and the James Bay Mental Health Services has a full time worker on site. The First Nation provides home and community support services programs and also works with WAHA to support the Traditional Health Program in its community.

### **ATTAWAPISKAT, Ontario**

Home to 1,800 Attawapiskat First Nations members, the community of Attawapiskat is located 240 kilometers north of Moosonee. Accessible by air year round and ice road from Moosonee in the winter months, Attawapiskat is the closest community to the Victor Mine of the DeBeers Mining Company, which is located 90 kilometers west of Attawapiskat. WAHA's Attawapiskat Site is a 16-bed facility comprised of 9 chronic care and 7 acute care beds. A Primary Care

Nurse Practitioner and Registered Nurses in the expanded nursing role provide health care services to the residents of the community from our facility and are supported by the Physician group from WGH on a rotating basis. Further support is available 24/7 by telephone from the ER Physician at WGH. The James Bay Ambulance Services provides pre-hospital care to the community and the James Bay Mental Health Services has a full time worker on site. The First Nation provides home and community support services programs and also works with WAHA to support the Traditional Health Program in its community.

### **PEAWANUCK, Ontario**

The community of Peawanuck is surrounded by the lands of the Polar Bear Provincial Park 400 kilometers north of Moosonee on the Winisk River; 35 km from Hudsons Bay. Members of the Weenusk First Nation originally settled in Winisk, located 30 kilometers down river, however in 1986 the community had to be abandoned as a result of the Winisk River flood disaster. Due largely in part to the community members' determination to be in their new homes before winter, seven months later the community of Peawanuck was established and the community relocated to its present site. Accessible by air, with limited winter road access from Fort Severn, Peawanuck is home to approximately 300 members of the Weenusk First Nation, who continue to practice the traditional ways of the Cree and rely on the land as a primary food source. The community's health care services are provided by Health Canada's First Nations Inuit Health Branch which operates a Nursing Station supported by Registered Nurses in the expanded nursing role. Physician support is provided through WAHA and the physicians provide medical services on a rotational visit model. Further support is available 24/7 by telephone from the ER Physician at WGH. The James Bay Mental Health Services has a full time worker on site. The First Nation provides home and community support services programs and also works with WAHA to support the Traditional Health Program in its community.