

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### RURAL ONTARIO INSTITUTE SELECTS CHIGAMIK COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE TO HELP IMPROVE COMMUNITY VITALITY AND WELLBEING

*Midland, Ontario – January 29, 2019* – Centre de santé communautaire CHIGAMIK Community Health Centre has been selected by the Rural Ontario Institute as one of only three community demonstration projects across Ontario aimed at better understanding and improving community vitality and wellbeing, as part of their North Simcoe Community Health Link.

“On behalf of all the partners involved with the North Simcoe Community Health Link, we are pleased to be selected to take part in this important community demonstration project, since it attests to the value and mission of what we are trying accomplish in the health care system. This is a great example of what Community Health Centres truly stand for - community collaboration for real change,” said David Jeffery, Executive Director, Chigamik Community Health Centre.

The North Simcoe Community Health Link, which serves the most fragile health care users, has been the first health care agency to pioneer the use of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing as a way to research, identify and combat social isolation in a health care setting. This has resulted in major reductions in emergency room visits (31%) and admission to hospitals (45%) throughout North Simcoe Muskoka.

Through the research, it has been identified that five per cent of people in Ontario use two-thirds of all health care dollars. And, the majority of these people have medical conditions that are either caused or worsened by poverty, malnutrition and social isolation. The goal of this project is to develop non-medical, cost effective interventions that focus on addressing the social determinants of health through such interventions as “social prescribing” – enabling primary care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical, community services and activities.

“After reviewing the potential impact this project can have on our community, I believe the social prescribing approach, highlighted in the Health Link research, *The Missing Link*, can help alleviate pressures not just in our hospitals, but potentially in other human service agencies as well,” said Mayor Stewart Strathearn, Town of Midland.

Over the next eight months, Chigamik Community Health Centre will be working with the Town of Midland and other community partners to better understand and improve local community wellbeing – moving beyond data collection and reporting to the implementation of strategies and actions to improve community vitality.

For more information, please contact Gary Machan, Project Lead at 705-794-9050

## **North Simcoe Community Health Link Reports**

[The Missing Link: The Power of Belonging](#)

[Deepening the Understanding of the People We Serve: Through the Lens of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing](#)

### **About CSC CHIGAMIK CHC**

Centre de santé communautaire CHIGAMIK Community Health Centre is a not-for-profit health care service funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, through the North Simcoe Muskoka Local Health Integration Network. It offers bilingual and culturally sensitive care. It encourages persons who identify as First Nations, Francophone, Inuit, Métis or Aboriginal and live in North Simcoe Muskoka to register. For more information please visit [www.chigamik.ca](http://www.chigamik.ca).

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