



For Immediate Release
 April 8, 2020

COVID-19 Task Forces mobilizing in the Kenora District

The All Nations Health Partners is a diverse coalition of municipal, Indigenous and health system leaders who have combined forces to support and prepare our communities for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part of our COVID-19 pandemic plan includes the development of a COVID-19 Emergency Centre that will serve as a temporary off-site support facility for the vulnerable population. This includes:

- People who are showing COVID-19 symptoms and are waiting for testing;
- People waiting for COVID-19 test results; and,
- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 who do not require hospital care and need a safe and supportive place to be quarantined.

Multiple facilities throughout Kenora and Keewatin were reviewed and examined to ensure the best facility was selected to meet the needs of the COVID-19 Emergency Centre. The three largest facilities considered included the Kenora Recreation Centre, the Kenora Curling Club and the Keewatin Memorial Arena.

The All Nations Health Partners, after a careful assessment, determined that the Keewatin Arena was the most suitable facility to best support this important and critical work. In partnership, the Lake of the Woods District Hospital and the Kenora District Services Board have entered into a short-term agreement with the City of Kenora for the use of the facility. All renovations and modifications to the Keewatin Arena are temporary and the COVID-19 Emergency Centre will close once the COVID-19 pandemic response is completed.

The supports and services will be provided in coordination with many organizations from the community and the All Nations Health Partners; this includes health care service providers, developmental services, social services, local physicians and community partners. This project is a true coming together of partnerships that is equal to the very challenge that our communities are about to face.

“The support from individuals and businesses from the community has been extraordinary. To date, over \$40,000 in materials, supplies, furniture and equipment has been donated to the project. Without the generosity of Sierra Construction and Weyerhaeuser, the renovations to the facility would not have been possible,” stated Henry Wall, Chief Administrative Officer, Kenora District Services Board.

“Responding to the COVID-19 threat is challenging and it has created a great opportunity for everyone to come together as partners, providers, volunteers and citizens to contribute in their specialized capacity. Protecting the vulnerable from COVID-19 is part of this challenge and we have created a solution that will work for our community,” says Ray Racette, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Lake of the Woods District Hospital.

“The All Nations Health Partners have created a strong foundation by forming close partnerships, to make sure all voices from our area are represented. It is in critical times like these that we have to rely on those partnerships and work together to make sure our most vulnerable are taken care of, and the proper steps and precautions are taken. A big thank you to all the community support we have received and members who have stepped up to help make this possible,” says Joe Barnes, Executive Director of Kenora Chiefs Advisory.

The All Nations Health Partners thank the members of the Vulnerable Population Task Force who have worked tirelessly in bringing this project together in a very short amount of time.

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