



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public feedback in Stage 1 of the new hospital project results in blossoming Indigenous Patient Relations Department

Kenora, ON, December 2, 2022 – In September the All Nations Hospital Project Steering Committee shared some proposed areas of the new hospital project which would be new or enhanced. This includes Mental Health & Addictions, Indigenous Health Services, Diagnostic Imaging, Surgical Services, Transitional Care and Palliative Care. While many of these enhancements MUST wait for the new hospital due to physical limitations in the current facility, there are some that can begin NOW, not waiting for the new hospital.

In Stage 1 of the new hospital project extensive public engagement was done in our region (in our urban and rural settings, with First Nations communities and with seasonal residents) and several themes were identified. One such theme was the need for support for Indigenous patients and their families as they navigate the health system, which often begins at the hospital.

Using this feedback, Lake of the Woods District Hospital (LWDH) and Kenora Chiefs Advisory (KCA) got to work not only on planning for a robust Indigenous Patient Relations department in the new hospital but also putting supports in place in the current facility. What this has included so far:

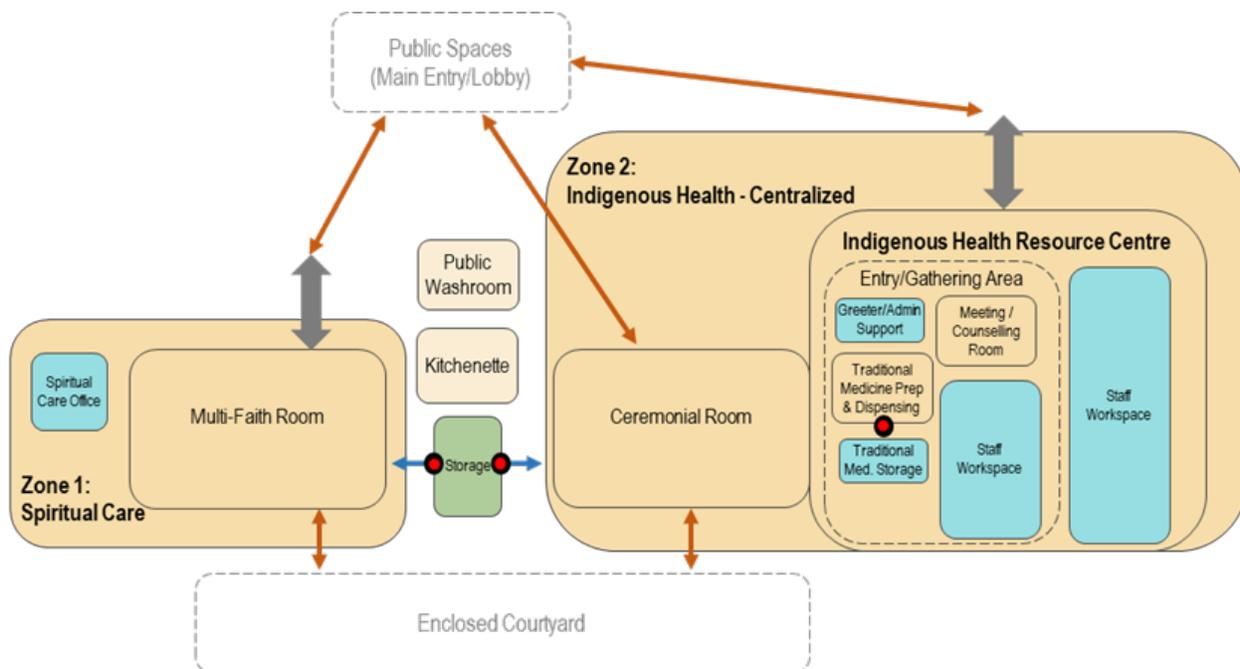
- A new working group being struck (with partners LWDH, KCA and WNHAC) to implement change and solutions in the current hospital
- Partnerships with KCA and WNHAC for staffing within the hospital (Indigenous Patient Navigators, Community Project Planner, Manager for Indigenous Patient Support Services, Transitions Facilitators)
- The development of a new Indigenous Advisory Council (including community representatives) which will provide guidance on the development of policies and processes which address First Nations Care issues within the hospital
- Reviewing and refining the current patient feedback process with the intent of creating an easily accessible and inclusive process
- Ensuring patients have the ability to smudge / perform traditional practices in the hospital. The Ojibwa Healing Room was opened in our hospital in December 2020
- Stocking traditional medicines such as sage in the hospital
- Further developing the cultural staff training program
- Celebrating National Indigenous Peoples Day and recognizing National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

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Proposed for the new hospital is a full complement of staff focused on spiritual care and Indigenous health to support patient needs (translators, navigators, cultural educator, etc). Physically this would include an Indigenous Resource Centre, spaces to accommodate traditional practices (Ceremonial room, Traditional Healing rooms, traditional kitchen, quiet rooms, multi-faith room) and external spaces such as a Sweat Lodge, landscaped spaces to allow for gatherings, fire, traditional garden, water access, etc.



The All Nations Hospital Project is now nearing the end of programming in Stage 2 of a five-stage process to plan and build a new hospital. For more information on this project visit [All Nations Hospital - Kenora, Ontario - Home \(lwdh.on.ca\)](http://AllNationsHospital-Kenora,Ontario-Home(lwdh.on.ca)).

To keep informed on the project, please follow the Lake of the Woods District Hospital on Facebook and visit the All Nations Hospital Project website to subscribe to receive the most up-to-date information - <https://anh.lwdh.on.ca/>.

The All Nations Hospital Project is a community project, focused not only on creating an inclusive, efficient facility staffed by compassionate and caring individuals but also on building relationships to strengthen our community. Mamoo'kandaa oshi aakoziwigamig. Working together for our new hospital.

#AllNationsHospitalProject #BuildingOurHospital

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