



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Lake of the Woods District Hospital celebrates Diagnostic Imaging Centre of Excellence Grand Opening**

*Kenora, ON, August 30, 2025* – Lake of the Woods District Hospital (LWDH), together with the Lake of the Woods District Hospital Foundation held a small gathering and ribbon cutting today to celebrate a milestone occasion. The Diagnostic Imaging department in Kenora’s hospital has evolved into a new, state-of-the-art Diagnostic Imaging Centre of Excellence.

This incredible milestone for local health care will ensure patients from across Northwestern Ontario have access to world-class diagnostic imaging close to home. The Centre now offers nine imaging modalities, with the most recent additions being a state-of-the-art Mammography Unit, breast Ultrasound and Biopsy Suite and now Kenora’s first ever MRI machine.

“Today is more than the opening of renovated space and new technologies, it is a truly historic achievement for our incredible team and community,” said Cheryl O’Flaherty, President and CEO at LWDH. “The Centre will strengthen the care we provide, attract and retain exceptional healthcare professionals, and serve patients and families for decades to come.”

The Centre of Excellence has been made possible through the Beyond the Scan Campaign, led by the Lake of the Woods District Hospital Foundation. Together with the generosity of donors, businesses, service clubs, and community partners, the campaign raised \$9,522,151 to fund diagnostic imaging equipment not covered by government funding. In addition, the Foundation’s Excellence Fund, supported by ongoing community contributions will provide critical resources over the next two fiscal years to further strengthen diagnostics at Lake of the Woods District Hospital. Proceeds will be directed toward sustaining, upgrading, and enhancing the technology and services within the Centre to ensure it continues to meet the region’s evolving health care needs.

The speed at which this vision has become reality is as remarkable as the achievement itself. The Beyond the Scan Campaign Cabinet, a dedicated group of volunteers, first came together in August 2024. Less than one year later, on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the first patient was scanned as part of rigorous applications training. Construction, which began in January 2025, was made possible with support from the Ontario Ministry of Health, which funded the necessary building improvements. The purchase of the MRI

and other diagnostic imaging equipment, however, was funded entirely through the generosity of our community via the Beyond the Scan Campaign. We are also deeply grateful to Canon Medical Systems and Health Care Solutions, whose expertise and partnership were instrumental in bringing this project to life, as well as to the many local contractors who worked tirelessly throughout the build.

“The Centre is proof of what can happen when a community comes together,” said Ashley Hendy, LWDH Foundation Board Chair. “Every gift, every effort, made this possible. It’s not just about equipment, it’s about bringing advanced, compassionate care home.”

“From a clinical perspective, the Centre brings Kenora to the gold standard of diagnostic care,” explains Dr. Catherine Murray, Radiologist and Diagnostic Imaging Service Lead at LWDH. “Having these technologies here means timely treatment for patients. Most importantly, it ensures health equity. Patients in Northwestern Ontario now have access to the same level of care as those in larger urban centers, without the burden of travel.”

MRI services will officially open on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and run Monday to Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM. All referrals to MRI throughout the region will run through a Central Waitlist Management (CWM) system, which will ensure timely and efficient service. The CWM system gives the patient the option to choose where they want to have their MRI based on preferred site and the shortest wait time. The central intake also balances the imaging workload across the region so that no one site is overwhelmed.

The opening of the Diagnostic Imaging Centre of Excellence represents not only a leap forward in patient care but also a celebration of community spirit, vision, and determination.

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