



Northern Ontario
School of Medicine
École de médecine
du Nord de l'Ontario
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NOSM Says Goodbye to Dr. Frederick Gilbert

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) is preparing to say farewell to a man who made a significant contribution to the first chapter in the history of the School. NOSM Board Chair and Lakehead University President, Dr. Frederick Gilbert, will retire from both of these roles this summer. Described as the "last of the original administrators who advocated for NOSM," he has participated in unprecedented developments at NOSM and Lakehead.

While serving two terms as NOSM's Chair of the Board of Directors and one term as Vice Chair, Gilbert presided over landmark developments. Dr. Roger Strasser, NOSM Dean, recently paid tribute to Gilbert's contributions. "Fred has played an

instrumental role in overseeing the early stages of the School's development. His experience and expertise were invaluable in guiding the establishment of the NOSM Board of Directors," he said.

"He came to Lakehead when the medical school proposal was just beginning and provided strong and cohesive leadership," said Dr. John Augustine, NOSM Board member, whose own lifelong advocacy for health-care issues has had a noteworthy impact on the creation of NOSM. Augustine acknowledged Gilbert for his leadership qualities and for his ability to attract researchers to Northern Ontario.

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New Strategic Plan Will Guide Future of NOSM

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine has developed its second strategic plan intended to guide the School's progress through the years 2010 to 2015. Much has been achieved in NOSM's first five years of operations, and this second plan builds on these successes with well established priorities and a clearly articulated vision and mission. NOSM's new vision, "Innovative Education and Research for a Healthier North," is supported by a mission that will enhance the School's mandate for the education of high-quality physicians and health professionals and reinforce the School's international recognition as a leader in distributed, learning-centred, community-engaged education and health research.

The new strategic plan builds on NOSM's founding principles, which are consistent with progressive changes occurring at the forefront of medical education.

To access the full version of NOSM's new Strategic Plan, please visit www.nosm.ca.

The new plan calls for five strategic priorities that will enable the School to realize its new vision and mission. These include:

Enhancing NOSM's Education Program

NOSM will expand its distributed education and learning model and ensure the ongoing inclusion and balance of integrated, interprofessional clinical learning throughout NOSM's undergraduate, postgraduate, and health professional programs. This focus will enable NOSM graduates to easily integrate into community care settings which have adopted collaborative, patient-centered approaches.

Strengthening NOSM's Research Initiatives

NOSM will focus on further developing its research agenda in line with its distributed education model, and continue to broaden the academic experience of its learners, faculty and staff. These research activities will respect the unique cultural attributes of NOSM's Aboriginal, Francophone, and other culturally distinct partners.

Develop NOSM's Learning Environment

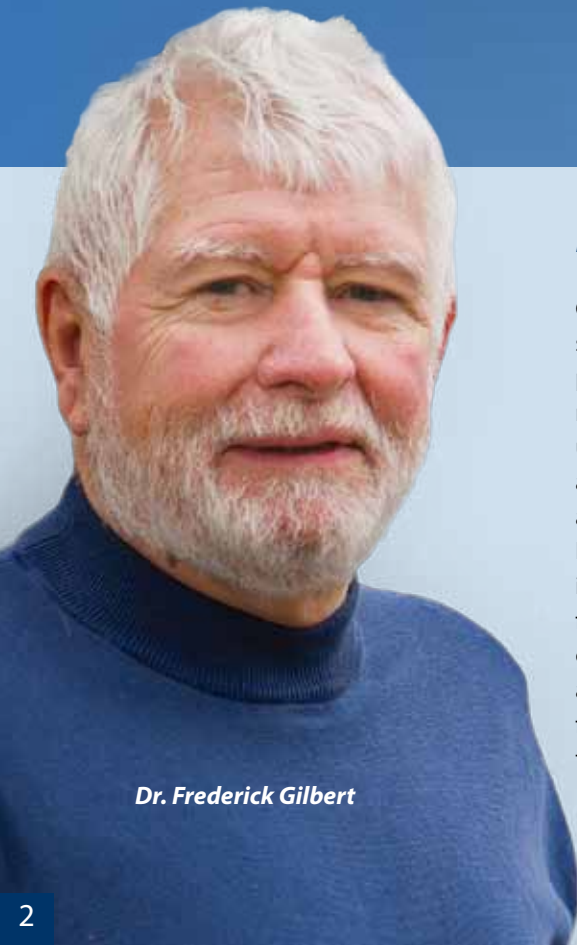
The School will continue to emphasize an inquiring learning environment tailored to the needs of all of its stakeholders, including students and residents, as well as staff, faculty and medical and health professional practitioners.

Foster Excellent Faculty Relations

NOSM's operating model consists of unique challenges related to the recruitment and retention of qualified full-time, part-time, and stipendiary faculty. Innovative approaches toward faculty relations will be developed to ensure the sustainability of the NOSM model.

Enhance Collaboration and Communication with Community Partners

NOSM's distributed education model relies heavily on the support and involvement of the communities and key stakeholder groups. NOSM will continue to enhance communication tools that support the development of these community partnerships. ■



Dr. Frederick Gilbert

NOSM Says Goodbye continued from page 1...

Gilbert has been at the helm during a time of significant research developments, particularly at Lakehead, where his push for research innovation contributed to the university's advanced standing in the academic community. Under Gilbert's administration, *Maclean's* magazine ranked Lakehead University as the number one institution for value-added research. This followed previous developments, such as the construction of the Advanced Technology and Academic Centre (ATAC), a high-tech facility equipped with a virtual reality lab at a time when only six others existed at Canadian universities. These successful initiatives have led to a blossoming of dynamic research partnerships with NOSM, the Thunder Bay

Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC), and other facilities.

At a NOSM Board retreat held in Elk Lake, Ontario from May 6 to May 8, Board Directors participated in a special ceremony to recognize Gilbert for his part in the creation of NOSM and his role in the School's mandate to contribute to improving the health of the people and communities of Northern Ontario.

After a brief respite, Gilbert plans to continue building on a lifetime of academic and administrative achievements. "I definitely want to keep working and use my abilities," he said. ■

Interview with Dr. Joel Lanphear, Retiring NOSM Associate Dean

In 2005, Dr. Joel Lanphear was appointed Associate Dean of NOSM's Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) portfolio, and later, Senior Associate Dean of NOSM's West Campus in Thunder Bay. His five-year tenure has been marked by groundbreaking achievements. Among them is the contribution he has made to the planning, development, and implementation of NOSM's distinctive undergraduate curriculum and the expertise he has demonstrated in guiding the School throughout the process of accreditation for the M.D. program.

Lanphear is resigning from his current post and will continue to pursue education and research interests at the School as a faculty member and Director of the Centre for Research and Education for the Health Professions. *Northern Passages* recently spoke with Lanphear about his nearly 40-year career in medical education.

Northern Passages(NP): *You have worked in many places around the world. What brought you to NOSM?*

Lanphear: I made a career of developing new medical schools. As I learned more about NOSM, I came to understand the hopes and desires and the vision for this medical school. Given the complexity of the curriculum design, I was eager to participate in the challenging task of developing new and appropriate ways of educating health-care providers for the people of Northern Ontario.

NP: *Before coming to NOSM, you were involved in three medical school start-ups in the United States and the United Arab Emirates. How are the challenges of building a medical school in Northern Ontario distinct from those you addressed in your previous roles?*

Lanphear: A major challenge is the geography, particularly the distances between the communities and the campuses. These issues are related not only to the provision of health care, but to the re-engagement with our 70-plus partner communities who are vital in the education and training of our medical students, residents, and allied health professionals. Thanks to an incredible network across Northern Ontario, we engage with communities electronically. But there is no substitute for personal contact, so we spend a lot of time on the road.

NP: *If there have been unique challenges, there must be unique rewards attached to being part of this made-in-the-North solution. What are they?*

Lanphear: The rewards come from being able to work with incredible people, including those in the UME (Undergraduate Medical Education) portfolio, as well as staff, faculty, and physicians who are totally devoted to the School's social accountability mandate and believe in what we are doing. This, of course, extends to Local NOSM Groups, which have a huge impact on welcoming our students into the communities, to the funding ministries, and members of the Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) and Francophone Reference Group (FRG).

NP: *Many in the medical community in Northern Ontario have credited you with inspiring people — faculty, staff and administrators — to believe in themselves and deliver a first-rate medical education program. How did you inspire and sustain the enthusiasm of the many participants needed to buy into an unproven pioneering initiative?*

Lanphear: From the beginning I knew this medical school would succeed. It was the right thing to do at the right time for all the right reasons, and I tried to convey my confidence to everyone that it would work. You have to help people understand that you believe in them and that it takes their participation to succeed. Sometimes you have to be a cheerleader and lead from out front, not behind.

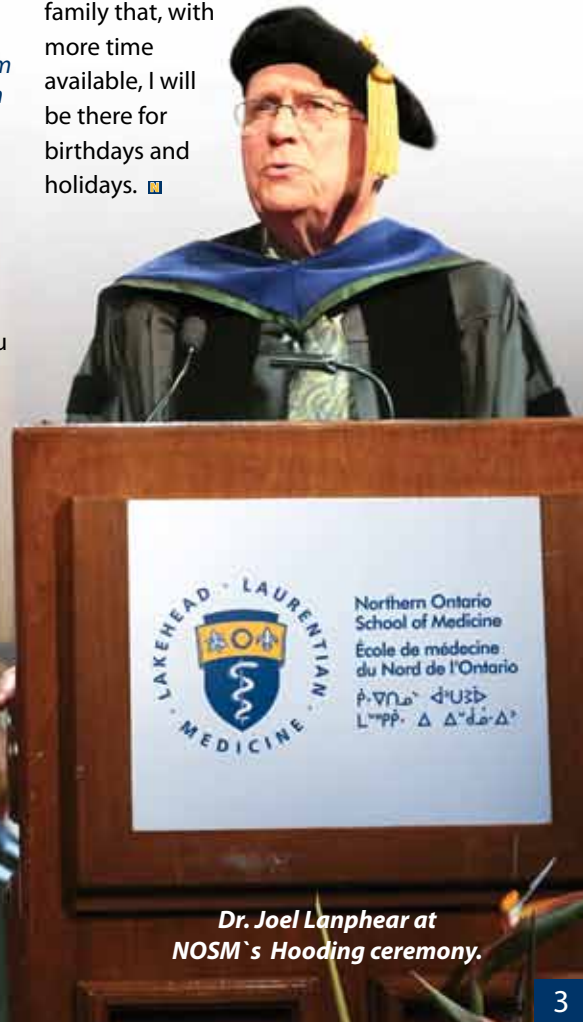
NP: *Your 40-year career is distinguished by many achievements. Which of these will stand out among them?*

Lanphear: I would like best to be remembered as a father, husband, and

grandfather. Beyond that, I would say the last five years have been the best of my life. To have been given the honour of participating and contributing in some way to the creation of this School, and to the success of the first group of graduating medical students, has been an outstanding opportunity for me.

NP: *For some, these may be considered the golden years. Instead of retirement, you will be pursuing research interests. How do you envision your foreseeable future?*

Lanphear: After my current responsibilities end in June, I will be looking at the broad construct of the health professions - examining what we do and what questions we need to ask ourselves to make things better. I have also promised myself and my family that, with more time available, I will be there for birthdays and holidays. ■



Dr. Joel Lanphear at NOSM's Hooding ceremony.

Troisième symposium francophone de l'EMNO – Accent sur la santé communautaire

L'École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario a tenu son troisième symposium francophone à l'hôtel Radisson à Sudbury du 28 au 30 avril 2010. Pendant ces trois journées très réussies, plus de 140 distingués participants de tout le Nord de l'Ontario ont exploré les facettes des soins touchant les populations francophones.

Ayant pour thème « La santé – Un enjeu communautaire », le symposium de cette année a inclus une série de présentations, d'ateliers et de séances interactives axés sur le réseautage communautaire, le renforcement des capacités, les pratiques en santé et les approches concertées visant à améliorer la prestation des soins pour les francophones du Nord de l'Ontario. Plusieurs partenaires communautaires ont appuyé l'événement, notamment FedNor dont la contribution aidera l'EMNO à offrir des séances régionales d'information et de planification, ainsi qu'un réseau communautaire couvrant tout le Nord et un forum en ligne.

L'EMNO a organisé les trois symposiums francophones avec la coopération du Groupe consultatif francophone créé en 2003 pour assurer la liaison entre l'EMNO et les communautés francophones.

Au programme très instructif du symposium

de cette année figuraient entre autres d'importantes recherches en cours. Kim Morris, directrice des communications et des affaires publiques au Centre d'accès communautaire du Nord-Est, a fait remarquer que ces recherches étaient essentielles pour recenser les besoins des francophones et y répondre efficacement en respectant la culture.

D'autres intervenants ont souligné l'importance de l'engagement direct de la communauté : « À titre de membres de la communauté, nous devons prendre la responsabilité de notre santé et travailler pour améliorer le système », a déclaré Nicole Ranger, chef des projets de collaboration à l'EMNO et membre du Groupe consultatif francophone. À son avis, des événements comme le symposium francophone sont des occasions d'échanger des renseignements et d'envisager la mise en œuvre de nouvelles initiatives au niveau communautaire.

Un autre point saillant du symposium fut le lancement du rapport très attendu intitulé « Engagement communautaire francophone : Comprendre, Orienter, Agir », entrepris par le Bureau des affaires francophones de l'EMNO sous la direction de Danielle Barbeau Rodrigue. Ce rapport

reflète l'importance de la participation des francophones afin d'aider l'école à s'acquitter de son mandat en matière d'imputabilité sociale et d'engagement communautaire.

Le Dr Marc Blayney, doyen associé à l'engagement communautaire et doyen associé principal du campus Est de l'EMNO, a donné une vue d'ensemble des conclusions du rapport qui établit notamment que l'école est un centre de formation médicale qui se soucie de la diversité culturelle.

Le doyen, le Dr Roger Strasser, qui considère que cette conférence est une étape cruciale dans l'amélioration de la prestation des soins aux groupes francophones, a réitéré l'engagement de l'EMNO à répondre aux préoccupations des francophones : « Comme les deux précédents tenus respectivement en 2005 et 2007, le troisième symposium francophone est essentiel pour examiner et comprendre les pratiques et services de santé visant la population francophone du Nord de l'Ontario. Ce regroupement de nombreuses personnes bien renseignées sur les soins et les communautés francophones est une occasion de discuter de collaborations pour améliorer les soins pour la population de la région, y compris avec nos partenaires francophones ». ■



Community Health Focus of NOSM's Third Francophone Symposium

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine recently held its third, successful three-day Francophone Symposium at the Radisson Hotel in Sudbury. From April 28 to 30, 2010, over 140 distinguished participants from across Northern Ontario gathered to explore dimensions of health care related to Francophone populations.

Dedicated to the theme, "Health – A Community Issue," this year's Francophone Symposium included a series of presentations, workshops, and interactive sessions focused on community networking, capacity building, health practices and collaborative approaches intended to enhance effective health-care delivery for Francophones in Northern Ontario. The event was supported by several community partners, including FedNor, whose contribution will also assist NOSM in hosting a series of regional information and planning meetings, as well as a pan-Northern Community Network and new web-based forum.

NOSM has held three Francophone Symposia with the cooperation of the Francophone Reference Group (FRG), established in 2003 to liaise between NOSM and the Francophone communities. Among

the many shared learnings at this year's symposium were the significant research initiatives underway. Kim Morris, Director of Communications and Public Affairs at the North East Community Care Access Centre (CCAC), noted that these research results were key to identifying Francophone needs and responding with efficient and culturally appropriate health delivery models.

Others noted the importance of direct community involvement in advancing grassroots initiatives. "As individuals in the community, we have to take ownership of our own health and work towards improving the system," said Nicole Ranger, Manager of Collaborative Projects at NOSM and Member of the Francophone Reference Group. Ranger sees events such as the Francophone Symposium as opportunities for information sharing and looking toward developing new initiatives at the community level.

Another symposium highlight was the launch of the much anticipated report, entitled "Francophone Community Engagement: Insight / Guidance / Action," spearheaded by NOSM's Francophone Affairs Unit under the leadership of Director Danielle Barbeau-Rodrigue. The report reflects the importance of Francophone

participation with the aim of helping the School to better fulfill its mandate of social accountability and community engagement.

Dr. Marc Blayney, Associate Dean of Community Engagement and Senior Associate Dean of NOSM's East Campus, gave an overview of the report's findings, which included an acknowledgement of the School as a medical educational centre conscious of cultural diversity.

NOSM's commitment to addressing Francophone concerns was reiterated by the Dean, Dr. Roger Strasser, who viewed this conference as a crucial step in the enhancement of health delivery to Francophone groups.

"This third Francophone Symposium, like the two before in 2005 and 2007, is essential to examining and understanding current health practices and services for the Francophone people of Northern Ontario. The gathering of many individuals who are well informed about health care and Francophone communities opens a window of opportunity for the discussion of collaborative approaches intended to improve health care for the people of the region, including our Francophone partners," Strasser said. ■

Distinguished Participants Consider Community Health at the Francophone Symposium.



NOSM Researcher Takes Stock of Disease and the Air We Breathe



Dr. Stacey Ritz

It may be common knowledge that air pollution is harmful to our health, but exactly how harmful and in what ways it manifests are questions which NOSM Assistant Professor Dr. Stacey Ritz is exploring through several studies in the Sudbury area. The region has dramatically reduced toxic emissions by means of improved mining practices and a decades-long environmental reclamation program, considered one of the most successful in the world. Yet reduced concentrations of metals and other pollutants can still induce harm. "Reductions in emissions are good, but we are still trying to discern which kinds of disorders might be affected even at these lower levels. In order to make effective policy, we have to understand the subtle nuances regarding the types of disorders that might be influenced by exposure to specific metal profiles in the atmosphere," Ritz explained.

This medical researcher delves into the relationship between air particulates and the development of autoimmune disease, a

condition in which the immune system attacks its own body. Examples of autoimmune diseases are rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, Type 1 diabetes, and multiple sclerosis. Ritz's work involves the examining of particles of metal in the Sudbury atmosphere, comparing them to particles from other regions, and determining the biological differences in the way cells respond to these particle profiles.

"We collected Sudbury particles and found, as you would expect, higher levels of nickel, copper, iron and cobalt," Ritz said, suggesting further investigation is needed to determine whether or not the Sudbury particles do more to promote autoimmune disease than other regions with different metal profiles. Ritz' role is to disseminate research findings rather than develop treatments or drugs for disorders. Once factors that contribute to the development of disease have been identified, she relays the findings to policy makers and others entrusted with limiting emissions and exposure to specific metals. ■

CIHR President, Dr. Alain Beaudet, Draws Attention to Research Opportunities

Dr. Alain Beaudet, President of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), was the keynote speaker at one of NOSM's Dean's Hour sessions earlier this year. Dr. Beaudet's presentation on "Creating Innovative Research" outlined strategic initiatives consistent with many research priorities and programs already underway at NOSM.

Among CIHR's priorities is the commitment to investing in world-class research excellence. Part of fulfilling that mandate is a strong peer-review process that attracts and retains top-rate researchers. Research in Canada is challenged by the shortage of physicians, nurses, and other clinicians in the field. "Despite the fact that investments in health research have tripled over the past ten years, the number of doctors and health professionals doing research has remained low," Beaudet said.

Contrary to popular perceptions about favoritism in the industry, health professionals are just as likely to obtain

research funding as medical scientists. Beaudet insists NOSM can play a key role in reversing the low representation of health professionals by exposing medical students early on to research activities with the aim of heightening interest in the field and training future physicians to think scientifically.

NOSM has already undertaken a proactive approach to research geared toward future health practitioners. Each year, medical students are given the opportunity to gain cardiovascular training under the guidance of seasoned researchers, thanks to funding generously provided by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario (HSFO). NOSM Dean's Awards, similarly, make it possible for learners to conduct hands-on research on a wide range of biological and social research topics of particular importance to Northern populations.

A solid grounding in research practice demonstrated by NOSM's approach is critical to providing sound evidence-based medicine

and securing a high-quality, accessible and sustainable health-care system with a focus on primary health-care research.

Dr. Beaudet also drew attention to CIHR's objective of reducing health inequities of Aboriginal peoples, first by citing CIHR's growing financial investment in the field, and then by calling attention to the disparities in mortality and suicide rates, as well as cardiovascular disease between the Aboriginal and general populations. CIHR policies on Aboriginal health mirror NOSM's mandate to be socially accountable to the cultural diversity of Northern Ontario, including the Aboriginal populations of the region.

CIHR provides funding opportunities for health research related to biomedical, clinical, health systems services, and social, cultural, environmental and population health. ■

NOSM Supports Haitian Relief Efforts

On January 12, 2010, an earthquake measuring 7.0 destroyed much of the small island nation of Haiti. The resulting impact leveled buildings, killed over 200,000 people, and affected millions more across this tiny Caribbean country. NOSM learners, staff and faculty responded to the need for assistance by launching two fundraisers and by lending medical expertise to the people of Haiti.

The student initiative was led by several NOSM learners associated with the Global Health Interest Group, an advocacy organization that raises funds in support of causes related to global health. Learners raised \$1100 raffling tickets and printing, compiling, and selling reading packages that second-year students would require during their Integrated Community Experience (ICE) placements. These proceeds, matched dollar-for-dollar by the Government of Canada, were sent directly to Medecins sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders and their relief efforts in Haiti.

NOSM M.D. students in both the Sudbury and Thunder Bay chapters of the Global Health Interest Group regularly fundraise for health-related causes. This year they generated \$3,000 in support of various health organizations.

Student Amanda Moore was one of the principal organizers of the Haiti campaign who explained to *Northern Passages* the motivation for investing the time and energy in such initiatives. "I think that physicians and medical students are in a privileged, and thus well-suited, position to help bring about positive social change.

"I've been very fortunate in the benefits that I've been afforded, including the opportunity to learn medicine, and I think I should use these advantages to help bring about better and more equitable health for people who have been marginalized or discounted," she said.

Other organizers in the student-led drive were Sarah Penfold, Celia Sprague, Brienne Lowey-Bodkin, Katherine Bell, Jamei Eng, Zachary Veitch and Julie Zalan.

Staff and faculty also responded with enthusiasm. NOSM Assistant Professors, Dr. Jordi Cisa, and Dr. Wil Anderson, provided medical care to the citizens of this traumatized nation. West Campus staff members, Tracy Al-idrissi, Cathy Powell, and Anne Seeley, along with East Campus employee, Kimberley Larkin, organized fundraising efforts which generated \$656.50, an amount matched dollar-for-dollar and donated to the Red Cross relief efforts. ■

NOSM Faculty and Board Member Honoured

NOSM Board Member, Associate Professor, and long-time physician at the Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre, Dr. Dermot McLoughlin, has been presented with the Chris Cromarty Award for Leadership in honour of his effective team work, quality leadership, and significant contributions to the well being of the people of the Sioux Lookout region.

The award came as a surprise to the dedicated physician who expected to receive a 30-year service pin at a Celebration of People event. It was a fitting tribute to a health practitioner still known to spend evenings examining x-rays, conducting research, and publishing papers after 50 years of practice. NOSM Dean, Dr. Roger Strasser, commended McLoughlin for his extraordinary contribution to the well being of others and to the long-term effect his dedication to health care has had on the community as a whole. "We are honored to have such a dedicated practitioner as a NOSM board member and teacher, and to witness Dr. McLoughlin's tireless efforts in working for a healthier Northern Ontario."

McLoughlin has served as preceptor for NOSM and, prior to that, for the Northwestern Ontario Medical Program (NOMP). Among his professional acknowledgements are the John C. Sibley Award from McMaster University in honour of his outstanding contribution to health sciences education and research, and the Pope John XXIII Medallion for medical services to leprosy patients in Africa. McLoughlin has been a strong supporter of health care in First Nations communities. He is widely known as the Founding Director of the Basic Radiography Worker training program, which has been instrumental in improving health services for Aboriginal peoples throughout the North. ■

Harvard Professor Draws Attention to Health-Care Challenges of Vulnerable Populations



Dr. Harvey Makadon

On March 2, 2010, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine held a presentation in which visiting professor, Dr. Harvey Makadon, spoke on the challenges faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) people in accessing a level of health care equal to that of the general population.

Speaking from NOSM's East Campus in Sudbury to audience members in attendance and to participants in learning sites throughout Northern Ontario, Makadon proposed that historical bias toward LGBT groups by health providers and administrators can be addressed by altering attitudes and behaviours, and adopting a more inclusive approach.

To do this, he encourages physicians to get to know their patients, including making an effort to understand their patients' gender identities. This can be achieved in part by following the procedures of taking core comprehensive histories, becoming familiar with a patient's family life, avoiding judgments, and assuring confidentiality. In addition, he suggested mirroring a patient's language and speaking in gender-neutral pronouns and terms in order to break down possible barriers.

The session was organized by the Access AIDS Network with support from the Public Health Agency of Canada and Rainbow Health Ontario. ■

New Programs Heighten Incentives for Rural-Based Practitioners



NOSM Dean, Dr. Roger Strasser, Health Minister, Dr. Deb Matthews, and Thunder-Atikokan MPP, Bill Mauro

Good news was announced on Friday, March 5, 2010, when the Honourable Dr. Deb Matthews, Ontario Minister of Health and Long Term Care, announced the creation of two new physician recruitment and retention initiatives from NOSM's West Campus in Thunder Bay. These incentives significantly increase the size of grants to physicians who agree to practice in Northern and rural communities, and expand the range of communities in which Canadian and international medical graduates can fulfill their postgraduate return of service commitments.

"Under this new program, incentives will start at \$80,000 and reach a maximum of \$120,000. Every community in Northern Ontario, including the larger cities, will be eligible for the minimum incentive, which provides a huge improvement to health care in the North," Matthews said. Previously, physicians who agreed to practice in rural locations, with the exception of five major Northern Ontario cities (Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, Sudbury, and North Bay), were granted a minimum \$15,000 incentive for a four-year term of service.

The two programs are the result of changes made to the government's Underserved Area Program (UAP), which has since been retired and the funds redirected to these new ventures known as the HealthForceOntario (HFO) Northern and Rural Recruitment Retention Initiative (N3R Initiative), and the HFO Postgraduate Return of Service Program. Under the terms of the latter program, medical graduates agree to five years of service in a community in exchange for postgraduate training.

NOSM Dean, Dr. Roger Strasser, joined the dignitaries and NOSM faculty, staff, and supporters attending the Minister's announcement, and spoke to the importance of these incentives for improved health care.

"These programs demonstrate the commitment of the government to improving access to health care in Northern Ontario," he said, adding that the "fantastic news" complements NOSM's social accountability mandate to contribute to improving the health of the people and communities of the region. ■