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Northern Passages

Newsletter of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine

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School welcomes new class

With the arrival of the third class of first-year medical students this past August, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine is now home to 168 aspiring physicians.

As part of their journey the students toured the world famous Soo Locks, were treated to a barbecue in Marathon, and met physicians and community leaders all along the 1,000 km route.



As in past years, the new class of 56 medical students was welcomed at the two main campuses in Thunder Bay and Sudbury, and then treated to a bus tour of Northern Ontario. This pan-Northern tour began this year on the Laurentian University campus, and included stops in Sault Ste. Marie, Marathon and finally Thunder Bay.

In Thunder Bay the new students were the guests of honour at a dinner hosted by NOSM's Founding Dean Dr. Roger Strasser. Here they took their Hippocratic Oath before finally returning to their respective campuses to begin their studies.

NOSM's commitment to the communities and

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La grande séduction ... des médecins du Nord de l'Ontario 2^e symposium francophone de l'EMNO

À la différence du film *la Grande séduction*, personne n'a proposé de former une ligue de cricket! Des idées et initiatives autrement pertinentes ont circulées au symposium « *La grande séduction... des médecins du Nord de l'Ontario* ».

Tel était le thème du deuxième symposium francophone organisé par l'École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario, tenu les 21 et 22 septembre au

Suite en page 4



In the film *Seducing Doctor Lewis*, the villagers pretend (poorly) that they are all cricket fanatics in order to lure a prospective doctor. A recent NOSM symposium borrows the film's French title, but the strategies discussed were much more promising.

La grande séduction... des médecins du Nord de l'Ontario, NOSM's second francophone symposium, was held at Timmins' Cedar Meadows Resort,

Continued on p. 4

CCC Community: Muskoka region

As one of NOSM's most southerly partners, Huntsville and Bracebridge offer unique opportunities for the six students who are now living and learning as part of their Comprehensive Community Clerkship (CCC).

Huntsville has welcomed four medical students, while Bracebridge is hosting two.

The students are learning at the Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare sites in Bracebridge (South Muskoka Memorial Hospital site), and the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital site.

"We are truly proud to be a part of the NOSM family," says Barry Lockhart, CEO of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC).

MAHC is a multi-site healthcare organization created in 2005 through the amalgamation of South Muskoka Memorial Hospital and Algonquin Health Services.

MAHC includes the Burk's Falls and District Health Centre, Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge, and provides management services to Fairvern Nursing Home.

MAHC offers a wide range of services that include: 24-hour Emergency care, intensive care, surgical services, rehabilitation, diagnostic imaging, and cardio-respiratory services.

Just two hours by car north of Toronto, Muskoka extends from Georgian Bay in the west, to the northern tip of Lake

Couchiching in the south. Algonquin Provincial Park marks the east end of the region. Muskoka has just over 50,000 permanent residents, but swells by an additional 100,000 during the summer.

During their eight months in Bracebridge and Huntsville, students are being taught by local physicians and other

healthcare providers who are NOSM faculty members. Through this partnership, NOSM students are gaining valuable hands-on practical experience in these communities.

Dr. Roger Strasser, NOSM Founding Dean, says this kind of connection to the people, and communities of the North, is integral to the success of the CCC.

"The Northern Ontario School of Medicine is committed to building partnerships with the communities and health organizations of Northern Ontario," says Strasser.

"Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare, local physicians, other healthcare providers and other community members are welcomed partners."

In preparation for the students' arrival, meetings took place with local physicians, and other community members who now make up Muskoka's Local NOSM Group (LNG). This group of eight to twelve individuals are an important link between the Muskoka communities and the students.



The official welcoming of Muskoka into the CCC family. Among those participating in the announcement were (from left to right): Tony Clement, MP, Muskoka/Parry Sound; Claude Doughty, Mayor, Town of Huntsville; Barry Lockhart, CEO of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare; Dr. Roger Strasser, NOSM Founding Dean; and, Don Coates, Mayor, Town of Bracebridge.

Upcoming NOSM Symposia

Times: 12:00 – 13:30 Eastern, 11:00 – 12:30 Central

The NOSM Symposium Series consists of presentations provided by nationally and internationally recognized experts. Presenters are selected by the Heads of the Clinical Sciences, Medical Sciences and Human Sciences Divisions at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

The Division Heads identify presenters who promote the exchange of information on key topical issues, developments and trends in medicine and

medical education. The Symposium Series enables communities, students, academics and researchers to network and explore opportunities to collaborate. The NOSM Symposium sessions are open to the public and are presented live, via video conference and as webcasts. For further information go to www.normed.ca or contact Sherry Carlucci at 705-662-7257 or sherry.carlucci@normed.ca.

Thursday, October 18/07

Presenter: Dr. Roger Strasser, Dr. Joel Lanphear and Ian Peltier
Distributed Community Engaged Medical Learning

Thursday, November 15/07

Presenter: William G. Tholl, CEO, Canadian Medical Association

Thursday, December 13/07

Presenter: Roberta Ferrence Ph.D., Executive Director of the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit and Professor of Public Health Sciences, University of Toronto.

Thursday, January 17/08

Presenter: Dr. Robert Wollard, Royal Canadian Legion Professor and Head, UBC Department of Family Medicine

RoCS improves community selection process

The School's pan-Northern family residency program just got better, thanks to a new offering in this year's selection process.

For the first time, potential students in the Family Medicine Residents of the Canadian Shield (RoCS) program will be able to pre-select their principal community.

"We think this change will make our program even more attractive to potential residents," says Dr. Tom Crichton, Assistant Dean - Postgrad (Family Medicine). "This also makes our vision and commitment for a truly pan-Northern family residency program even clearer."

The Family Medicine Residents of the Canadian Shield (RoCS) is Canada's newest residency program. It is a pan-Northern program placing residents in a wide range of clinical settings under the supervision of practicing family physicians, specialist physicians and other allied health care

professionals.

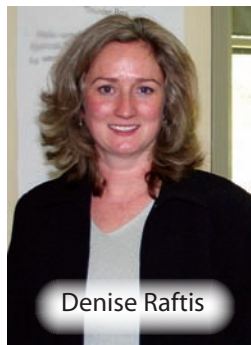
While RoCS is a new program, it builds on the long history of successful residency programs offered through the former Northwestern Ontario Medical Programme (NOMP) and Northeastern Ontario Medical Education Corporation (NOMEC). These programs are now integrated into one pan-Northern program.

With the new changes, when potential residents



The first annual Specialty Resident Retreat was held recently in Thunder Bay. This was the first event to bring specialty residents from all disciplines and all Northern regions together.

Dietetic program welcomes first class



Denise Raftis

This fall the School welcomes yet another charter class of students, this time as part of a new Northern Ontario Dietetic Internship Program (NODIP).

Denise Raftis is the Program Coordinator. She

says the approach of NODIP is the same as the School's MD program – to train professionals, in this case dietitians, who are interested in Northern Ontario.

"When people leave to go down south for their training they tend to stay in the south," she says. "We want to give people with the aptitude and the interest in Northern practice the skills they need to work here."

Of the 10 interns selected for this charter class, eight are from Northern Ontario, with the other two coming from rural areas.

The program is a joint initiative between the School and the NODIP Professional Advisory Committee. It includes multiple health-care facilities throughout Northern Ontario, and is funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care in Ontario. These include regional hospitals, public health

units, community health centres, long term care facilities, small rural hospitals, and First Nations communities.

The program will train ten dietitian interns annually, with Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, and Thunder Bay as the principal internship sites, supported by many other partners throughout Northern Ontario.

NOSM's Founding Dean, Dr. Roger Strasser, notes that dietitians in the North have been working for many years to establish a permanent internship program.

"The atmosphere at the launch was almost as enthusiastic as the start of the whole medical school," recalls Strasser. "It was quite amazing."

Raftis agrees, saying there have been pilot programs in the past, but thanks to NOSM, there is now a permanent financial and organizational structure in place.

"I really commend NOSM for taking this on," says Raftis. "It shows how committed the School is to interprofessional development, and to the communities we serve."

The ultimate goal of NODIP is to build the number of dietetic and nutrition professionals who are practicing in the North.

Raftis is a graduate of Guelph University's Nutrition Program and Victoria Hospital (London) Internship Program, and an "escapee" from southern Ontario.

apply to NOSM RoCS, they can now select one of five communities as their home-base of learning. The five sites are North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Thunder Bay or Timmins. In the past all five sites were part of the program, but residents chose their home base after acceptance, not before.

Crichton says the change came about based on feedback from residents, as well as from the communities and preceptors. He expects the new system will not only make RoCS more attractive to prospective residents, but will also enhance the communities themselves.

The change goes into effect this year. Canadian residents will be able to apply directly to each of the five communities through the Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS) system.

NOSM currently has spaces for 34 residents. This includes two for the new Community Medicine program, as well as two spots reserved for international students.

It's Your Newsletter!

Northern Passages is published quarterly and distributed to the broad NOSM community. If you have a story idea, or want to get the word out about an event, a milestone or an interesting development, please contact:

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La grande séduction ... suite

Cedar Meadows Resort de Timmins. Plus d'une centaine de délégués provenant du Nord de l'Ontario et des invités d'ailleurs au pays ont partagé leurs expertises et expériences sur le défi du recrutement d'étudiants, de résidents et de médecins, ainsi que de communautés francophones comme partenaires clés.

Le portrait brossé a été celui d'un effort complexe mais concerté, où de nombreux facteurs institutionnels et interpersonnels se conjuguent de manière à composer une stratégie régionale vaste et prometteuse.

La grande séduction ... continued

September 21st and 22nd.

Over a hundred delegates from Northern Ontario and guests from other parts of the country shared experiences and expertise in the field of recruitment of medical students, residents and practitioners, as well as the recruitment of communities as key partners in the accomplishment of NOSM's mandate.

The symposium provided an overview of a complex, but concerted array of considerations, where institutional and interpersonal factors come into play to produce a vast and promising regional strategy.



Une longue ovation a accueilli **Maureen Lacroix** à l'annonce que la bourse d'études de la communauté francophone porterait désormais son nom, en reconnaissance de son demi-siècle d'engagement en santé, notamment à titre de présidente de l'hôpital Laurentien. Dans son allocution, Madame Lacroix a évoqué des épisodes de sa longue carrière pour illustrer le constant défi du consensus. Dans un passé encore récent, a-t-elle dit, les minorités de tout genre ne bénéficiaient pas des égards qu'ils ont de nos jours. La présence de bénévoles francophones dans ces exercices est cruciale; or estime-t-elle, ceux-ci n'ont pas toujours été suffisamment nombreux.



Pour sa part, le docteur **Marc Blayney**, vice-doyen aux activités professionnelles à l'EMNO, a souligné comment le recrutement est favorisé par la sensibilisation culturelle intégrée aux modules d'études. Ceux-ci font place à des intervenants francophones, intègrent des profils de communautés bilingues et font même vivre des réalités culturelles. De plus, il a fait remarquer le progrès constant du recrutement de candidats francophones, qui est passé de 17 % en 2005 à 27 % en 2007.

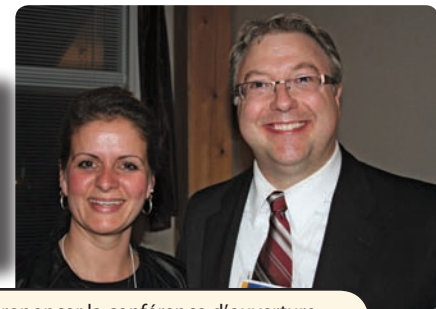


Denis Hubert, président du Collège Boréal, a annoncé qu'à compter de la rentrée 2008-2009, une bourse d'accessibilité d'une valeur de 15 000 \$ destinée à couvrir les droits de scolarité de la première année sera remise par le Collège Boréal et la Fondation du Collège Boréal à un nouvel étudiant de l'École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario issu des programmes du Collège Boréal.



En ouvrant l'événement, le doyen fondateur de l'EMNO, **Roger Strasser**, a souligné les progrès rapides qui témoignent de l'imputabilité sociale de l'École envers les francophones. À ce titre, il a évoqué l'aménagement des structures, du curriculum et de la recherche, le profil démographique des candidats admis et surtout, souligné-t-il, des nombreux partenariats communautaires.

Le président-directeur général de la Société Santé en français, **Hubert Gauthier**, a témoigné d'expériences de recrutement riches en leçons. Il a soutenu qu'il est essentiel que les jeunes qui proviennent de milieux minoritaires soient les plus susceptibles de retourner travailler dans leur milieu. Il indique qu'il est aussi primordial d'offrir de la formation le plus près possible des communautés d'origine. Alors, des établissements comme l'EMNO ont donc un rôle crucial à jouer. Par ailleurs, le succès en recrutement ira de soi quand les francophones seront reconnus comme des innovateurs à succès et que leur présence dans les institutions bilingues sera non seulement pleinement admise, mais source de fierté.



Le privilège de prononcer la conférence d'ouverture est allé à **François Boileau**, le nouveau Commissaire aux services en français de l'Ontario. Il en a profité pour rappeler divers acquis juridiques de la cause Montfort. Le droit à la qualité égale, dit-il, incite la fonction publique à l'innovation des services. Le droit à l'offre active établit l'intérêt d'inclure les francophones dès les premières étapes décisionnelles, de manière à assurer des programmes adéquats. De plus, il est désormais établi que des institutions francophones acquises ne peuvent pas être retirées. Toutefois, a-t-il rappelé, les droits seuls ne suffisent pas. Les solutions émergeront du milieu même. L'engagement communautaire demeure le facteur clé.

Veillez consulter le site Web de l'EMNO pour une couverture plus détaillée: www.normed.ca

School hosts many visitors from afar

If success is measured in the amount of attention one receives, then NOSM is already a medical school star. The number of delegates from beyond Northern Ontario's boundaries continue, with a veritable flood coming these last couple of months.

This recent deluge of visitors began in mid-September with a visit from Sister Elizabeth Davis of the Congregation of Sisters of Mercy of Newfoundland and Labrador. Davis is the Chairperson of the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation, President of the Medical Council of Canada, and a Board Member of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

Later in the month NOSM welcomed Dr. Nick Busing, Secretary of CACMS (Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools) and Dr. Barbara Barzansky, Interim Secretary of LCME (Liaison Committee on Medical Education). This was part of NOSM's ongoing accreditation process.

Still in September, the School opened its doors to Dr. David Campbell, President of the Australian College of Rural and Remote

Medicine. This is the first medical college in the world solely focused on rural and remote medicine.

And finally for the month, NOSM hosted the Health Council of Canada. Council members include people from the federal, provincial and territorial governments.

In early October the School, and the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research at Laurentian University, received a delegation from Norway. The 18-member group represented the University of Tromsø, the National Centre for Rural Medicine, government health administrators, and rural practitioner.



Dr. Greg Ross, NOSM's Associate Dean - Research, leading a tour of the School's laboratory facilities for the delegation from Norway.

The Norwegians came to learn about NOSM's distributed education model, and to tour some of the School's facilities. The group also visited five Northern Ontario communities where NOSM students are learning as part of their medical education.

NOSM faculty are recognized by their peers

Faculty members at NOSM continue to be recognized for their outstanding contributions to community health, medical education and research.

Dr. Peter Hutten-Czapski is a family physician in Haileybury and



Dr. Hutten-Czapski (right) is presented with the award by Jan Kasperski, CEO of the Ontario College of Family Physicians, during a ceremony at the School's East Campus in Sudbury.

clinical faculty member of NOSM. He also holds a seat on the School's Academic Council, and the Board of Directors. Hutten-Czapski has been named "family physician of the year" for the North by the Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP).

According to the college this award, "recognizes the outstanding dedication of family physicians to their patients, their community, and their profession." Each year the OCFP award six family physicians (one from each region of the province) with the title of "Family Physician of the Year."

Dr. Len Kelly of Sioux Lookout is an Associate Professor of Family Medicine. He was recently awarded the D. M. Robb Research Grant by the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC). This award is given in recognition of Kelly's outstanding work in Aboriginal palliative care.

Dr. Margaret Munro, Assistant Professor of Family Medicine based in Thunder Bay, was recognized by the CFPC with an Award of Excellence. These awards recognize outstanding effort and contribution to family medicine.

Dr. Todd Young is a Family Medicine Lecturer based in Hornepayne. He receives the Hollister King Rural Family Practice Scholarship for his work with methadone therapy and the treatment of addictions and chronic pain in rural family medicine.

Dr. Lionel Marks de Chabris is Assistant Professor - Emergency Medicine in Sudbury. The CFPC awarded him with the Janus Continuing Professional Development/Continuing Medical Education Scholarship for his work on chronic pain management.

Clubs donate to NOSM

Community organizations and service clubs across the North have always known that the whole is always greater than the sum of the individual parts. No where is this more true when it comes to giving.

A number of clubs and teams across the North are getting together to make

"You really can do great things when you come together as a group," says Gail Brescia, NOSM's Development Manager. "This is a great way for individuals to get involved to support the School."

In most cases club donations go to creating endowed bursaries. These bursaries can carry a permanent name, being a living legacy for years to come.

In recent months the School has received donations from: the Catholic Women's League of Canada, the Bourse Richelieu du Sudbury, and the Temiskaming District Masons.

In another case, the community of Terrace Bay is pooling their resources and creating an endowment fund in honour of Dr. Keith Wilkes; a recently departed, and much loved, community doctor. In Sault Ste. Marie Algoma Steel's annual "Bring a Doc Home" Charity Hockey Tournament is all set to run, with



[TOP] Temiskaming District Masons and the Masonic Foundation of Ontario Bursary, with (left) Gail Brescia, Bill Sweet, Lester Cudmore and Mike Doody.

[MID] The Catholic Women's League of Canada, with (left) Sandra Wieckowski, Gail Brescia, and Sylvia Kayzer.

[RIGHT] Bourse Richelieu du Sudbury, with Jean-Yves Robert, Gail Brescia, Gratien Allaire, and Danielle Barbeau-Rodrigue.



group donations to the School, often to commemorate a person, or celebrate a community dream.

proceeds going to NOSM's bursary fund.

"We are pleased to accept these donations on behalf of NOSM's students – students who really need our support," she says.

Graduating medical students potentially face debt loads of over \$100,000. This makes the donations, be they large or small, absolutely vital.

For information on giving please contact: Gail Brescia, Development Manager; phone: (807) 766-7433, Gail.Brescia@NorMed.ca, or go to the website: www.normed.ca.

CCC Community: Fort Frances

The Town of Fort Frances has a long and proud history as the hub the of the Rainy River District. As of September it is also home-base for two of NOSM's third-year Comprehensive Community Clerkship (CCC) students.

The students are living in Fort Frances for the entire academic year, with La Verendrye Hospital and Nelson Medicine Professional Corp. (formally the Fort Frances Clinic) being the main base of learning.

Wayne Woods is President and CEO of Riverside Health Care Facilities Inc. which operates the hospital. He says having students fully integrated into communities such as Fort Frances is key to the development of physicians who understand and appreciate Northern medical practice.

Dr. Jason Shack, the Physician Lead in Fort Frances, agrees. He says the students are learning by fully participating in the health care of the community.

"Patients are going to see them as part of our day-to-day clinical practice," says Shack. "They're going to see them in emerg, they're going to see them in the hospital, they're going to see them in the operating room, they're going to see them in the office with us."

The community of Fort Frances numbers close to 9,000, with a regional population of nearly 20,000. The town is the oldest European settlement west of Lake Superior, with the first fort being erected in 1688.

The site was a key part of the fur trade route, going under various names until the year 1830 when the governor of the Hudson Bay Company, Sir George Simpson, visited the post with his wife, Lady Frances Ramsay Simpson. In honour of the lady's visit, the post was renamed "Fort Frances."

During their eight months in Fort Frances NOSM's students are being taught by local physicians and other healthcare providers who are faculty members of the medical school.

Cont. from p. 1

New class reflects the North

cultures of Northern Ontario begins with its recruitment process. This year, the School received 2274 applications, a ten per cent increase from the number of applications received in each of the last two years. Out of this number, a total of 408 were selected for an interview.

A key part of the School's accountability mandate is to have class profiles reflect the cultural diversity of Northern Ontario. This year's class achieves this once again, with:

- 91% of the new students being from Northern Ontario
- 9% who are self-identified as Aboriginals
- 27% who are self-identified as Francophones

Faculty profile: Dr. Wayne Bruce

For some, a career is a calling – a vocation if you will. For Dr. Wayne Bruce it was all that, along with the combination of an insightful guidance counsellor and questionable professional basketball skills.

"I played college and amateur basketball, and I was pretty good, but eventually I could see it wasn't going to make a very wise career choice," says Bruce. "I liked science and math so I went to the counsellor and said 'I want a job with good career prospects.' He suggested lab medicine, so that's how I got started."

No matter how it began, Bruce found his profession, and began a distinguished career that has now led him to his new role as NOSM's Associate Dean of Continuing Health Professional Education.

Before joining NOSM, Bruce was the Director of Continuing Medical Education and Outreach (CMEO) and a Professor of Pathology at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Prior to this he was Director of Laboratory Education for North Dakota (LEND) at the University of North Dakota.

But perhaps most importantly, at least from a Northern Ontario perspective, Bruce likes to curl.

"My dad always liked to curl, and he'd take me along with him," says Bruce. "So I guess you can say I've been interested in the game since I was a wee tyke."

Not surprisingly, however, Bruce has not had much chance to work on his sweeping or take-outs in a while. He's been far too busy working with a wide variety of organizations, including the Specialty Disease Management Services in Jacksonville, Florida, and the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Through it all, he has maintained a strong history and interest in rural health and has distinguished himself in creating and delivering innovative and creative programs through a variety of distance learning methods.

And while he has spent his professional career south of the border, his heart, as they say, is firmly lodged in Northern Ontario. For more than a decade he and his family have owned a home in Minaki, north of Kenora in Northwestern Ontario.

He and his wife both enjoy getting out in all seasons, and that includes winter. "I love cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and ice fishing," says Bruce. All of which makes him

perfect for NOSM.

Along with his love of the North, Bruce brings a wealth of experience and skill to his new job. He is now responsible for all aspects of planning, implementing and evaluating continuing health

professional education, including continuing medical education (CME) and continuing professional development (CPD) for physicians, other health professionals, health professional education programs, Interprofessional Education, and Faculty Development training and activities of the School.

These programs will be designed to complement and expand on the School's existing undergraduate and postgraduate education programs, consistent with NOSM's key academic principles.

Bruce is a graduate of both the University of Minnesota and the University of North Dakota. He received his Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.



HIRC Highlights (Health Information Resource Centre)

The HIRC is pleased to welcome two new staff members. Donna Brown, Library Technician on the West campus, joined the HIRC in August. Donna comes to us from Confederation College.

In September, Marian Diamond joined HIRC as temporary Administrative Assistant on the West campus. Marian has taken over the position from Lori Adamko, who has moved to Facilities on the West campus. Welcome Donna and Marian.

Keep watching for the new and improved HIRC website, soon to be launched. The fresh interface offers improved navigation, a 'news' archive, and additional information about our resources and services.

www.normed.ca/library, askhirc@normed.ca
East: 705-662-7282, West: 807-766-7375

School partners to bring first geriatric care conference to Northern Ontario

Caring for an aging population is a growing challenge of Canada's health-care system, and nowhere is it more important than in Northern Ontario, which is aging faster than both the national and provincial average.

This fact makes the first pan-Northern geriatric care conference, being held in late October, all the more vital to the people and communities of the region.

The conference is sponsored by a team of partners that include the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. Sherry Carlucci is Faculty Development Coordinator at the School, and is one of the key organizers of this ground-breaking event.

She says the two and a half day conference is aimed at all medical and allied health-care professionals who work with older adults and seniors. It takes place in Sudbury, October 24th to 26th, at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Centre.

"This conference is unique in that it is aimed at bringing the whole range of health-care professionals together," she explains. "We have an incredible array of sessions and speakers. There will be something for everyone."

Some of the conference sessions include Sexuality and Aging, Older Adult: Gambling Prevention Project, Nutrition Challenges in Healthy Seniors and Managing pain in Vulnerable Seniors, just to name a few.

For more information please contact Sherry Carlucci at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, phone: 705-662-7257, email: sherry.carlucci@normed.ca

Handbook helps School learn from Elders

Aboriginal Elders play a vital and vibrant role in their communities, and in the School itself. Now a new handbook promises to make it even easier for everyone at NOSM to benefit from Aboriginal Elders, be it in their personal, academic or professional lives.

Ian Peltier is Acting Director of the Aboriginal Affairs Unit at NOSM. He says this new Aboriginal Elders Handbook is a unique tool developed for the use of students, staff and faculty at the School.

"We plan to distribute it to everyone at NOSM," says Peltier. "It's going to be straightforward and functional so that everyone can find a way to utilize Elders throughout the whole institution."

Peltier says people often come to his unit with questions about involving Elders in ceremonies, or to seek their advice and input. "But a lot of people don't know how to approach an Elder, or even whether it is appropriate to ask."

These are the kinds of questions the

handbook is designed to answer. It will help people understand the process of approaching an Elder, explaining how to do it in an appropriate and respectful manner.

The idea for the handbook came out of an Elders conference attended by Peltier and others from his unit in February, 2007 at Trent University. While other longer narrative-type texts exist, it was clear from the conference there was nothing like a straightforward handbook.

"This really is meant as a tool that can be used by everyone at NOSM, and perhaps even beyond," explains Peltier.

Some of the sections covered in the handbook include:

- Personal characteristics of Aboriginal Elders
- Roles of NOSM Aboriginal Elders, and when & where they do it
- NOSM Aboriginal Elders and their importance to the School
- How NOSM Aboriginal Elders are integrated into NOSM



School 'a hit' at the Canadian Aboriginal Science and Technology Society conference

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine's CBM 106 Integrated Community Experience presentation was a hit at the recent Canadian Aboriginal Science and Technology Society (CASTS) Conference.

"A lot of people were incredibly impressed with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine," says Ian Peltier, Acting Director, Aboriginal Affairs. "No other school does an Aboriginal community placement to the extent we do. It is a part of the overall curriculum."

NOSM's ICE 106 (Aboriginal community placement) gives all 56 NOSM first-year students an opportunity to experience an Aboriginal community over a four-week period. They do this while still continuing with their clinical activities, working on the final module of the year, the musculoskeletal system.

Peltier says their presentation's success gave them an opportunity

to network with others at the conference, held Oct. 3 to 5 in Calgary. He, along with Janet Napash and Sam Senecal, NOSM's two Regional

Aboriginal Community Coordinators, fielded a lot of questions and inquiries about the ICE 106 Aboriginal community placement.

"We had people speak to us and just say 'Wow,'" explains Napash. "They really wanted to talk about what we do here at the School."

Senecal has already received positive response from the conference; a potential Aboriginal medical student called him shortly after he arrived back at NOSM.

"When I explained NOSM's program to him, he loved it," says Senecal. "He will probably apply for the 2008/2009 intake."

While at the conference, which was attended by 300 to 400 people including Aboriginal doctors and scientists, the three Aboriginal Affairs Unit members received invitations from the University of Manitoba and the First Nations University of Canada to speak to their students.

