



# ALL NATIONS HEALTH PARTNERS

ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM

## PARTNER TABLE MEETING SUMMARY – MARCH 2026

### Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders

*The ANHP OHT Partner Table engaged in a continued discussion of mental health, addictions and substance use disorder services and supports offered by partner organizations in the Kenora region:*

- **Lake of the Woods District Hospital** – Denise Forsyth, LWDH Senior Director of Mental Health Services and ANHP OHT Co-Chair Cheryl O’Flaherty presented information on the hospital-based Substance Use Disorder Integrated Care Pathway (SUD ICP), highlighting the unprecedented collaboration across organizations, including CMHAK, FIREFLY, KCA and associated treatment programs.  
It was noted that the continued, severe shortage of post-treatment and transitional housing, as well as ongoing workforce gaps in the Kenora area, continue to hinder the work of the participating organizations.

### Community Patient Advisory Council (CPAC) Northern Health Travel Grant Advocacy

- **Community Patient Advisory Council (CPAC)** Co-Chair Rita Boutette provided background and history of the CPAC advocacy efforts to enact change in how the Northern Health Travel Grant (NHTG) provides financial assistance for medically-necessary travel in Northern Ontario.  
Travel for healthcare in the North is often non-discretionary and poses safety, financial, and equity challenges. The CPAC, working in partnership with patient advisory committees from several other northern OHTs, identified root causes, including: geographic isolation & access to care; highway safety; inadequate reimbursement; complex application processes; emotional, ethical, and cultural impacts; and systemic disadvantages for rural and First Nations communities  
The CPAC began work on the initiative last May, with public engagement, and the development of an advocacy video, culminating in a draft briefing note, presented to the Partner Table. It advocates for a three-stage approach to provide adequate compensation, improve navigation of the system, and create a patient advisory group specific to the NHTG.

### Strategic Next Steps

- **Travel Grant Advocacy:** Partner organizations of the ANHP OHT will provide support for the further development of the NHTG briefing note, including intersections with the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program for First Nations and Inuit.

**Next Partner Table Meeting: April 1st, 2026**