

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **INNOVATIVE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING MODEL BRINGS EXPERTS TOGETHER TO HELP HOMELESS**

**North Bay, ON:** Nipissing District's innovative transitional housing complex on Chippewa Street, known as Northern Pines, brings together the expertise of the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB), Crisis Centre North Bay (CCNB) and North Bay Regional Health Centre (NBRHC), with wrap-around services on-site to help break the chronic homelessness cycle.

The DNSSAB recognized years ago that the complex needs of those experiencing chronic homelessness require more than a meal and a roof, and effective change required a creative way to bring health supports into the Northern Pines model. With these key partnerships in place, Northern Pines is at the provincial leading edge, bringing much needed on-site medical, psychological, and emotional supports to tenants. Community collaboration is instrumental to the successful reduction of homelessness and the vision to end chronic homelessness.

The District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB) announced today that it is working in partnership with two key community partners at Northern Pines: Crisis Centre North Bay (CCNB) and North Bay Regional Health Centre (NBRHC).

"As the service system manager for housing in Nipissing District, DNSSAB applauds the partners' willingness to participate in this unique model and for arriving at a creative, suitable plan to provide wrap-around services to clients", says Mark King, DNSSAB Chairperson.

The Northern Pines delivery model integrates Health Quality Standards, based on established scientific methods and best available evidence, with supportive housing best practices and offers well-defined pathways to care, including on-site treatment for mental health and addictions.

CCNB is the contracted operator of Northern Pines and has worked for decades in the community providing shelter services and programming for people experiencing homelessness. CCNB delivers housing services at Northern Pines, through a residential support team that offers a structured, supportive and supervised living space. Staff are on-site 24/7 to provide supports to residents including independent life skills training, one-on-one counselling,

cooperative living skills, nutrition education, meal planning and preparation, community awareness, and structured tenancy.

“No one organization can solve the issues surrounding homelessness, mental health, and addictions – we need to be working together. Our clients need integrated care with community supports in one environment. We are excited to be a part of a system that is going to combine health and housing, providing a much-needed wrap around approach for our community’s most vulnerable,” says Sue Rinneard, Executive Director, Crisis Centre North Bay.

The North Bay Regional Health Centre has a strong history of innovative programs and practical experience providing mental health support in our community. One of its two Assertive Community Treatment Teams (ACTT) will operate out of Northern Pines. ACTT is a multidisciplinary team of professionals, led by a psychiatrist, providing coverage in the community 16 hours per day, 7 days per week with after-hours on-call coverage.

In addition to ACTT, NBRHC will provide on-site addiction supports on a scheduled monthly basis, through its mobile Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) clinic.

“We’re proud to team up with the Crisis Centre and DNSSAB to improve mental health service efficiency and access for people experiencing homelessness,” says Paul Heinrich, President and CEO, NBRHC. “This collaboration between community partners is an example of making our current investments work better for the people who need it most in a location that best meets their needs.”

DNSSAB’s Community Paramedicine Program will also provide services on-site at Northern Pines. Paramedics will be able to offer health assessments, point-of-care testing, vaccinations, and blood work to residents at Northern Pines to improve overall physical health. In many cases, access to the Community Paramedicine Program is the first point of contact for health services for homeless individuals.

### About Northern Pines

There are three distinct, secure living quarters within Northern Pines, designed to accommodate 60 people according to the level of support and care required. People can progress from high to low supports, and then through the community housing continuum. More information on Northern Pines can be found on the [DNSSAB website](#).



“The needs of people experiencing homelessness vary from those with complex health challenges, to those who simply need a safe place to stay on their journey out of homelessness,” says King. “These important health supports provided by NBRHC, along with

CCNB programming and other housing wrap around services, will help to stabilize residents and connect them to other resources and services in the community.”

Building on this work, DNSSAB recently issued a Request for Proposal to retain the services of a consultant to assess the current homelessness situation in municipalities throughout Nipissing District and to make recommendations on how community services can move forward to respond to the identified needs. The assessment will review current services for unsheltered people across the district, including the low barrier shelter in North Bay and street outreach services, and consider the need for a homelessness hub, as well as offer best practices in these areas.

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