



Registered Nurses'  
Association of Ontario

L'Association des  
infirmières et infirmiers  
autorisés de l'Ontario

## **RNAO Rural, Remote and Northern Area Nursing Task Force**

### **Local Innovations Inventory**

#### 1) Community-Based Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Lakehead University (in collaboration with Confederation College) offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Community-Based) program, allowing students to complete the majority of their studies in one of the following communities: Dryden, Fort Frances, Kenora, or Sioux Lookout. In this full-time program, students complete all theory courses and labs in the community in which they are based. The majority of all clinical work is completed in the community as well; however, some travel is required. The program uses the same curriculum as the four-year on-campus BScN at Lakehead and the delivery is done through videoconferencing facilities at Confederation College. The electives can be taken online through Continuing Education and Distributed Learning at Lakehead.

The second cohort is now complete with 18 graduates. Recruitment for the third cohort which starts in September 2014 is underway.

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/undergraduate-programs/thunder-bay/nursing/node/1571>

[http://contactnorth.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/innovation-practices/access\\_to\\_graduate\\_programs\\_at\\_lakehead.pdf](http://contactnorth.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/innovation-practices/access_to_graduate_programs_at_lakehead.pdf)

#### 2) Native Nurses Entry Program (NNEP)

The Native Nurses Entry Program (NNEP) has been operating since 1987 as a nine-month preparatory on-campus program that offers education and support for Aboriginal students before entering the Degree Nursing program at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay.

Representatives from Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) first approached Lakehead University's School of Nursing in 1983 to explore the feasibility of establishing a program to prepare Anishnawbe people for the nursing profession.

In May 1985, the Medical Services Branch of Health Canada, First Nations leaders and representatives from the education and health sectors were brought together for a two-day consultation workshop to dialogue about the issues, challenges and obstacles to Aboriginal people's entry into nursing. The result was the initiation of NNEP in January 1987.

The need for nurses, particularly for remote Aboriginal communities in Northwestern Ontario, is acute. Lakehead University is the closest place for this education. As well, Thunder Bay is a service center for much of the region and many northern people are accustomed to travelling to Thunder Bay for health services.

The NNEP consists of four academic courses (English, chemistry, biology, math) as well as three specialty courses, and follows the nine-month academic year. Every effort is made to incorporate cultural teachings within the curriculum content whenever possible. To date, NNEP has graduated 172 students, who have come to Lakehead University primarily from northern Ontario communities such as Sandy Lake, Muskrat Dam, Deer Lake, Pic River, Gull Bay, Moose Factory, AnimbigooZaagi'igan, Seine River, Flying Post, Pic River, Dalles, Aroland, Moose Cree, Niibinamik, Kitigan Zibi, Lac Des Mille Lac, Couchiching, Kingfisher, Bearskin Lake, Fort William and Round Lake. From this group, 65 students have graduated with a BScN, 19 students have went on to complete a General BA, 6 have completed a Master program, 1 has gone on to Medical School, and quite a number have utilized the NNEP as a stepping stone to become RPN's, PSW's, Social Work, Psychology, Native Family Worker, Native Addictions Worker, Chief, etc.

The program is well developed, preparing Aboriginal students for the rigours of Lakehead University's four-year BScN program. The BScN curriculum embraces Primary Health Care and the social determinants of health as frameworks to understand the health experiences of all people, including Aboriginal people.

With our focus on northern, rural and remote health care, our graduates are equipped to work in Northwestern Ontario in a variety of settings, including nursing stations. Most, if not all of the NNEP/BScN graduates are working with Aboriginal people to support their health goals. This degree also allows them to pursue further education towards a graduate degree in nursing or the Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioner credential.

Program activities are overseen by the NNEP Advisory Committee, which consists of representation from Lakehead's School of Nursing, First Nations Inuit Health Branch of Health Canada (FNIHB), NAN, and Ogimaawin – Aboriginal Management Council, the NNEP Manager, Aboriginal Nurses, past NNEP Graduates, and the program Elder. Funding comes from Health Canada and the Ontario government's Aboriginal Post-Secondary Student Fund.

### #3) Confederation College Practical Nursing Program

Confederation College offers its practical nursing program through regional campuses and video conferencing: <http://www.confederationc.on.ca/practicalnursing>