



# De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre

*We're Taking Care of Each Other Amongst Ourselves.*



## **The Campaign Trail May 2015**

### **Campaign Launch**

On May 5, 2015, De dwa da des nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre launched its capital campaign in both the Brantford and Hamilton Communities. The events were attended by Board Members, Capital Planning Adhoc and Quality Committee Members, Staff, Community Partners, Community Members and the media. The local newspapers in both communities featured articles in the paper.

### **Brantford City Planning**

Jo-Ann Mattina and I met with Greg Dowark, General Manager, City Services for the City of Brantford. During this meeting, I provided an update on the programs and services provided by the Aboriginal Health Centre and the status of our capital planning project. Staff are in the process of scheduling a follow up meeting with Greg Dowark and the Planning Director for the city of Brantford.

### **Hamilton City Planning**

A meeting was held with Glen Norton (City Planner, City of Hamilton), Bill Curan (Local Developer), Kevin Sulewski, Jo-Ann Mattina and I to discuss land opportunities in Hamilton. During this meeting, I provided an update on the programs and services provided by the Aboriginal Health Centre and the status of our capital planning project.

### **Staff Engagement**

PRISM Partners will be meeting with the Management Team on May 25, 2015, to understand the current programs and services that are provided at the Aboriginal Health Centre, what program and services we should/need to be providing and what struggles/barriers we are facing. The information gathered from this meeting will begin to inform the Stage 0 - Pre-Capital Submission.

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## NEWS BRANTFORD-BRANT

# New native health centre eyed



By Michelle Ruby, Brantford Expositor  
Tuesday, May 5, 2015 7:43:46 EDT PM



Constance McKnight is executive director of the Aboriginal Health Centre. (Brian Thompson / The Expositor)

Aboriginal prayer, drumming and dance officially marked the planning of a new home for the Aboriginal Health Centre.

Those connected with the centre gathered on Tuesday at the T.B. Costain/SC Johnson Community Centre for a "capital launch" of the proposed building.

A proposal for the project -- and a similar one to be built in Hamilton -- will soon be prepared for the Ministry of Health in the hope of securing funding.

There has been no potential site selected for the new Brantford centre and executive director Constance McKnight said the cost has yet to be determined.

Consultants have been hired to assess needs, determine costs and draw plans for a new facility. A fundraising campaign also will be launched.

"We're at the pre-capital stage," said McKnight.

"We're creating a proposal. It will be a three- to five-year process before construction begins."

McKnight said the centre, which provides western and traditional medicine and services, has outgrown its current space at 36 King St. where it has been located for about six years.

"The building is more than 100 years old," said McKnight. "We're at the stage that we can't retrofit it any further."

McKnight said they have about 1,000 patients and provide service to nearly 3,000 people who are of aboriginal descent, First Nations, Metis and Inuit. The centre provides "culturally appropriate" health-care programs, offering clients a choice of traditional healing or Western medicine, or a combination of both.

Physicians and nurse practitioners provide primary health services, along with mental health support, advocacy, outreach and health promotion, and education services.

Lack of room at the King Street centre forced the organization to rent space on Colborne Street for health promotion activities. Another health centre staff member works from the Brantford Native Housing building on Colborne.

McKnight said a new facility would allow everyone to be under one roof. It would also enable the centre to expand the programs it offers, some of which were discontinued when Pine Tree Native Centre of Brant closed about a decade ago.

"At the end of the day we'd like to have a facility that makes aboriginal people proud to own it and the people of Brantford proud to house it."

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## Aboriginal Health Centre needs bigger digs

*Nicole O'Reilly*

Hamilton Spectator | 12 hours ago

The De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre is looking for new homes in Hamilton and Brantford after outgrowing its existing facilities.

The centre, which offers a mix of traditional healing and western medicine, officially launched its capital planning campaign at events in the two cities Tuesday.

Community members, centre employees and representatives from partner agencies gathered in prayer, song and dance and with a traditional lesson at Honouring the Circle on Rosedene Avenue in Hamilton in the afternoon.

Details of where the new health centres will be located and what they will look like are yet to be decided, but board chair Pat Mandy called the launch of the campaign — with the slogan "Building on our roots" — a major step forward.

The plans are a "new beginning" said the centre's executive director, Constance McKnight. She described De dwa da dehs nye>s, which means "taking care of each other amongst ourselves," as a place of community, refuge, learning, healing and sharing.

It's a long path forward, said project leader Susan Conner, a consultant with PRISM Partners Inc. The key will be building a compelling case for funding to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, she told the crowd, later adding that the price tag will be in the millions.

They are planning a community feedback session for late June and expect to submit a proposal to the ministry as early as the end of July, Conner said.

The centre services roughly 1,500 clients a year in everything from primary health care to spiritual healing and mental health and addiction services.

Hamilton's site at 678 Main St. E. is an aged, three-level brick building with significant space and structural issues.

Architect Brian Porter of Two Row Architect told the crowd they will have to prove to the province that simply renovating the spaces is not an option.

"It's like your favourite pair of blue jeans in high school that you just can't fit into anymore," he said.

Clinical services manager Angela Naveau says when she started with the centre about 11 years ago, they were operating out of a trailer at the site on King Street in Brantford.

In an interview, she said she's excited to see how far they have come.

Naveau was part of a team from Aboriginal Health Centres across the province who visited a centre in Anchorage, Ala., about a year ago.

That centre, the Southcentral Foundation, is heavily client-driven, Naveau said, adding that this is the dream for the new facilities in Hamilton and Brantford.

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