

MEDIA RELEASE



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Northwestern Health Unit celebrates 75th anniversary with year-long campaign

Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) is celebrating 75 years of local public health. The anniversary is being honoured throughout 2023 with events and contests and a local public health matters campaign.

Over the past 75 years, the health unit has grown from six staff in 1948 to 160 staff in 2022. At first the agency served only the Kenora area but by 1968 it had expanded to include all the communities in its current catchment area. The agency is unique when compared to many other health units in the province, as they serve about 82,000 people within a 171,288 square kilometre area. The vast distance between communities and the region's sparse population has driven the agency to be nimble, efficient, and innovative. Many of NWHU's services focus on increasing access to ensure our region's residents have the opportunity to be healthy.

Public health plays an important role in keeping our communities healthy and safe. "This is a year to recognize the achievements of public health – safe water, vaccine preventable diseases, tobacco-free spaces, and even seat belts all stem from the efforts of public health," says Dr. Kit Young Hoon, Medical Officer of Health at NWHU.

Leaders at NWHU commend past and present staff for their hard work over the past 75 years. "I am honoured to be a leader at Northwestern Health Unit. Our agency has been resilient and dedicated over the past 75 years and our staff, programming, and communities fill me with pride every day," says Marilyn Herbacz, Chief Executive Officer at NWHU.

To celebrate the milestone with residents, NWHU is hosting a local event each month in one of their local offices. At these events, community members will get a chance to meet health unit staff, enjoy refreshments, and enter draws to win prizes.

For more information on the 75th anniversary events and draws, visit: <https://www.nwhu.on.ca/about-us/75-years-of-local-public-health/>.

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