



Nishnawbe Aski Nation  
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## **NEWS RELEASE**

Thursday November 14, 2013

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **THE REVEREND TOMMY BEARDY MEMORIAL WEE CHE HE WAYO GAMIK FAMILY TREATMENT CENTRE CELEBRATES ACCREDITATION**

**THUNDER BAY:** Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Harvey Yesno today joined with representatives of The Reverend Tommy Beardy Memorial Wee Che He Wayo Gamik Family Treatment Centre (Sioux Lookout Family Treatment Centre), community leaders and health officials to celebrate the centre's accreditation designation by the Canadian Accreditation Council.

"On behalf of Chiefs and First Nations across Nishnawbe Aski it is a pleasure to recognize this milestone achievement and I congratulate everyone involved for their tireless efforts to make this dream a reality," said Grand Chief Harvey Yesno. "This facility is unique as it treats the entire family and is recognized as a leader in community-based and culturally appropriate healing for our people. We are very pleased to support their efforts."

The Family Treatment Centre is located in Muskrat Dam First Nation, a remote community along the Severn River approximately 370 kilometres north of Sioux Lookout. It offers a six-week phased residential program that provides support and guidance to substance abusers and their families to understand and overcome addiction through the development of a strong spiritual base, the understanding of traditional values and beliefs and the development of attitudes and skills that will help them deal with changes within the community.

The centre can accommodate six families at a time and treats approximately 80 clients each year. It accepts referrals from all of NAN's 49 First Nations and has also accepted clients from Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

"It took a tremendous amount of teamwork and support from First Nations across NAN to reach this milestone and we couldn't have done it without them," said Wee Che He Wayo Gamik Family Treatment Centre Board of Directors Chairperson Ronnie Beaver. "Accreditation supports our goal to provide the best services possible for the families who come to us for healing. This is significant because the uniqueness of our program is that we treat the entire family, not just the person seeking treatment, in familiar surroundings in culturally appropriate manner. There is no other program like this anywhere."

The development of the Family Treatment Centre began in the 1970s as First Nations in the Sioux Lookout district explored options for culturally appropriate addiction treatment closer to home. It evolved from a resolution passed by Sioux Lookout District Chiefs mandating a family-centred residential program that would allow entire families to heal together and have a positive impact on the community. The centre was incorporated in 1989 and officially opened on October 17, 1991.

*Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty No. 5 – an area covering two thirds of the province of Ontario in Canada.*

***For more information please contact:***

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