



Centre for Pulmonary Rehabilitation Expanding Services Free of Charge for Patients

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(NORTH BAY) - The Centre for Pulmonary Rehabilitation (CPR), which operates out of The Village at Canadore College, is announcing the expansion of pulmonary rehabilitation services for patients in North Bay and surrounding areas. Rehabilitation services will now be offered both virtually or in person and will feature the same exercises and educational programs to improve muscle strength and respiratory management for patients with stable chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a common lung disease causing restricted airflow and breathing problems. The expanded services will be available to patients free of charge.

A survey by Health Quality Ontario showed a severe shortage in pulmonary rehabilitation resources in the province.

“Currently, only one to two percent of COPD patients in Ontario have access to pulmonary rehabilitation,” said Dr. Maya DeZoysa, Respiriologist and Director of Pulmonary Rehabilitation at the CPR. “Considering how much of an impact pulmonary rehabilitation can have on breathing and improving symptoms for those with COPD, increasing the availability in North Bay is significant!”

The Centre has been providing pulmonary rehabilitation services locally for 18 years, but a lack of funding has made it challenging to meet community needs. Fortunately, a recent collaboration between the CPR and the Nipissing Wellness Ontario Health Team (NWOHT) is allowing this significant expansion of pulmonary rehabilitation to include both virtual and community-based programs; both are eight-week programs with two sessions per week.

“Nipissing Wellness Ontario Health Team is committed to enhancing access to best practice care for all who live with chronic conditions such as COPD,” said Wendy Smith, Executive Lead, Transformation and Strategy. “Rehabilitation is a non-invasive self-management approach to COPD that has been proven to enhance quality of life.”

“As a collective, organizations within NWOHT are working together with Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health to provide the resources necessary to improve the lives of our local population. This is one of many initiatives that we have embarked on together,

and we look forward to continued opportunities to support our local community,” Smith said.

“Most patients who are referred for pulmonary rehabilitation have a hard time walking, even for 5 minutes,” said Tammy Draper, Registered Respiratory Therapist and President of CPR. “Most are unsure of how to manage during a “flare up” or they don’t understand what COPD is; they are only told that they have it. We empower the patient with 12 hours of education and strengthening, helping to reduce the symptoms of COPD.”

“Most people with COPD have had to give up things they love such as hunting, fishing, walking with their grandkids, or simply bringing their garbage out to the curb. Pulmonary rehabilitation helps them regain their confidence,” Draper said.

“The program helps me to have the confidence to leave my home and manage my breathing,” said Anita Rheume, a virtual rehabilitation patient. “I’ve learned how to breathe properly and go for walks without being so short of breath. I’ve learned about my COPD and how to manage it. I wish I had this sooner, and others with COPD could take advantage of it.”

“Clinics like the Centre for Pulmonary Rehabilitation are the reason we created The Village in the first place,” said Canadore President and CEO George Burton. “To provide practical experience for our students and much-needed healthcare for our communities.”

The Village is the revolutionary health and wellness training facility at Canadore College. A unique model in Canada, the facility focuses on collaborative interprofessional education and the integration of Indigenous, Eastern, and Western healing and wellness practices. Students in Canadore’s Human Care, Health Science and Social Services, and Sport and Recreation programs are learning there and getting practical experience in clinics like CPR.

The expansion of the pulmonary rehabilitation program means more hands-on learning opportunities for Canadore’s students.

“Being a student in the Respiratory Therapy program, our clinical exposure predominantly occurs during the final year of the program,” said student Morgan Chard. “However, the clinic’s expansion has created more opportunities for student engagement and exposure before our clinical rotations.”

The expanded programming began in January, and there are currently no wait times.

For more information, visit <https://northbaypulmonary.ca/>.

About The Village: *The Village is a world-class health and wellness facility that is providing a ground-breaking approach to educating the next generation of Canada's health and social service professionals. It is the first facility of its kind in Canada and blends Indigenous, Eastern and Western health practices with student-led facilities.*

For more information on The Village Collective Impact Project, contact: Micheline McWhirter, Project Manager at Micheline.mcwhirter@canadorecollege.ca or at 705-358-2829.

About Canadore College: *Canadore College trains people through applied learning, leadership, and innovation. It provides access to over 80 full-time quality programs and has outstanding faculty and provides success services to students from nearly 400 Canadian communities and 25 international countries. The College, its students, and alumni add \$402.5 million to the Nipissing Parry Sound service area economy. Approximately 1,000 students graduate from Canadore each year, and they join 70,000 alumni working across the globe. Canadore receives less than 50 per cent of its traditional funding from the provincial Ministry of Colleges and Universities and relies on its own innovation and entrepreneurial endeavours and generous donors for the balance.*

About Nipissing Wellness Ontario Health Team: *The Nipissing Wellness Ontario Health Team was created promote connection between community members and care providers in our Nipissing district. Our primary goal is to improve patient outcomes by bringing services together and help people easily navigate the local health care system. There are approximately 30+ members within the Nipissing Wellness OHT, including a focus on Home and Community Care and Community and Support Services, Digital Health Group, Mental Health and Addictions, Primary Care, Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes, Acute Care, Children's Services, Indigenous Care, and Social Services. For more information on the Nipissing Wellness Ontario Health Team, contact Sébastien Goyer, Communication and Engagement Coordinator at sgoyer@nipissingwellness.ca or 705-482-2514.*

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