

THE NORTHERN MEDICAL CLINICS

The Northern Medical Clinics have been conducted for over 40 years throughout Northern Ontario, run by March of Dimes Canada in partnership with volunteer physicians.

This past year, **141 visits were rated**. 86% of respondents attended clinics in Cochrane, the rest attended clinics in Kirkland Lake. This past fiscal year, 9 clinics were held in Cochrane, and 2 in Kirkland Lake. Here are the results from the most recent report:

WHY ARE THE CLINICS NEEDED?

- Traveling long distances to receive healthcare results in added expense (two-thirds of respondents reported travel was too expensive for them)
- Few patients use the Ontario Telemedicine Network to deal with problems that they end up coming to clinics for (90% of respondents knew of OTN, but only 8% had used it)

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

- Median age: 63 years old
- Women and men were proportionately represented
- 40% of respondents reported they had a disability, top 3 were arthrosis (49%), dorsopathy (13%), soft tissue disorders (11%)
- 67% heard about the clinics from family doctors, 32% from word of mouth

TRAVEL GRANT COST SAVINGS

The Northern clinics substantially reduce travel grant costs. With the clinics, the median round trip by patients was 216 km, and the Northern Health Travel Grant (NHTG) payable for that distance is \$47.56. Therefore, the total cost of all estimated grants was \$17,575.

In comparison, if the patients were to go to Toronto instead, the median round trip would be 1416 km, and the NHTG payable for that distance is \$680.45. The total cost would have been \$242,513 - close to 15 times the cost of the actual grants!

WHY DO THEY COME TO THE NORTHERN MEDICAL CLINICS?

59% Have attended a Northern Medical Clinic before

47% Access to a medical specialist quicker

39% For specialized medical care not available in the North

SATISFACTION WITH CLINICS

- 95% of respondents rated overall experience as either very good or excellent
- When asked to describe the best and worst things about clinics, respondents were **much more likely to describe the best thing**: closeness of clinics (23%), physician/examination (18%), support staff and staff (15%), promptness (14%)

"Proximity to home and excellent service from physician/surgeon and staff"

"Considering the number of people there, I was happy with the organization and speed"

"The specialist himself. The way he explained my medical problem and how he answered my questions"