

## Electronic Medical Records User Conference in Little Current

Participants at the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) User conference were fully engaged throughout the full day of training activities at the Manitoulin Hotel and Conference Centre. Coordinated and delivered by the Giiwednong Health Link (GHL) on October 25, 2018, the event brought together health centre staff, clinicians and administrators from across Manitoulin Island and the North Shore. The conference provided an opportunity for EMR Users to network with their peers, attend EMR workshops and get inspired with fresh ideas as they bring the benefits of eHealth technologies back to their respective First Nation community health centres.

After the event was kicked off with a powerful opening song by the Mushkway Gaabo Drum, the Giiwednong Health Link's Executive Director Michael McGregor provided some welcoming remarks, which laid out the goals of the conference. *"GHL understands that the roles of our health providers are essential to the health and wellbeing of First Nation community members. To support health providers, GHL is very pleased to have assembled this meaningful series of workshops that were designed to enhance EMR User's knowledge, skills, and abilities to improve health outcomes our First Nation communities."*

*Manitoulin Physio Centre* owner - Derek Debassige energized those in attendance at the sold-out event with his highly inspiring keynote address which was themed "Build Better Care - Using data to drive better health outcomes". Derek currently serves on the Manitoulin Health Centre Board of Directors and has previously served on the Board of Directors at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. He has also partnered with First Nation communities for over nineteen years in home and community care and more recently in the area of school health support services. Drawing on his vast and varied experience, Derek demystified the role of data in health care and showed how the power of eHealth technologies and data metrics can be unlocked to improve patient outcomes.



"First Nation Health Centres are accustomed to capturing data required by various external governments and agencies," explained Derek Debassige, "But we can take another look at what the data is telling us about our patients and tailor programming to individuals and provide metrics which allow us to advocate on their behalf".

Telus Health Learning Specialists were on hand to facilitate a range of workshops on new EMR uses and techniques to achieve even greater benefits from the Practice Solutions Suite EMRs that are deployed in the region's Health Centres. While the EMR workshops were structured to benefit both novice and more experienced EMR users, the intensive Change Management module was found very appealing by administrators and managers.

*Telus Health's Alison Foster reflected on the day, "Seeing the GHL community of users so engaged, passionate, and driven to make a difference in the community rejuvenates our own passion and excitement for the possibilities in the EMR world."*

Giiwednong Health Link feels that it is important to offer these events for our partner First Nations to meet and share experiences and best practices at local venues here in the north without having to travel down south. This conference is part of GHL's mission to bring professional development and capacity building opportunities to its members. Other recent training initiatives have included Privacy and Security Awareness training events that were held on both Manitoulin Island and Serpent River First Nation on the North Shore.

At the conclusion of the event, many thanks were extended to the Mushkway Gaabo Drum, the enthusiastic keynote speaker Derek Debassige, the knowledgeable trainers from Telus Health, and the terrific master of ceremonies, Craig Abotossaway who injected some humour while keeping the proceedings moving on schedule and grounded in First Nation tradition. However, most of the thanks were reserved for the EMR User participants for taking the time out their busy schedules to get even better at delivering health programs and services by using digital health technologies.

For further information about GHL, please visit: [www.giiwednonghealth.ca](http://www.giiwednonghealth.ca)