



Q&A: Emergency Department Closure

1. Why

a. Is this happening?

- Physician shortage (we are at 60% of capacity for ED physicians)
- Inequitable funding for locums
- Distance and time for locums to travel here

b. Can't we utilize the emergency department if nurses are there?

- Nurses can provide basic first aid services only. They require a physician to be available to provide orders for things such as medications, tests, and interventions, as per practice regulations and hospital legislation.

2. What

a. To do in case of an emergency?

- Call 911. The ambulance will transport you to the next nearest available hospital (Dryden).

b. Can we do to prevent this?

- At the Hospital, our collaborative and caring team help foster a positive experience. However, providing the best and most current equipment we can is also key.
- Locally, we can and do work to ensure the most inviting working and living conditions possible for Physicians and their families. This can include having inviting housing, warmly welcoming them, helping partners secure employment, helping families integrate into the community.
- More broadly, there is a need to address physician distribution and funding models to make them more equitable and incentivize northern work. We need to increase opportunities for medical residents to work in our communities

3. Where

a. Do we go instead, if we need emergency care?



- People with emergent health problems should call 911 and request ambulance assistance. You may be transported to the nearest hospital Emergency Department available to offer treatment.
- For less emergent health problems, please call the Telehealth Line at 1-866797-0000.
- You may choose to travel to the next closest Emergency Department, which is in Dryden, Ontario.
- Urgent care will be available at the Red Lake Family Health Team from 9 am to 12 pm on Saturday, March 26, 2022. Please call 807-727-2617, during that time, to book an appointment.

b. Where else is this happening?

- Physician shortages have been pervasive throughout Northwestern Ontario. Many of our neighbouring hospitals, such as Lake of the Woods, Sioux Lookout, Atikokan and others, have experienced threatened ED closures in the last year.

4. When

a. When will this be happening until?

- Saturday March 26, 2022, from 0800 to Sunday March 27 from 0800

b. When is urgent care open until?

- Urgent care will be available at the Red Lake Family Health Team from 9 am to 12 pm on Saturday, March 26, 2022

5. Who

a. Is responsible for physician staffing?

- Physicians who are part of the local physician contract between Red Lake Medical Associates and the Ministry of Health are responsible to schedule Emergency Department shifts amongst themselves. Physicians then provide their schedule to the Hospital. The Hospital does not schedule physicians.

b. To contact for more information?

- Any of the Hospital leadership team, or, after hours, administrator on call can be reached by our nurses for urgent matters at 807-727-2231.