

# Excellence In First Nations Telemedicine

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**Presenter**

**Chief Joe Meekis, Keewaywin First Nation**



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# History of KO's Vision

- IN the year 1998, the KO Chiefs chartered a bus to Toronto. We visited a hospital and were given a tour of that hospital. It was the first time we were introduced to a telehealth unit.



# History

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- 1998 - KO Chiefs give directors to use technology to improve community well being
- 2000 - Health Canada announces funding to support a regional Telehealth consultation in Northwestern Ontario with the involvement of KO (Northern Chiefs)
- 2001 - Developed partnership between Keewaytinook Okimakanak and the North Network , now known as Ontario Telemedicine Network.
- 2002 – KO Telemedicine is established by Keewaytinook Okimakanak servicing the communities of Deer Lake, Fort Severn, Keewaywin, North Spirit Lake, and Poplar Hill First Nations with technical support provided by KO Kuh-ke-nah Broadband Network (Knet).



# History Continued...

- 2003 - KOTM expansion project began, subsequently adding 21 communities to the network by 2007.
- 2006 - The Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) joined KOTM, providing its own funding for equipment, training and operational resources, including scheduling staff.
- 2006 - KOTM receives expansion two awards from the Canadian Society of Telehealth.
- 2008 – KO Telemedicine surpasses 2500 successful consults.



# Background

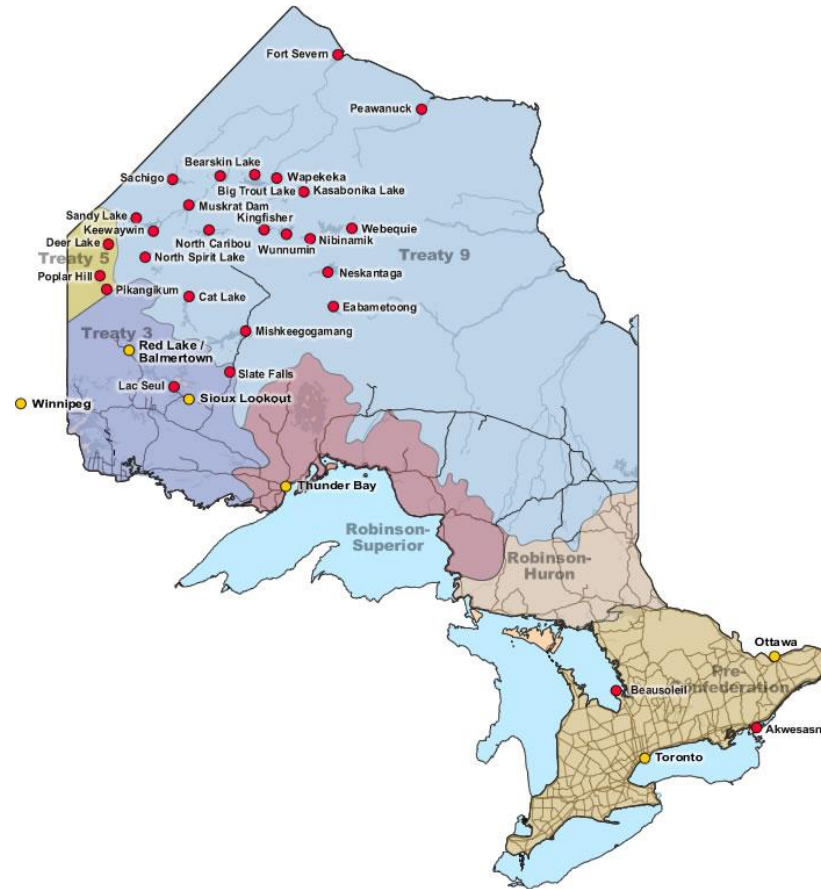
KO Telemedicine (KOTM) currently supports Telemedicine programming in 26 remote and semi-remote First Nations in Ontario. KOTM is nationally recognized as a leader in Telemedicine applications and is the largest First Nations directed Telemedicine program in Canada.



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# KOTM Communities



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# Applications

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- Community Engagement
- Clinical consults
- Educational events
- Training Programs
- Administrative events
- Family Visits
- Elder's Gatherings
- Youth Music Festivals





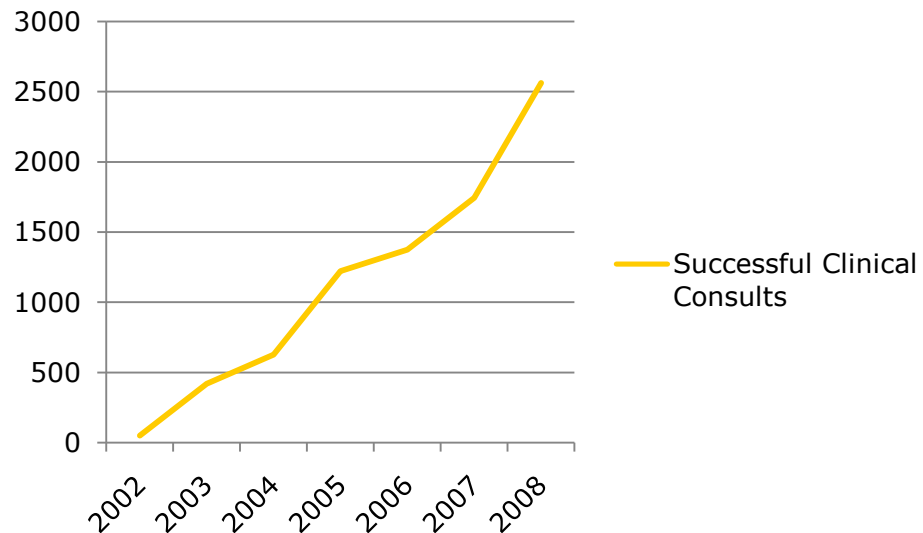
# Community Engagement

KOTM has visited 27 communities. In order to obtain the community's trust, KOTM had to find the strongest link to the community. The biggest supporters for KOTM were the Elders within the community. From the elders guidance and knowledge we have developed:

- Community Engagement Protocol
- Traditional Values and Native Ethics Teachings
- A holistic community-driven telemedicine model
- Elders: Monthly Elders Gatherings



# KOTM Clinical Growth Since Inception



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# KOTM Program History

Year	Successful Clinical Consults
2002	50
2003	419
2004	626
2005	1221
2006	1375
2007	1745
2008	2563



# Background (cont.)

In addition to clinical access to specialists and community physicians, KOTM facilitates the development of many cutting edge applications such as Telehomecare, Teleophthalmology, Telerehab and Telemental health.



# Education

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KOTM is currently coordinating over 30 educational events a month geared to First Nations health workers. For 2009:

- **In partnership with Lakehead University, implement Native Nursing Education Program via videoconferencing**
- **Continue to build partnerships to provide education to FN health workers.**





# Initiatives for 2009

## Sustainability

Despite KOTM's success, the lack of Federal and Provincial policy supporting First Nations Telemedicine leaves KOTM dependant on annual funding agreements with First Nation and Inuit Health (FNIH), Ontario Region, for 100% of its funding. As KOTM delivers provincial services to First Nations and supports the broadband infrastructure requirement for eHealth applications, a partnered funding model is required where the MOHLTC pays the broadband connectivity through the SSHA model.



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# NAN Expansion

KOTM has developed a proposal to expand Telemedicine services to First Nations in all of Nishnawbe Aski Territory. This would mean approximately 20 additional sites in LHINs 13 and 14. It is proposed that SSHA would support the connectivity component required to implement and sustain this expansion. KOTM will be actively seeking implementation and operational dollars for this initiative.



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# Integrate with SLFNHA EHealth Framework

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The Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) oversees 30 First Nations within NAN Territory. The SLFNHA Health Plan identifies eHealth as a priority and is working on a framework to implement eHealth initiatives. KOTM has partnered with SLFNHA to support eHealth developments and integrate Telemedicine wherever possible to support implementation



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# KNet Applications

Another special mention is the role of KNet, the broadband provider arm of Keewaytinook Okimakanak and partner of KO Telemedicine. KNet is a First Nations owned and directed broadband infrastructure spanning across the north and servicing First Nations in Ontario. KNet supports SSHA connectivity to First Nations and the application of eHealth services across the network. Some examples include:



# MiiQuetch!

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