ODANAK ABENAKI NEWSPAPER | VOLUME 17 NUMBER 2 | AUTUMN 2026

W8BANAKI PILASKW

WORD FROM THE CHIEF



Richard O'Bomsawin
Chief - Abenaki
of Odanak Council



Kwaï fellow band members,

Hope this finds you all well rested and left with good memories of another summer gone by. We were blessed this year with a record number of band members visiting for the 67th edition of our pow wow gathering. The weekend before we were honored to welcome some of the O'Bonsawin family from Sudbury for their first family gathering here in Odanak. I was happy to spend time and connect with people who are the children of our members who migrated to Sudbury. I am reminded of how dispersed we are due to wanting a good life for our families and how that impacts community.

As you might know, our people continue the fight to make things right with the state. On May 29, 2025, Bill S-2 (formerly Bill C-38) was introduced in the Senate to continue efforts in addressing remaining inequities in the Indian Act. This bill seeks to address the second generation cut off with a single parent rule allowing entitlement to registration to pass on indefinitely for future generations. What does this mean for our nation? It means an increase in our membership. However, there have been no talks about adjustments to the resources to accommodate the influx.

As a community this is bringing change. It makes me think of the importance of knowing our history. How did we get here? We need to be aware of the agreements that were entered into by our ancestors. Treaties and wampum belts were very important in establishing a more equal negotiation status. We need to ensure that we not be wiped out and dispossessed by policies and bills that prevent our people to continue thriving in our rightful place as a first nations.

We are currently seeing an interest in our members wanting to move to Odanak. Some of our elders have concerns about this meaning that our community changes and becomes more like a city neighbourhood rather than the community it has always been. Making an effort to know each other is an important first step.

How can we navigate this in a way that our grandchildren know the sense of community and family our ancestors were blessed with? So much knowledge was handed down by having our mentors around in the village. When our children would go out to play, they would meet people who would teach them fishing, basket making, carving etc.

When my family came home after my father passed, I was grateful for the help and welcome we received. For us coming home was so important, to complete the journey my father had started; the one of coming back home. His father had left the village for work in Ottawa and always had the goal of returning. This move took two generations to prepare.

Hopefully we are able to meet the influx of band members returning with openings for gainful employment and adequate housing. As mentioned in my previous article, we must think and act strategically to build the framework for a healthy economic base to allow for us to thrive as a nation and provide for a sustainable future. It would be important to see our business people want to come and establish their business in the village. Working to create a solid economy is an element we must consider a priority. In reflecting on our personal journey, I remember the challenges of finding work in the first year. I have since made economic development an important part of our life. We now as a family contribute to our community, and have provided over 100 jobs in our time here and we continue to do so. So, to my fellow business inclined members. If you have a business project you think would be interesting for Odanak. Please contact our economic development office. our foundation is in its building phases. Let's build it strong enough to sustain the next 7 generations!

In peace and friendship,

WORD FROM COUNCILLORS



Florence Benedict
Councillor - Abenaki of Odanak Council

Kwaï,

In this issue, I'd like to introduce you to a project that means a great deal to me and for which I have the privilege of being responsible: the Awikhiganigamikok Library.

A BIT OF HISTORY

The library was founded in November 1983 at the Abenaki Museum, in what was then known as the Great Hall. At the time, it consisted of two large glass-fronted bookcases. This wonderful initiative was spearheaded by Ms. Nicole O'Bomsawin and the late Ms. Nicole De Gonzague.



Ms. Nicole O'Bomsawin and the late Ms. Nicole De Gonzague surrounded by volunteers.

Over the years, the library changed locations several times. Initially located at the Abenaki Museum, it was then moved to the community hall (Aln8bawaï), then to the former post office—now occupied by Health Center staff—at Place Jeunesse, and, for nearly ten years, in the Community Center.

Since September 2016, the library has been housed in the W8banaki premises, located at 102 Sibosis Street.



The library's new location.

Affiliated with the BIBLIO CQLM Network since 1983, our library now holds approximately 1,300 books from the BIBLIO Network as well as 2,845 titles from the local collection, offering a wide selection of reading material for all ages and tastes.

In addition, once a month on a Monday, Ms. Angélie Lafontaine and Ms. Virginie Descôteaux host the Awikhigan Book Club.

Often considered a third place, the library is much more than just a space for reading. It is a neutral space, separate from home and work, where everyone can take a moment to relax, reflect, and escape from the daily grind.

Throughout the year, the library welcomes toddlers from the Aw8ssissak daycare center. It also organizes various activities, such as book launches and exhibitions of historical photographs in collaboration with the Abenaki Museum. Computers are also available to users who need them.



Several old photographs on display at the library.

A WELL-DESERVED RETIREMENT

Our current librarian, Ms. Marcelle O'Bomsawin, who has been with us since September 2010, will retire next October after 16 years of service.

Thanks to her dedication, professionalism, and passion for reading and culture, she has made a remarkable contribution to the development and growth of our library. Her departure will undoubtedly leave a great void within the organization. (Photo 4)

We wish her a very happy and well-deserved retirement!

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. ERIC CLOUTIER

Last May, I had the privilege of attending a ceremony in Victoria, British Columbia, to honor Mr. Eric Cloutier with a medal for his 25 years of service with the C.P.D.A.

Mr. Cloutier now boasts 29 years of service—a remarkable career that deserves to be recognized.





Presentation of the 25-year service medal to Mr. Eric Cloutier at the C.P.D.A.

Congratulations for all these years of service and for the excellent work you have done over the years.

CLOSING REMARKS

Finally, I wish you a wonderful summer and a lovely fall. I look forward to seeing you again in the next issue of Pilaskw.

Wli Wni,

WORD FROM COUNCILLORS



Jacques T. Watso
Councillor - Abenaki of Odanak Council

These lines were written on July 4, 2026. By the time you read them, several weeks, or perhaps even a few months, will have passed. Long publication delays sometimes make it a bit pointless to comment on current events, since those events will already have passed by the time the newspaper reaches you.

Instead, I'd like to use this space to share a message that will remain relevant.

By the time this issue reaches you, you will likely have received your settlement. I want to remind you that this money belongs to you and you alone. You are entitled to it because you are the descendants of our ancestors who suffered a profound injustice. While no amount of money can make up for centuries of dispossession, suffering, and inequality, this compensation is at least an acknowledgement of that past.

Please use these funds wisely. You may choose to invest in your future, support your family, carry out a project, or improve your quality of life—whatever you do, I hope these funds will help you build a lasting future.

I would also like to thank you. Over the past few months, I have had the pleasure of seeing many of you attend our public meetings. Your questions, your comments, and your presence show that our community is thriving. I sincerely hope that you will continue to get involved, because strong communities are built on engaged and informed members.

Our Nation still bears the scars of decades of displacement and separation. Our diaspora is now scattered across several locations, but that does not prevent us from staying united. No matter where we live, we share a history, an identity, and a common responsibility toward Odanak's future.

Let us continue to rally, engage in dialogue, and work together to ensure the preservation and development of our community for generations to come.

Kchi Wliwni



Photo taken by Martin Gill. Sculpture located at the Saint-Marcel-de-Richelieu school.



Alain O'Bomsawin
Councillor - Abenaki of Odanak Council

Kwaï, hello,

I hope your summer vacation was enjoyable and that you were able to make the most of it.

Over the past few weeks, Florence Benedict, Martin Gill, and I participated in a meeting regarding the Chapais farm with the Wendat and Wolastoqiyik Wahsipekuk Nations. This 40-hectare plot of land could potentially be shared among the three nations. This preliminary phase of the process indicates that, according to the City of Lévis, the construction of condominiums or apartment buildings is not feasible, as the municipality lacks the capacity to provide drinking water. However, the installation of a territorial marker would be considered to acknowledge our presence on this territory. The matter is now in the hands of the W8banaki Nation for further action.

Martin Gill and I also had the opportunity to attend the unveiling of an original sculpture installed on the grounds of the Saint-Marcel-de-Richelieu school. Following a visit to the Abenaki Museum, students in grades 4 through 6 expressed their desire to pay tribute to the ancestral Abenaki territory. This initiative sparked an art project, and the sculpture—designed by Christine Sioui Wawanoloath—now stands on the school grounds as a symbol of recognition and respect for this land.

I also had the privilege of attending, alongside Council members as well as several employees of the Council and the W8banaki Nation, the unveiling of the W8banaki Nation's first official flag at the Université de Sherbrooke. This is a historic and significant moment for our Nation.

Next, regarding the church, the bell tower had mechanical problems that required an inspection. The inspection revealed that the current motor—which, according to the repairman, is over 50 years old—will need to be replaced or modernized. A new motor or a loudspeaker system will therefore be installed to ensure it functions properly.

Finally, regarding the Water Authority, in response to a question about the drinking water supply, I mentioned that no issues were anticipated in the short or medium term. After checking with the Intermunicipal Water Authority, this information has been confirmed: no risks have been identified regarding the drinking water supply.

We can be proud of everything that is being done for and by the W8banaki Nation. On that note, I wish you all a wonderful fall.

Wli Wni,

WORD FROM MANAGEMENT



Daniel G. Nolett
Executive Director - Abenaki of Odanak Council

Kwaï mziwi!

Construction of the brand-new daycare centers and FNHS facility began after the construction holiday. Following a public call for bids through the SEAO process, Construction Boulard & Associates, based in Trois-Rivières, was selected as the general contractor for the project. We would like to remind you that this is a project totaling nearly $5 million, with construction work expected to take place over a period of one year.

Roadworks on Awassos Street, which took place over a total of 16 weeks, are now complete. Traffic was severely disrupted during the construction period. A total of $3.2 million in funding from ISC was invested in this major project.

Construction of a new four-unit, three-bedroom building for families is expected to begin in late summer or early fall 2026 on Mgezo Street. Regarding the six-unit building at 2 Mgezo Street, which was destroyed by a fire on February 25, we have asked an architectural firm to review the interior design plans.

Construction of the new 11–17-year-old center located at 1100 Marie-Victorin Road is complete. The official opening will take place shortly so our young people can start using it as soon as school starts. This represents an investment of just over $2.2 million, with funding for this construction provided by ISC.

Payment of compensation for the specific claims settlement began in late August, as planned. The next payment will be made in late September, and the final payment, for those who were late in providing their information to Price Waterhouse Coopers, will be made in mid-November. As a reminder, the Council had decided to distribute 40% of the total settlement amount ($190 million in principal plus accrued interest). Meanwhile, work is underway to establish a trust to administer the funds for band members who have not yet reached the age of majority at the time of distribution, as well as for estates (funds for band members who died between June 30, 2023, and March 13, 2026). We are also working on the management trust that will be responsible for managing the remaining undistributed funds to secure the community's future.

We are still awaiting the investment policy, which is currently being drafted by the MNP firm. This policy will provide guidance to the trustees who will eventually be appointed to the board of directors of the management trust. The board will be responsible for managing and investing the compensation funds to ensure their growth and to grow the capital. More to come...

Over the past few weeks, and even months, we have hired several new staff members to meet the needs of our organization. Most of these new hires were recruited to ensure the smooth operation of the shelter for Indigenous women and children fleeing violence. Here is the list of recently hired staff members and their titles:

NEW EMPLOYEE LIST

NAMES	LOCATION	JOB TITLE
Sylvie Ally	Health Center	Family Support Worker
Jessy Backs	Shelter	Psychosocial Counselor for Domestic Violence
Jérémy Chevalier	Police Department	Patrol Officer
Marie-Claude Couture	Shelter	Youth Worker
Charlie Daneau	Shelter	Psychosocial Counselor for Domestic Violence
Léane Desmarais	Health Center	Assistant Facilitator
Maxime Fréchette	Band Council	Network Administrator
Joanny Gill	Shelter	Outreach Worker
Nadia Gill	Health Center	In-Home Care Coordinator
Sébastien Gill	Band Council	Day Laborer
Florence Guévin	Shelter	Psychosocial Counselor for Domestic Violence
Mélissa Huot	Shelter	Deputy Executive Director of the Women's and Children's Shelter
Albert Klopfenstein	Band Council	BETO Intern
Patrick Lamoureux	Band Council	Day Laborer
Elody Latraverse	Health Center	Day Camp Facilitator
Arianne Lavoie	Police Department	Patrol Officer
Thérèse Nicholson	Shelter	Safety, Reception, and Community Relations Coordinator
Lora Nidelle Nanfack Togomo	Health Center	Medical Archivist
Kim O'Bomsawin	Shelter	Clinical Coordinator
Stéfanie O'bomsawin-Gauthier	Band Council	Community Mobilization Officer
Marianne Prud'homme	Health Center	Client Care Worker
Patricia René	Health Center	Client Care Worker
Caroline Roy	Health Center	Client Care Worker
Élizabeth Sawyer	Health Center	Residential Counselor
Jeannette Panadis	Health Center	Client Care Worker
Noah Clément	Health Center	Lifeguard Assistant
Gabriel Durand	Health Center	Lead Facilitator
Léonie Gamelin	Health Center	Lead Facilitator
Sara-Ève Noël	Health Center	Day Camp Facilitator
Maïna O'Bomsawin	Health Center	Lead Lifeguard
Saskia Shooner	Health Center	Lifeguard
Antoine Verville	Health Center	Day Camp Facilitator

Mziwik, n'sidaldam wli tagw8gw! I wish everyone a wonderful fall!

SHORT COLUMN ON THE ABENAKI LANGUAGE

FRACTIONS[1]

	FRACTIONS
Three-quarters	Iawi cheben8zik nasichebad
Two-thirds	Nasi cheben8zik nisichebad
Half	Pabasi
One third	Nasi cheben8zik
One quarter	Iawi cheben8zik
One fifth	N8nni chebn8zi
One sixth	Ngwed8s kassi cheben8zik
One seventh	T8baw8s kassi cheben8zik
One eighth	Ns8zek kassi cheben8zik
One ninth	Noliwi kassi cheben8zik
One tenth	Mdala kassi cheben8zik
One fiftieth	N8nninska kassi cheben8zik
One hundredth	Ngwedatgwa kassi cheben8zik
And so on	...

1 Excerpt from the book INITIATION À LA GRAMMAIRE ABÉNAKISE, by Monique Nolett-Ille, Odanak 2006.



A MAGNIFICENT OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE ALMOSAK M8WIWI DOG PARK!

Helen Watso, a proud member of the community!

Saturday, June 13, was a truly wonderful day for the official grand opening of the **Almosak M8wiwi Dog Park**! Under sunny skies and with a great turnout, we were delighted to welcome about 80 visitors, many of whom were accompanied by their faithful four-legged companions.

The day was filled with fun activities and a wonderful sense of community. Our board member, **Nancy Bussière**, owner of **Moulée G. C. B.**, ran a booth featuring a prize wheel, numerous gifts, two beautiful gift baskets, and goodie bags for our canine visitors. Several exhibitors were also on hand to showcase their pet products and services.

Over the course of the afternoon, eight prizes were drawn, including a lovely, personalized painting generously donated by local artist **Audel Artiste Peintre**. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to **Café Masko** and the **Abenaki Museum** for their delightful gift baskets, as well as to **Nancy Bussière**, who generously donated two pairs of tickets to a local show, much to the delight of the lucky winners. A very special thank you to groomer **Mélanie Bouchard of Passion Mystik**, who offered nail trims for $5 throughout the event and generously donated all proceeds to the dog park. Her generosity was greatly appreciated by the committee and visitors alike.

We would also like to acknowledge **Philippe O'Bomsawin**, who brought his smoker and treated participants with some delicious samples of smoked trout, elk, and cheese. Without a doubt, this was one of the highlights of the day.

Our sincere thanks also go to our anonymous donor for the magnificent water fountain, which adds a unique and welcoming touch to our park. We would like to give special thanks to **Barbara-Ann Watso** for her generous donation of two park benches, which allow visitors to relax comfortably while their dogs play. We also thank **BETO—Mziaow8gan ta Aki** for donating the trees. While two of the first trees sadly did not survive, the success of our fundraiser will allow us to replace them.

We are very pleased to announce that this event raised **$1,037**! These funds will be used to purchase additional water bowls, new picnic tables, and other improvements that will make our park even more welcoming for everyone. The success of this event would not have been possible without the dedication of our volunteers, the support of our sponsors, the generosity of our donors, and the presence of everyone who came to celebrate with us. Your selflessness, excitement, and spirit of community made the inaugural event an unforgettable one that will have a lasting impact on the lives of dogs and their owners for years to come.

Wliwni! Thank you!





NDAKINA OFFICE COLUMN— W8BANAKI

Edgar Blanchet
Research Coordinator - Ndakina Office

WHO ARE WE?

We would like to remind you that the Ndakina Office is the department of the Tribal Council whose mandate is to defend and promote the Nation's rights and interests regarding its ancestral territory. It now consists of four teams, with a total of nearly 30 employees:

- Crown-Developer Relations Team (responsible for responding to territorial consultations and negotiations)
- Archaeological and Historical Heritage Team
- Territorial Analysis Team
- Land and Knowledge Team, made up of the Ndakina wardens and the Knowledge Team (which conducts action research)

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE NDAKINA OFFICE

Did you know that the Ndakina Office is now recognized as a full-fledged research organization? We are currently developing our research agenda for the next four years. Several new projects are in the works, including the following major initiatives:

- **Maalhakws**: Preserving the black ash and the knowledge associated with it
- **Wlimskiko (sweetgrass)**: Revitalization and restoration of sweetgrass in the Ndakina
- **Nanawaldamoda Kdakina (Let's Take Care of Our Land)**: Mapping of traditional knowledge and land use and occupation by the W8banakiak
- **Kchitegw (St. Lawrence River)**: A regional study of the St. Lawrence River, in collaboration with eight other First Nations and the Canadian Environmental Impact Assessment Agency
- And many more!

All of our projects and collaborations must adhere to the standards, principles, and values set forth in the Ndakina Office's wampum. They must support cultural resurgence and the self-determination of the W8banaki Nation, and the outcomes must first and foremost benefit the W8banakiak (Abenaki).

THE NOMADIC UNIVERSITY MAKES A STOP IN ODANAK

From June 15 to 19, 2026, the Ndakina Office hosted the Nomadic University in Odanak, a gathering of the DIALOG research network (INRS) and the School of Indigenous Studies (UQAT). This summer school provided participants with a rich, multidisciplinary educational experience on the territory, its resources, and W8banakiak territorial knowledge. Presentations, field trips, and discussions with knowledge keepers fostered a deep understanding of issues related to the territory, natural resources, language, and the transmission of knowledge, while strengthening our ties with academic research.

THE FIRST SEASON OF COMMUNITY FISHING BY OUR LAND WARDENS

In the spring of 2026, our team of Ndakina wardens held their first community net fishing season! The fish caught will be prepared during community activities throughout the year.

INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH THE ATIKAMEKW NATION: A NET FISHING TRIP IN MAURICIE NATIONAL PARK

For three days, our team of Ndakina wardens and a few members took part in a cultural exchange focused on traditional fishing with our Atikamekw neighbours at the site of the former Laurentien Club, where the Abenaki once served as hunting and fishing guides. This highly educational first-time experience was defined by teamwork, valuable knowledge-sharing, and wonderful moments spent together on the territory. We hope to repeat this activity next year for anyone interested in participating!

Remember that, thanks to this collaboration between the W8banaki and Atikamekw Nations and La Mauricie National Park, fishing quotas are set aside annually for members of each Nation. Contact our Ndakina wardens to learn more about this agreement.

THE WLIPOGWAT PROJECT (SO GOOD!) IS BACK FOR ITS THIRD EDITION!

Wlipogwat means "so good" in Aln8ba8dwaw8gan (the W8banaki language). This project aims to revitalize W8banaki cuisine and the foods of the Ndakina by making these resources and this knowledge more accessible.

Since this spring, our wardens have been organizing harvesting workshops (for fish, geese, muskrats, wild garlic, etc.) in order to host a community feast where all members of the Nation will be invited to come and taste food sourced from the Ndakina.

The next Kchi Mijow8gan (grand feast) will take place in March 2027. We will be looking for volunteers from the Nation to cook the harvested foods for the event. Whether using "traditional" family recipes or modern reinterpretations, all contributions are welcome.

JOIN THE ABENAKI HUNTING AND FISHING COMMITTEE!

The Abenaki Hunting and Fishing Committee is a vital forum for discussing issues that affect our traditional practices. It is an advisory committee that makes recommendations to the Councils. It meets four times a year to deliberate on important decisions regarding fishing, hunting, trapping, our codes of practice, and members' concerns.

All members of the Nation are invited to join. You do not need to be a community hunter to attend. In fact, if you'd like to become one or simply learn more, this is the perfect place to start.

Your presence is invaluable, as it helps us better understand the needs, realities, and priorities of our Nation. It allows us to advance our issues in a representative and collective manner!

ONLINE SLAUGHTER RESERVATION AND REGISTRATION SITE

More and more areas are being reserved for the exclusive use of members of the Nation. All members can book their stay dates in these areas directly online at the following address: reservationndakina.com.



WHAT'S NEW AT ODANAK TOURISM



Stéphanie-Nika Trottier
Tourism Development Advisor - Abenaki of Odanak Council

What's New at Tourisme Odanak: A New Way to Experience W8banaki Culture!

This summer, a breath of fresh air and modernity is sweeping through Tourisme Odanak. In order to welcome visitors more effectively and showcase the wealth of our history, we are rolling out a host of new initiatives that will transform the visitor experience in our community.

THE VERY FIRST TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE AT CAMPING ABENAKI AVENTURE

For the very first time, we're launching a pilot project to welcome tourists right on-site! A temporary information desk is opening at Camping Abenaki Aventure. Even better: our very first travel advisor is joining the team this summer to guide you, share her favorite spots, and help you plan an unforgettable experience in Odanak and the surrounding area. Come and say hi!

AN IMMERSIVE, LUMINOUS, AND CULTURAL ARK

Odanak is also breaking new ground by becoming one of the first links to a unique regional project: the "Espaces accueil et découverte" (Welcome and Discovery Spaces), born out of a collaboration with Tourisme Centre-du-Québec and the Quebec-based company Bloom.

Starting in July 2026, you'll be able to explore our brand-new Tourist Ark. Designed by artist and designer Marie-Ève Bourassa, this ornamental, illuminated structure will blend beautifully into our landscape. In addition to consulting the official tourist map there, you'll be able to watch captivating videos highlighting Odanak's culture, history, and must-see activities.

Please note: The installation will be set up at a temporary location this summer and will move to its permanent site a s soon as the necessary infrastructure is completed.

This major project is made possible thanks to financial support from the Tourism Growth Program (PCT), an initiative supported by Economic Development Canada for the regions of Quebec and managed by Tourisme Autochtone Québec.

ON THE ROAD FOR THE SAINT-FRANÇOIS TOUR

But that's not all! We're actively working to enhance the experience for cyclists, paddlers, and hikers on the Saint-François Tour. A total of 31 new information panels will be installed along the 285 km of this tourist route. These educational stops will allow you to immerse yourself in the history and millennia-old culture of the W8banaki people as you make your way along the trail.





GOT A PROJECT IN MIND? ODANAK TOURISM CAN HELP!

Our tourism opportunities are driven above all by the strengths of our community. While the current season is in full swing, this is also the perfect time to think about the future and let your ideas take shape. Community members who wish to develop a tourism or cultural project—whether in crafts, gastronomy, lodging, or immersive experiences—can receive personalized support.

Several funding programs are available to support these local initiatives. The Tourisme Odanak team is available to guide you in structuring your ideas and designing your project, enhancing your prospects of securing funding.

To discuss this or learn more, please feel free to contact me at sntrottier@caodanak.com.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A WILL

Jennifer Vollant
Land Manager at the Land and Environment Office – Abenaki Council of Odanak

Kwaï mziwi,

For the past three years, I have had the privilege of working within your community. After completing several training programs, I have officially held the position of land manager for nearly a year.

Every day, I work with members of the Nation on land-related matters. These processes can sometimes seem complicated or time-consuming. My role is to keep you informed, answer your questions, and guide you so that the process is as simple and clear as possible every step of the way.

While working with the community, I've noticed that land management issues often become more complex when they involve an estate. When a loved one passes away, the family must cope with grief while also handling countless administrative responsibilities. This situation can quickly become overwhelming and stressful.

This is why I have chosen to devote this first article to the importance of planning ahead while you're still alive. Taking the time to make plans today can greatly help your loved ones down the road. It's a thoughtful gesture and a way to offer them a small measure of support during a time of great need.

****The following information is taken from the document Asset Management and Administration, published by Indigenous Services Canada—Quebec Region, Canada.ca/indigenous-estates**

A will is a document that provides instructions on how you want your property and land to be handled after your death.

BY WRITING A WILL, YOU CAN:

- provide for your loved ones, your children, and your grandchildren
- decide who will keep your home and your property
- clearly specify who will inherit your personal property (jewelry, vehicles, money, etc.)
- provide instructions regarding who will care for your children and dependents
- leave instructions regarding your end-of-life ceremony
- appoint the person who will handle your estate

WHAT A WILL MUST CONTAIN

The Indian Act specifies what you must include in your will.

IF YOU RESIDE ON A RESERVE, FOR A WILL TO BE VALID, IT MUST:

- Be in writing. You can draft your own will or use a form available from various sources, such as will kits or certain websites;
- Be signed by you;
- State your wishes regarding the distribution of at least one of your assets;
- State that the will takes effect after your death.

IDEALLY, A WILL SHOULD ALSO:

- Be dated;
- Be signed by two people who have witnessed your signature;
  - Have witnesses who are adults and are neither beneficiaries nor the spouse or partner of a beneficiary;
- Name the person who will act as executor;
- Include the full names and addresses of your beneficiaries;
- Include a list of your assets and where they are located;
  - Include all your real and personal property (for example, land, bank accounts, jewellery, business permits, crops, animals, investments, vehicles and buildings);
- Include a list of all your debts, their value and your creditors;
- State who you want to give each of your assets to;
- Include a list of other items you wish to give to specific people, including particular items with sentimental value;
- Contain instructions regarding who will care for your children and dependants.

DO YOU OWN LAND ON A RESERVE?

If you own land on a reserve, you may wish to include instructions in your will regarding how you want the land to be distributed after your death. The Indian Act states that you cannot give your land to a person who is not a member of your First Nation.

The Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act, or your First Nation's laws regarding matrimonial real property on reserves, may affect the transfer of your land. Your band council should be able to help you determine which laws apply to your situation.

Of course, the first step toward settling an estate smoothly is to write a will. This document allows you to clearly state your wishes and guide your loved ones after your death.

The person you appoint as your estate's executor will have several administrative duties to fulfill. A clear and up-to-date will can make their job much easier and help avoid many questions or complications. It's also important to review your will whenever your life circumstances change—for example, following a marriage, a separation, the birth of a child, or the acquisition of new assets.

Over the next few weeks, the Wills and Estates section of the Abenaki Council of Odanak's website will be expanded to provide further insight and answers to frequently asked questions on this topic.



IMPROVEMENTS TO FACILITIES AT KIUNA!

Student housing is getting a makeover for fall 2026.

New features include sectional sofas, 65-inch TVs, kitchen tables that seat up to six people, new murals, and freshly painted walls. Kiuna's green spaces have also been updated this summer! Students can now enjoy all these new improvements. This fall semester is off to a great start!



Picture of the Saint-Valère Dam on the Bulstrode River.

THE SAINT-VALÈRE DAM: A PRELIMINARY STUDY TO ASSESS ITS REMOVAL



Théo Allart
Project Manager – Odanak Land and Environment Office

For several years now, the Odanak Land and Environment Office (BETO) has been closely monitoring the Bulstrode River, a tributary of the Nicolet River that flows through the Ndakina. One particularly significant obstacle has caught our attention: the Saint-Valère Dam, which has long blocked fish passage on the river.

This year, BETO began a preliminary study to assess the feasibility of removing the dam.

WHY IS THE REMOVAL OF A DAM IMPORTANT?

Even a small dam completely changes the behavior of a river. It prevents fish from moving freely to spawn or feed, traps sediment that would normally flow downstream, and alters habitats both upstream and downstream. For species such as the American eel [Nah8mo], which must travel long distances between the ocean and freshwater to complete its life cycle, this type of barrier can pose a significant threat to its survival.

Removing a dam is no small matter. However, when it can be done safely, it is one of the most effective measures for restoring free movement to a river and to all fish populations.

Removing the dam would also give community members the opportunity to move freely along the river, whether by canoe, kayak, or simply to enjoy it without obstacles. This benefit extends beyond the ecological aspect.

WHAT CAN BE VERIFIED THROUGH THE PRELIMINARY STUDY

First, the BETO team will assess the effects that removing the dam would have on the river: water levels, current, and the areas that could be affected, both upstream and downstream.

Next, it will look at the material that has accumulated behind the dam over the years. We need to ensure that nothing harmful would be released into the river if the dam were removed.

Finally, BETO aims to compile a comprehensive profile of the fish communities affected by this dam. Should the dam be removed, this profile will serve as a baseline for monitoring how these fish communities benefit from the removal.

These assessments will determine whether dismantling the dam is feasible and how best to proceed.

A PROJECT FUNDED BY AFSAR

This preliminary study is made possible by funding from the Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk (AFSAR). It is part of BETO's broader effort to restore connectivity in the Ndakina waterways. We will keep the community informed of the project's progress. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Odanak Land and Environment Office.

NEWS FROM THE CSO



Julie Durand
Health Centre Director - Odanak Health Center



Justine M'Sadoques-Plourde
Assistant Director - Odanak Health Center

In this issue of Pilaskw, we are pleased to share some updates regarding the CSO's projects.

Last time, we announced that plans for new sports facilities were in the works. The project has made good headway, and we hope to open these new facilities in late fall. Behind the new 11-17 building, there will be a dek hockey and basketball court, a volleyball court, and a small-sided soccer field for friendly matches. If the timeline allows, an agility course and a training platform will be added during the first phase.

Our goal is for the entire Odanak community to take full advantage of these facilities and develop or maintain healthy habits. A vehicle-accessible path is also planned, allowing families with strollers and people with reduced mobility to move around the site easily.

A WELL-FED DAY CAMP

This summer, children enrolled in day camp enjoyed a daily snack in addition to a full meal. Thank you to Jessica-Ann Watso for her involvement in this wonderful project! Every Monday, a breakfast provided by the Ferme des Ormes was also served to all enrolled children. These initiatives directly contribute to the food security of our youth during the summer months.

NEW FNHS PREMISES

By the time you read this, construction on the new FNHS facility should have begun, or will begin shortly. The new facility will be located on Tolba Street, near the daycare center, but will operate independently.

WLIWNI, MICHEL HANNIS!

After 12 years of dedicated service at the Odanak Health Center, our medical transport driver, Michel Hannis, is embarking on a well-deserved retirement.

Over the years, Michel has traveled our roads to accompany members and their families on their journeys—often at times when seeing a familiar face made all the difference.

Known for his punctuality, reliability, and calm driving, Michel also stood out for a rarer quality: his genuine attentiveness to everyone he drove. Patients, families, and colleagues all agree: Michel is a kind-hearted man, always ready to help with a smile.

His commitment to the well-being of those he accompanied never went unnoticed. For 12 years, he was much more than a driver: he was a trusted pillar within our community.

Wliwni, Michel, for your reassuring presence, your humanity, and your dedication.

Enjoy your retirement, Michel!

PREVENTION THROUGHOUT THE SEASONS

Daphnée Couture
Nursing coordinator - Odanak Health Center

With the arrival of fall, the days are getting shorter and respiratory viruses often start to make a comeback. This is the perfect time to take care of your health and adopt healthy habits that protect the entire community.

The nursing team at the Odanak Health Center is here to support you with disease prevention, vaccinations, screening, and promoting healthy lifestyles.

If you experience persistent or concerning symptoms, seek medical attention right away.

By taking care of yourself, you're also helping to protect your loved ones.

This fall, let's make prevention a priority for our community's well-being.

Best regards,

COLD AND FLU SEASON IS BACK: WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY?

Isabelle Dupuis
SMI Clinical Nurse - Odanak Health Center

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SEASON: A PRIME TIME FOR INFECTIONS

September signals the return to school and daycare. It's a time full of new discoveries, friendships, and learning—but it's also a time when minor viruses spread more easily at home. Colds, coughs, gastroenteritis, and other respiratory infections are more common when children return to group settings.

SIMPLE STEPS TO REDUCE TRANSMISSION RISKS

Even though it's impossible to avoid all germs, adopting certain habits can make all the difference:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow rather than into your hands.
- Clean frequently handled surfaces and objects regularly.
- Keep your children at home when they are sick to reduce the risk of transmission.
- Encourage a varied diet, adequate sleep, and periods of active outdoor play to support overall health.

UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

Young children often get several infections during their first years in daycare or school. Their immune systems are still developing, and they are gradually learning to recognize and fight off various viruses. Although this period can be challenging for the whole family, it is a normal part of a child's development.

VACCINATION AND SUPPORT

Age-appropriate vaccinations remain an effective way to prevent diseases and their complications. If you have any questions, please feel free to discuss them with a healthcare professional at our center.

GET THROUGH THE SEASON WITH CONFIDENCE

With a little preparation, patience, and kindness, your household can get through cold and flu season smoothly. The first few months are often the hardest, but over time, episodes of illness generally become less frequent.

HONORING OUR BELOVED ELDERS

Marcelle Hannis
Home Care Nurse - Odanak Health Center

This October 1st, as we celebrate International Seniors' Day, let's take a moment to recognize the invaluable contribution of those who have come before us. In our community, elders hold a very special place. They are the guardians of our history, our traditions, our language, and our values. Their teachings continue to guide the generations of today and tomorrow.

This is an opportunity to show them our gratitude, and to reflect on how we can support them, listen to them, and include them in community life all year round.

On October 1st, the museum, in collaboration with the CSO, invites people aged 50 and older to a photo-sharing event to mark this important day. Registration is required; please call 450-568-6766.

I'd like to share a few tributes with you:

"Ms. Thérèse, 98, stays active and continues to be a source of inspiration to everyone around her. I have the privilege of helping her every week so that she can maintain her independence and quality of life. Beyond her energy, she's still very involved in her community and takes part in many events. Her presence, her experience, and her generosity make her a very valuable person to those around her. You know, Mrs. Thérèse holds a very special place in my heart. She's my favorite elder, an inspiring woman who proves every day that age is no barrier when you have the desire to stay active and engaged. At 98, she continues to be a role model of perseverance, strength, and wisdom. She is not only an important person in my life but also a true pillar of her community. Thank you, Ms. Thérèse, for inspiring us all."

— Stéphanie Plante, Kinesiologist



"My grandfather, Roland O'Bomsawin, passed on to me a love of travel, of getting to know places and people, of crisscrossing roads and rivers, and of discovering new dishes and restaurants (he had a huge influence on my own love of good food!). He also taught me how to confront injustice, and he cultivated my restlessness (albeit to a milder degree than his own!). My grandmother, Françoise Gill, taught me to be a good listener and to stay calm, and that love can be expressed through a whole range of actions. To be present in everyday life—she came to our house practically every day! A special mention goes to Ms. Huguette Nolett, my 'third grandmother,' as she used to say! I spent many afternoon at her house. She spoke to me in English and taught me how to defend my beliefs. The whole thing was so intimidating! I could clearly see her little smirk and the sparkle in her eyes as she encouraged me to stand up for myself. She really fed my intellect! I think about them often!"

— Suzie O'Bomsawin, Assistant General Manager–Human Resources Manager





A very special thought goes out to my father, Michel Hannis, who retired last August after 52 years of dedicated service to his community. He first served as a police officer for 3 years, then as a councilor on the Abenaki Council for 10 years, before devoting the last 39 years of his career to medical transport—the first 27 of which he spent working alongside Martin O'Bomsawin.

Through his commitment, his diligence, and his great courage, he has always been an example to our family and our community. I am especially grateful to him for instilling in me the importance of doing a job well, of dedication to others, and the desire to get involved in our community myself. Thank you, Dad, for everything you've accomplished and for the legacy you've left us. Enjoy your retirement—you've earned it!

DID YOU KNOW?



Élisabeth Morel
Dental Hygienist - Odanak Health Center

1. Rinsing after brushing is strongly discouraged:

Simply spitting out the excess toothpaste is enough. Rinsing washes away the protective fluoride, preventing it working effectively.

2. Brushing right after eating can damage your enamel:

Your saliva's pH needs to stabilize after eating or drinking something sweet or acidic. The best practice is to wait about 30 minutes after eating before brushing your teeth to avoid damaging the enamel and accelerating tooth erosion.

Good to know: A firm cheese can help neutralize saliva after a meal.

3. Brushing too hard can cause trauma to the gums:

It doesn't clean any better; in fact, it can wear down tooth enamel and cause gum recession. It's better to brush your teeth for 2 minutes and use a toothbrush with soft bristles.

4. The belief that you should avoid flossing when your gums bleed is incorrect:

Bleeding is a sign of inflammation (gingivitis) caused by accumulated dental plaque, and you should continue to clean your teeth gently.

5. A toothbrush only cleans 60% of your teeth's surface:

Dental floss cleans the remaining 40%.

6. Charcoal toothpaste and whitening toothpastes should be avoided:

These toothpastes are abrasive. Over time, they wear down the enamel, exposing the dentin (the yellow layer beneath the enamel) and ultimately causing the teeth to yellow and become sensitive.

To book an appointment: (450) 568-6766 or emorel@csodanak.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Gabrielle Dolan
Clinical Nurse -
Odanak Health Center

SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTION: ACT QUICKLY WITH AN EPIPEN

You're out hiking on the Koak Trail when your friend, who's allergic to wasps, gets stung.... Could you react quickly enough to save their life?

First, we need to understand what an allergic reaction is. An allergy is an excessive reaction by the immune system to a normally harmless substance (such as pollen, peanuts, or wasp stings). It triggers allergy symptoms of varying severity, ranging from a simple itchy nose to anaphylaxis, the latter of which can be life-threatening.

WHEN SHOULD YOU USE AN EPIPEN?

Whenever an allergic reaction occurs, action must be taken quickly at the first signs of anaphylaxis. Better to administer the injection unnecessarily than to delay one that is needed.

Symptoms of anaphylaxis may include:

Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea; stomach cramps.



Hives, itching, or redness on the skin.



Difficulty breathing or swallowing, wheezing, and coughing.



Swelling of the throat, lips, tongue, or around the eyes; or itching in the mouth



Weakness, dizziness, loss of consciousness, paleness



Increased heart rate or decreased blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, chest pain



Bottom line: If someone shows signs of a severe allergic reaction, administer the EpiPen immediately and call 911. A quick response can make all the difference. If you've been prescribed an EpiPen, make sure to always keep it within reach and check its expiration date regularly.

Do you have questions or want to practice using an EpiPen®? Stop by the Odanak Health Center. We're here to help!

THE ROLE OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS WITHIN OUR CENTER

Marie-Noël Mayrand
Chronic Disease Management Nurse -
Odanak Health Center

LOCAL SUPPORT TO HELP PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC ILLNESSES LIVE BETTER

At our health center, the treatment of chronic conditions, such as high blood pressure (HBP) and diabetes, is based on a compassionate, collaborative, and patient-centered approach. These conditions, which often have no symptoms in their early stages, require regular monitoring and tailored support to promote a better quality of life.

A DEDICATED AND APPROACHABLE TEAM

Nurses play a key role in the care of patients living with chronic conditions. They assess patients' health status, provide personalized guidance, support healthy lifestyle choices, and, in certain cases, can even adjust medication. Their presence fosters a relationship of trust and enables continuous support throughout the care journey.

Nutritionists help make nutrition more accessible and tailored to each person's individual circumstances. Their approach is practical, flexible, and respectful of lifestyle habits, taking into account the resources available in our community.

Pharmacists, working in collaboration with the team, ensure the optimal and safe use of medication. With their expertise, they provide rigorous monitoring and answer questions related to treatments.

The psychosocial team also plays an essential role in supporting patients. These professionals offer support in coping with emotional challenges, adapting to the illness, and managing its impact on personal, family, and professional life. They help strengthen coping skills, reduce stress, and maintain motivation in managing the health condition.

INTEGRATED, COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

Our center provides access to a variety of essential services to support the management of chronic illness. Nursing check-ups, nutrition consultations, and psychosocial interventions enable comprehensive and structured care. Referrals to other professionals can also be made as needed.

In addition, group activities and community resources may be offered to support users in their journey. These initiatives promote the sharing of experiences, motivation, and the reinforcement of progress made.

AN APPROACH TAILORED TO OUR REALITY

Our team takes a community-focused approach, where our knowledge of the local environment and realities allows us to offer tailored and relevant interventions.

This grassroots approach fosters communication, builds trust, and enables us to provide recommendations suited to our clients' personal, family, and professional circumstances.

A PARTNERSHIP DEDICATED TO YOUR HEALTH

The keys to managing your health lie in close collaboration between you and your healthcare professionals. Our team is here to guide, inform, and support each patient on both their physical and psychosocial paths.

Taking care of your health is an ongoing process, and every small step matters. Find out more about the services available and feel free to reach out to our team. Together, we can help you live better with a chronic condition and minimize its impact on your daily life.

450-568-6766 ext. 4023

RETURNING TO HEALTHY EATING HABITS

Marie-Pier Desnoyers
Dietetic Technician - Odanak Health Center

Fall is often synonymous with renewal. With summer vacation behind us—along with its on-the-go meals, less restrictive schedules, and many outdoor adventures—getting our routines back on track offers a great opportunity to reestablish healthy habits that promote our well-being.

Good news! This is the perfect time to regain balance while still enjoying your meals.

GETTING BACK INTO A ROUTINE... BUT WITHOUT PRESSURE

Good habits are built gradually. Rather than striving for perfection, aim for small, realistic changes that can become part of your daily routine.

Here are some ideas:

- Plan your meals for the week before you go grocery shopping. (You don't have to plan the entire week. Just a few nutritious meals, lunches, and snacks prepared in advance can greatly reduce your mental load on busier days.)
- Take the time to eat, as much as possible, without distractions.
- Cook more often.
- Pay attention to your hunger and fullness cues.

FILL UP ON COLORS WITH SEASONAL FOODS

Fall offers us an abundance of delicious local produce: apples, pears, squash, pumpkins, beets, carrots, cabbage, leeks, and root vegetables.

These foods are rich in vitamins, minerals, and fiber, and are often more affordable when they're in season.

Use this opportunity to prepare homemade soup, oven-roasted vegetables, an apple-and-beet salad, an apple-cinnamon crumble, and more.

SNACKS: YOUR BEST FRIENDS

With work and school back in full swing, days can sometimes feel like they drag on. A balanced snack helps you maintain your energy and focus between meals.

Here are a few examples:

- yogurt and fruit;
- cheese and whole-grain crackers;
- vegetables and hummus;
- nuts or seeds with a piece of fruit;
- homemade muffin with a glass of milk (or plant-based milk).

REDISCOVER THE JOY OF COOKING

Cooking doesn't have to be complicated. Preparing a simple meal, getting the kids involved, or cooking in larger batches and freezing leftovers are all strategies that can make your daily life easier.

Cooking is also a great way to instill healthy habits, discover new foods, and enjoy quality time with your family.

THE FALL CHALLENGE

This week, choose a single goal among the following, and then move on to the next one afterward:

- ☐ Add one more vegetable to dinner.
- ☐ Pack your lunches for three days.
- ☐ Try a new recipe featuring seasonal vegetables.
- ☐ Eat a meal without your phone or the TV.
- ☐ Discover a new local fruit or vegetable.
- ☐ Small changes, when repeated day after day, turn into major habits.

IN CONCLUSION

Fall is a great opportunity to start fresh, while listening to your own rhythm and needs. By focusing on varied meals, the joy of cooking, seasonal foods, and a guilt-free approach, you can adopt sustainable habits that support the health of the whole family.

GUIDE: NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS (NIHB) PROGRAM

Lyne Mailhot
NIHB Program Manager - Odanak Health Center

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR REGISTERED FIRST NATIONS MEMBERS

The Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program, administered by Indigenous Services Canada, provides coverage for several essential health services to eligible registered First Nations members.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

The program is intended for:

- First Nations members registered under the Indian Act.
- First Nations children under the age of 2 who are eligible for the NIHB program. Until they are officially registered, benefits can be obtained using the eligible parent's band number.

Important: Deadline for Submitting a Reimbursement Request

If you have to pay for a service or supply covered by NIHB, you **have up to one year from the date the service was received** to submit your claim for reimbursement along with the required documentation. It is therefore important to keep all your bills and receipts.

Always keep:

- Itemized bills;
- Payment receipts;
- Prescriptions, when required;
- Treatment plans;
- Any other supporting documents requested by NIHB.

THREE WAYS TO SUBMIT A REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

1. Through your service provider

Several providers enrolled in the NIHB program submit payment requests directly to NIHB. In this case, you generally do not need to fill out any forms.

2. On your own through the Express Scripts Canada platform

nihb-ssna.express-scripts.ca

You can create a secure account on the Express Scripts Canada NIHB portal to submit your reimbursement claims and track their status online.

3. With my help

I can also assist you with your applications. Simply send me your documents by mail, email, or in person.

I will then be able to confirm that your application is complete and submit your reimbursement request.

INSURANCE PRIORITY: PRIVATE INSURANCE BEFORE NIHB

It is important to know that NIHB is the last resort payer.

If you have private insurance (for example, through your employer, your spouse's employer, or another benefits plan), you must:

- Submit your claim to your private insurance first;
- Then submit the unreimbursed balance to NIHB when the service is eligible.

Any changes to your insurance coverage must be reported to Express Scripts Canada so that your record can be kept up to date.

THE 5 COVERAGE CATEGORIES OF THE NIHB PROGRAM

1. Pharmaceutical Services

NIHB covers many prescription drugs as well as certain eligible health products.

Important

If your medication is covered by the NIHB program, you normally should not have to pay at the pharmacy.

If you are asked to pay, there may be two reasons:

- The pharmacist did not contact NIHB to adjust the price or verify coverage;
- The renewal frequency or quantity allowed by the program has been exceeded.

Before paying, we recommend that you contact Express Scripts Canada to verify your record and the reason for the denial or the amount charged.

Replacement Frequency

Medications are covered according to the quantities and frequencies established by the program. If you try to get a prescription refilled too soon or exceed the allowed quantity, your request may be denied.

Documents Typically Required

- Valid prescription
- Receipt or itemized bill if a refund is requested.

Pharmaceutical Services/ Express Scripts Canada

1-888-441-4777

NIHB Drug Exception Centre

Address locator: 1902D
Ottawa ON K1A 0K9
Telephone (toll free): 1-800-580-0950

2. Dental Care

The NIHB program covers a range of dental services, including checkups, cleanings, X-rays, fillings, extractions, and select specialized treatments.

Important

Before undergoing major dental treatment (crowns, dentures, root canal treatment, orthodontics, etc.), ask your dentist for a detailed treatment plan. This will allow you to contact the NIHB to verify whether the treatment is covered and to confirm that you are within the program's allowed frequency limits before receiving the service.

Replacement Frequency

Dental exams, cleanings, X-rays, treatments, and dental prosthetics are covered according to specific frequency limits established by NIHB. Before undergoing major treatment, always check your eligibility with NIHB.

Documents Typically Required

- Detailed dental bill
- Treatment plan

Orthodontic Treatments

The NIHB Program must have received the client's complete file before the client's 18th birthday for the application to be eligible (this does not apply to clients with a craniofacial anomaly).

Important

Requests for a preliminary determination must be sent by mail (treatment plan, X-rays, and form)

Dental Predetermination Centre (dental services)

Non-Insured Health Benefits
Address locator: 1902D
Ottawa ON K1A 0K9
Telephone (toll free): 1-855-618-6291
Fax (toll free): 1-855-618-6290

Dental Predetermination Centre (dental services)

Non-Insured Health Benefits
Address locator: 1902 C
Ottawa ON K1A 0K9
Telephone (toll free): 1-866-227-0943
Fax (toll free): 1-866-227-0957

3. Eye Care

The NIHB program may cover eye exams, glasses, prescription contact lenses, and certain eligible visual aids.

Important

Before purchasing eyeglasses or other visual aids, make sure your provider participates in the NIHB program and verify your eligibility before making a purchase.

Replacement Frequency

- Eye exam: every 24 months for people age 18 and older.
- Eye exam: every 12 months for people under age 18.
- Prescription eyeglasses and contact lenses are replaced according to the eligibility periods and medical needs recognized by the program.

Documents Typically Required

- Prescription from an optometrist or ophthalmologist (issued within the last year)
- Itemized invoice.

Quebec

Non-Insured Health Benefits
Guy-Favreau Complex East Tower
202–200 René-Lévesque Blvd W
Montreal QC H2Z 1X4

Telephone: 1-514-283-1575
Telephone (toll free): 1-877-483-1575
Fax: 1-514-283-7762

Ontario

Non-Insured Health Benefits
1455–10 Wellington Street
Address Locator: 6604E
Gatineau QC K1A 0H4

Client information line
Telephone (toll free): 1-800-640-0642

4. Medical Equipment and Supplies

This category includes:

- Orthotics;
- Prosthetics;
- Orthopedic shoes;
- Hearing aids;
- Diabetes supplies;
- Wheelchairs and mobility aids;
- Other eligible medical equipment.

Important

Before making a purchase, request a detailed quote from your supplier. Many medical devices and supplies require prior authorization from NIHB before purchase. Contact NIHB to verify the item's eligibility, the required documentation, and the permitted replacement intervals.

Replacement Frequency

Replacement intervals vary depending on the type of medical equipment or supplies. They are assessed on a case-by-case basis based on medical need, equipment lifespan, and program policies.

Documents Typically Required

- Prescription or referral from a healthcare professional
- Clinical evaluation
- Detailed submission
- Detailed invoice
- Documents required for prior authorization, when applicable

Quebec

Non-Insured Health Benefits
Guy-Favreau Complex East Tower
202–200 René-Lévesque Blvd W
Montreal QC H2Z 1X4

Telephone: 1-514-283-1575
Telephone (toll free): 1-877-483-1575
Fax: 1-514-283-7762
Fax (toll free): 1-855-244-4470

Ontario

Non-Insured Health Benefits
1455–10 Wellington Street
Address Locator: 6604E
Gatineau QC K1A 0H4

Client information line
Telephone (toll free): 1-800-640-0642
Fax (toll free): 1-800-806-6662

5. Mental Health Counseling

The NIHB program may cover mental health counseling services provided by eligible professionals to support members' psychological, emotional, and social well-being.

Important

Before proceeding with services, make sure the provider is recognized by the NIHB program. You are advised to verify coverage before your first appointment.

Replacement Frequency

The number of sessions covered depends on the clinical assessment, the member's needs, and the program criteria. Please check your eligibility before proceeding with services.

Documents Typically Required

- Detailed invoice from the service provider
- Payment receipts, if applicable
- Supporting documents requested by NIHB

Mental Health Counseling also offers The Hope for Wellness Helpline

Whether you prefer to talk to someone over the phone or online, we're here to help you anytime.

Chat online:
hopeforwellness.ca

Call us at 1-855-242-3310

The Hope for Wellness Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to all Indigenous people in Canada.

Quebec

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Guy-Favreau Complex East Tower
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Client information line
Telephone (toll free): 1-800-640-0642

MEMBER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Have you found a clinic, a healthcare professional, or a service provider that offers excellent care to First Nations people and participates in the NIHB Program?

We're always looking for "star" clinics—that is, providers who:

- Participate in the NIHB program
- Adhere to the program's fee schedule
- Bill NIHB directly whenever possible
- Do not charge members any additional non-reimbursable fees
- Provide high-quality, respectful service to our clients

Your recommendations can help other members find providers who are familiar with the program and avoid unnecessary expenses.

Share your suggestions

If you know of a clinic, professional, or provider you would recommend, please feel free to send me the following information:

- Name of the clinic or professional;
- City;
- Type of service (dental, optometry, psychology, orthotics, audiology, etc.);
- Your evaluation of the service received.

That way, I'll be able to share this information with the other members of our community.

Contact me
Email: lmailhot@hotmail.com
Facebook: Odanak Health Center

By working together and sharing our experiences, we can make it easier to access services covered by NIHB and help members get the care they need without incurring ineligible out-of-pocket costs.

If you have any questions about your NIHB case, please feel free to contact me. I'd be happy to assist you with the process.

105, rue Sibosis Odanak QC J0G 1H0

Telephone: 450-568-6766 ext. 4030

Fax: 450-568-6717



MEDICAL RECORDS

Andréanne Gouin

Medical Archivist and Accreditation Canada Coordinator - Odanak Health Center

BEHIND THE SCENES, DRIVING SERVICE QUALITY

I have the privilege of serving in a dual role at the Odanak Health Center (CSO) as both Accreditation Canada coordinator and medical archivist. Although these roles are often carried out behind the scenes, they contribute every day to the quality, safety, and continuous improvement of the care and services provided to our community.

As the Accreditation Canada coordinator, I oversee the preparatory work for the 2029 accreditation survey. Over 400 criteria will be evaluated. In collaboration with all CSO teams, we analyze our practices, develop action plans, and implement the necessary improvements to meet the highest quality standards. I would like to wholeheartedly thank all the CSO teams for their trust and commitment to this wonderful process of continuous improvement.

As a medical archivist, I help our teams update policies and procedures and support professionals in managing patient records. Along with my colleague Paule, another medical archivist, we have distinct yet complementary roles. Together, we lend our expertise to the teams, lead various committees, and contribute to the continuous improvement of our practices. I am also the designated medical archivist for the CSO's psychosocial team. In my role, I assist them with legal matters, best practices in clinical documentation, and the review and compliance of patient records.

Behind every updated policy, every committee, and every action plan lies a common goal: providing the Odanak community with safe and compassionate care and services of the highest quality. I am proud to be part of this team effort.

GREAT NEWS FOR OUR TEAM

We are thrilled to welcome Lora, a part-time medical archivist who has joined the CSO's Reception and Archives team. Her arrival provides invaluable support, and we wish her the warmest of welcomes!

I would also like to highlight the essential work of Janice, our receptionist-secretary, who supports us every day with numerous administrative tasks. I'd also like to acknowledge Annie, who meticulously oversees the digitization of our records. Their contributions are vital to the smooth operation of our team. Thanks to everyone's dedication and the way our skills complement one another, we're moving forward together.

FROM MEDICAL ARCHIVIST TO HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNICIAN

Nidelle Lora Nanfack Togomo

Health Information Technician - Odanak Health Center

Medical archivists have long been perceived as performing an outdated role, limited to filing papers—but that's not the case! The confusion stems from a misunderstanding of their duties. Filing papers is the responsibility of a different professional category that operates earlier in the information processing chain. This change comes after over a decade of work by AGISQ[1], in collaboration with various stakeholders and organizations within the network. It reflects the evolution of our profession, the expansion of our responsibilities, and the essential role our expertise plays in the management, analysis, processing, protection, and use of health information.

The new title of "**Health Information Technician**" better reflects the current reality of the profession. It highlights the expertise developed in a variety of fields, such as clinical data quality, the analysis and processing of clinical notes, the confidentiality of personal information, electronic record management, health statistics, and support for decision-making processes.

Health information technicians play a strategic role at the Odanak Health Center. They ensure that information is accurate, accessible to authorized individuals, and compliant with legal requirements. Their work directly contributes to the quality of care by analyzing and processing clinical notes, ensuring patient safety, evaluating services, planning resources, and maintaining records.

This is the start of a new adventure for me, Lora, who was recently hired part-time at the CSO. Every file, every task, and every collaboration contributes to an essential mission: delivering high-quality care. I am very proud to join the CSO team in this new role. I am delighted to put my skills to work for this wonderful team, and I will help support the work of technicians Paule and Andréanne and lighten their daily workload.

> *"Behind every effective treatment, reliable information is key."*

1 AGISQ: Association of Health Information Managers of Quebec

NEWS FROM YOUR MUSEUM

MUSÉE DES Abénakis

Vicky Desfossés-Bégin
General Manager - Musée des Abénakis

Summer always brings a flurry of activity to the Abenaki Museum. Over the past few weeks, visitors from all walks of life have come to experience W8banaki culture, take part in our programming, explore our exhibits, and engage with our team. Every visit is an opportunity to pass on knowledge, share stories, and build connections.

Every year, we renew our programming to offer visitors new ways to discover W8banaki culture. Over the past few months, the Museum has continued this mission of cultural transmission through a diverse summer program and activities that allow visitors of all ages to discover different aspects of our heritage. As the summer season draws to a close, we're pleased to look back on some highlights and share what's in store for the Museum in the coming months.

A SUMMER OF DISCOVERY AND LEARNING

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

Throughout the summer, the Abenaki Museum offered a program of activities that allowed visitors to discover W8banaki culture firsthand and interactively. People of all ages were invited to create, experiment, and share ideas through activities that highlighted various skills, traditions, and artistic expressions.

Making talking sticks, medicine wheels, and bookmarks out of ash wood allowed participants to better understand the significance of these objects while crafting their own creations. Visitors were also invited to join artist Christine Sioui Wawanoloath for a tea break. This special gathering gave them the opportunity to speak with the artist about her career, her creative process, and the works featured in the exhibition *Kizi n'namih 8 matgwas | I Saw the Hare*, before creating their own piece inspired by her colorful and evocative world.

Among the new additions to this program were guided tours of an archaeological excavation site, offered near the Museum. Visitors were thus able to discover the work of archaeologists and better understand the importance of preserving the traces left by previous generations.

The season concluded with the return of *N'kadopi, I'm Hungry!*, an annual event that brings the community and visitors together around activities celebrating W8banaki culture. True to its mission, this day offered opportunities to discover traditional skills, participate in various activities, and share a moment of connection in a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Behind each of these activities lie conversations, questions, discoveries, and countless moments of connection between our team and visitors. It is this sense of closeness that makes the Abenaki Museum a vibrant place, where knowledge sharing truly comes to life.

ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

Summer 2026 also saw the launch of a major two-year community-based archaeological excavation project. Conducted near the Museum in collaboration with the Ndakina Office (W8banaki), this project aims to document and preserve an ancestral site threatened by erosion along the banks of the Alsig8ntegw (Saint-François River).

Since this project is intended to be community-driven, four young people from the Odanak and W8linak communities, aged 10 to 18, participated as apprentice archaeologists. Guided by the team from the Ndakina Office, they learned about the various stages of an archaeological excavation while developing a special connection to their history, territory, and heritage. This experience also helped strengthen their sense of belonging to the Nation.

In August, the excavations were opened to members of the Nation. This community participation allowed other members to enjoy a unique hands-on experience, fostering knowledge sharing, dialogue, and collective ownership of this exceptional heritage.

Beyond the experience offered to visitors, this project represents an important step toward preserving W8banaki heritage. The research will help better document a still-little-known period in the Nation's history, enrich knowledge about the ancestral occupation of the territory, and share these discoveries with the community.

Work will continue through 2027 and 2028 and will result in various outreach activities, including an exhibition, a documentary, and a range of educational materials designed to share these discoveries with as many people as possible.

Through this initiative, the Abenaki Museum carries on its mission of preserving, researching, and passing on cultural heritage, while fostering an approach that brings together scientific knowledge and community-based knowledge.



Excavation team—Summer 2026.

TEACHING THROUGH ART

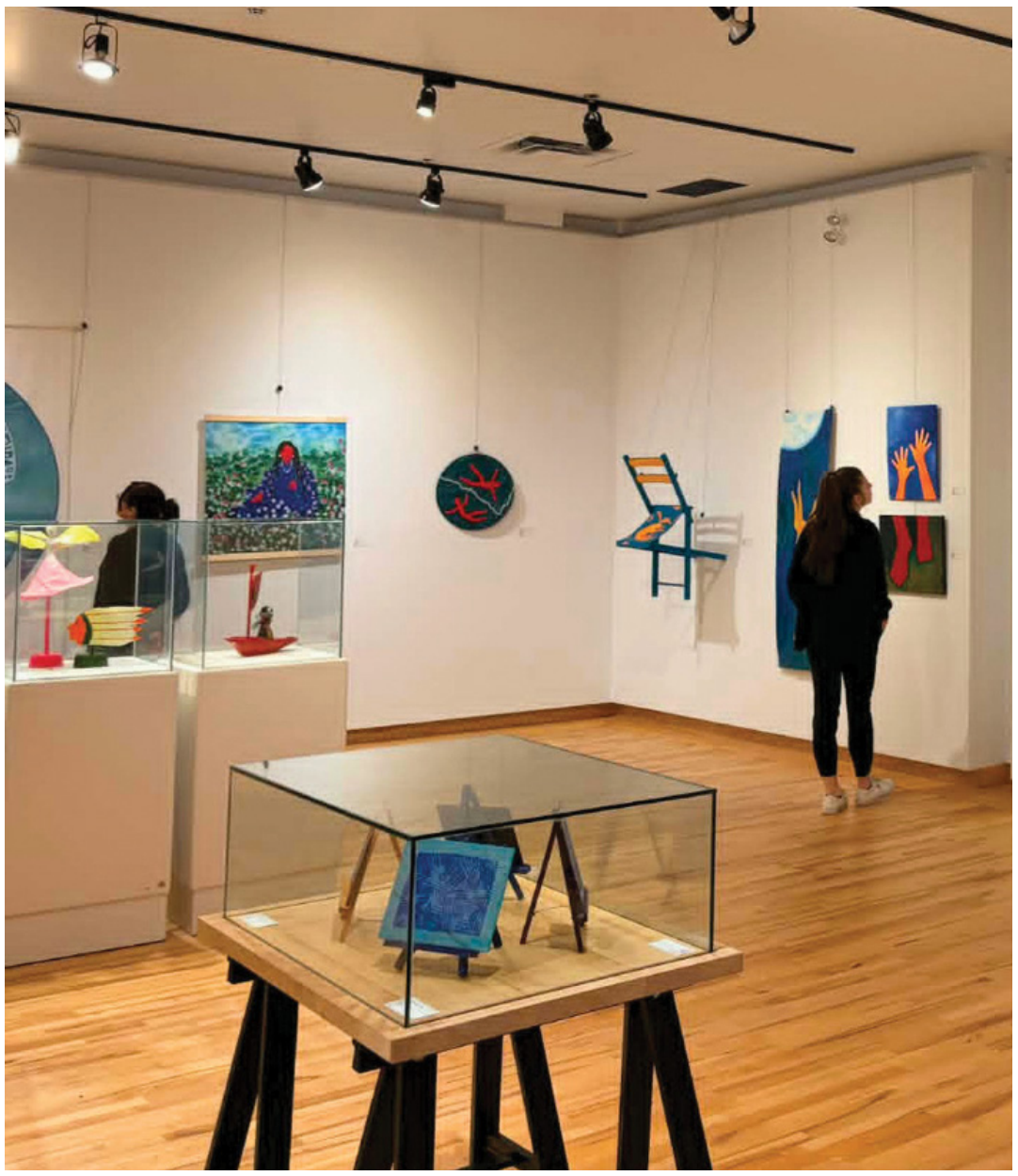
On display between April 14 and September 7, Christine Sioui Wawanoloath's exhibition *Kizi n'namih 8 matgwas | I Saw the Hare* accompanied visitors throughout the summer season. Drawing inspiration from nature, the imagination, and storytelling, the artist created a sensitive, colorful, and deeply evocative world.

This fall, the museum will continue its mission to showcase W8banaki culture from various perspectives through two new exhibitions.

Starting in October, visitors will be able to explore a brand-new exhibition dedicated to W8banakiak hunting and fishing guides. Presented for 12 months and produced in collaboration with the Bureau du Ndakina, this exhibition will highlight the essential role these men and women have played in the Nation's history. Through photographs, artifacts, and personal accounts, it will showcase a unique body of knowledge that has profoundly shaped the territory and contributed to the Nation's economic development.

This fall, the Museum will also present *Kin8ba*, an exhibition by W8banaki artist Denys Bernard. Bringing together several of his works, this exhibition will offer visitors the opportunity to discover a different perspective on contemporary W8banaki artistic creation.

By presenting both a major historical exhibition and an exhibition dedicated to an artist from the Nation, the Museum continues its mission to highlight the richness and diversity of W8banaki heritage.



Exhibition *Kizi n'namih 8 matgwas | I Saw the Hare* by Christine Sioui Wawanoloath.



Some of the products available in the online store.

A STORE THAT SHINES BEYOND THE MUSEUM

The summer also marked the launch of the Abenaki Museum's online store. This new store now allows visitors to explore and purchase a selection of books and products created by First Nations people. Visitors can thus extend their experience at the Museum or learn about our offerings, no matter where they are.

Beyond online sales, this store helps promote artists, authors, and artisans, while enabling the Museum to reach an ever-wider audience.

New products will continue to be added gradually over the coming months, making this store a dynamic showcase that will evolve alongside new creations and collaborations.

Every project carried out at the Abenaki Museum shares the same goal: to preserve, pass on, and promote W8banaki culture. Thanks to the dedication of our team, our partners, and our community, this mission continues to come to life day after day.

Wliwni—thank you to everyone who is joining us on this journey. We're already looking forward to seeing you at the Abenaki Museum soon!