

THUNDER BAY DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

Infant Hearing Program

Northwestern Ontario Regions



Infant Hearing In NWO

- **Challenges:**

- Distance:

- 832 km from Fort Severn to Thunder Bay
 - 880 km from Thunder Bay to Toronto
 - Road access communities are 300+ km from IHP centers in NWHU and TBDHU areas
 - Road access communities range to 400 km in Sudbury district
 - Most communities in NWHU are 750+ air miles to TBDHU and NWHU IHP centers



Infant Hearing In NWO

- **Challenges:**

- Transportation Funding
 - FNIHB will not pay for travel for IHP services
 - OHIP will not pay for travel for IHP services
- Number of Infants Born in Areas
 - Most remote communities have <50 births per year
 - Keeping trained personnel is a challenge





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EXPLANATION

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EXPLANATION

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EXPLANATION

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EXPLANATION

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Infant Hearing In NWO

- **Advantages**

- Hub System

- the NWO IHP centers are able to arrange services around a hub system with central service provision due to population

- Sharing of Services

- NWHU and TBDHU can share services to some extent, due to birth center location and flight scheduling



Infant Hearing In NWO

- **Hub System**

- Use of the hub system allows us to have several Stage 1 screening sites, feeding a central Stage 2 site.
- Referrals to audiology from all Stage 2 sites go to centrally located IHP center



Remote Diagnostics



Remote Diagnostics

- Ability to perform ABR and OAE diagnostic testing from a remote location, adhering to IHP protocol
- Requires a trained technician at the remote site to prepare, connect and monitor the infant
- Requires an IHP audiologist to perform the test from the central or control site



Remote Diagnostics

- Advantages:
 - Infants travel minimal distances for testing
 - Lack of transportation funding is less critical
 - Brings IHP to communities
 - Reduces travel costs to IHP
 - Allows for 2nd opinion or difficult cases to be assessed without travel



Remote Diagnostics

- Challenges
 - Cannot perform tympanometry or reflex measures
 - Audiologist has less control over infant
- ↑ technology always brings ↑ challenges!

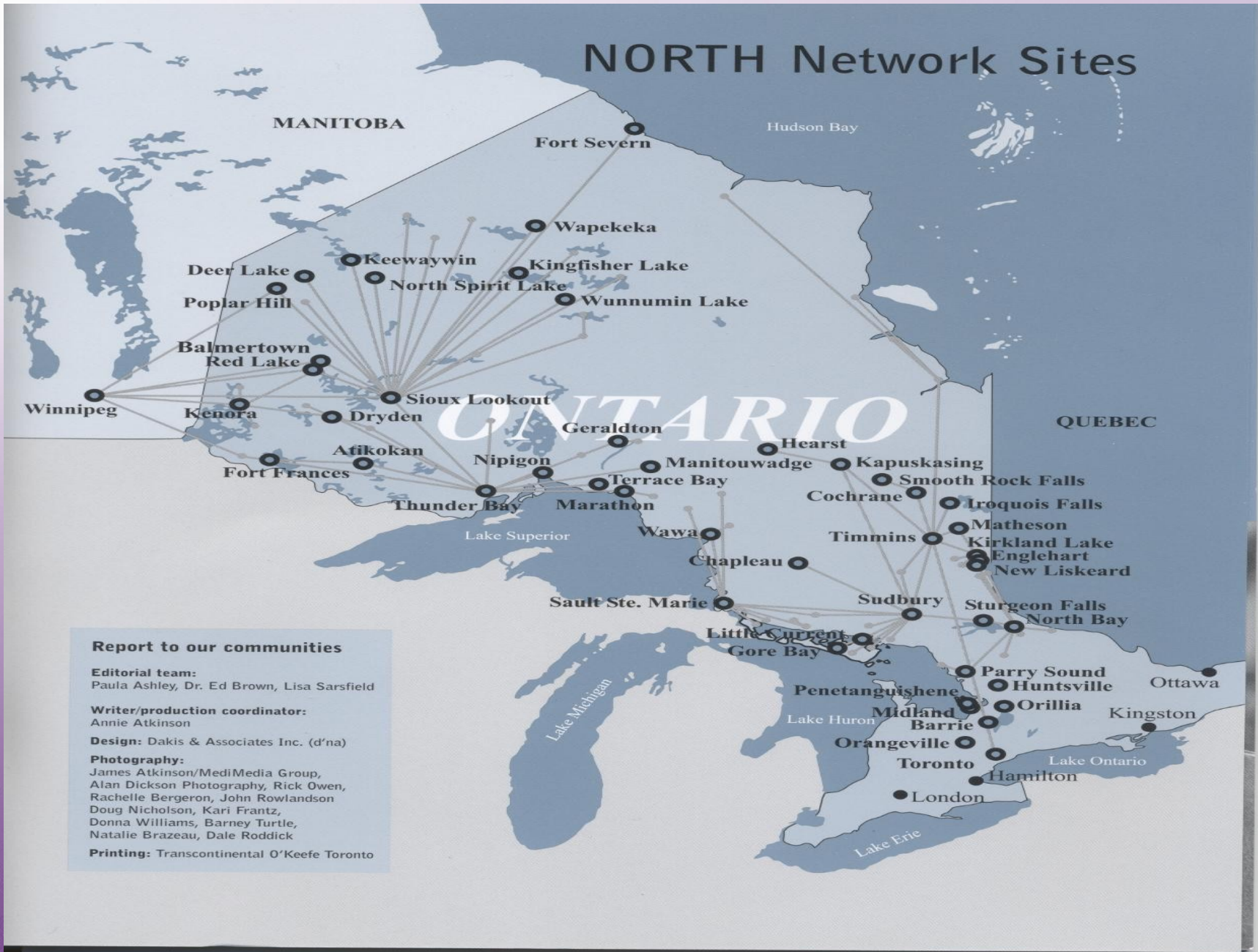


Remote Diagnostics

- Methods
 - Remote RS 232
 - in essence, a very long cable between the NavPro and the laptop
 - Remote operation of laptop
 - control of entire NavPro/Scout software from a remote location



NORTH Network Sites



Report to our communities

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Remote Diagnostics

- North Network
 - With the existing network, remote RS 232 control is not possible at present
 - Remote operation of NavPro/Scout is possible with IP connection using North Network



Remote Diagnostics

- Challenges:
 - Software for laptop to control remote system
 - Dedicated IP ports at NN sites
 - Suitable NN sites (sound levels, location etc)
 - Existing software and OS



Remote Diagnostics

- Answers
 - Software is readily available
 - NN is willing to install dedicated IP ports, working on local issues
 - MOST IHP diagnostic laptops are compatible



Remote Diagnostics

- To Do:
 - test of system at TBRHSC with IP hookup
 - test of system between Thunder Bay and Fort Frances
 - coordination and standardizing of other IHP sites
 - availability of remote systems

