



annual report

2024-2025





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board of directors



Ogimma Mark McCoy
Batchewana First Nation



Ogimma Kwe Karen Bell
Travis Jones
Garden River First Nation



Mary Ann Giguere
Thessalon First Nation



Ogimma Brent Niganobe - Secretary Treasurer
Peyton Pitawanakwat - Chairperson
Denise Boyer-Payette
Mississauga First Nation



Ogimma Kwe Wilma-Lee Johnston
Michelle Owl
Serpent River First Nation



Ogimma Angus Toulouse - Vice Chair
Lawrence Solomon
Sagamok Anishnawbek

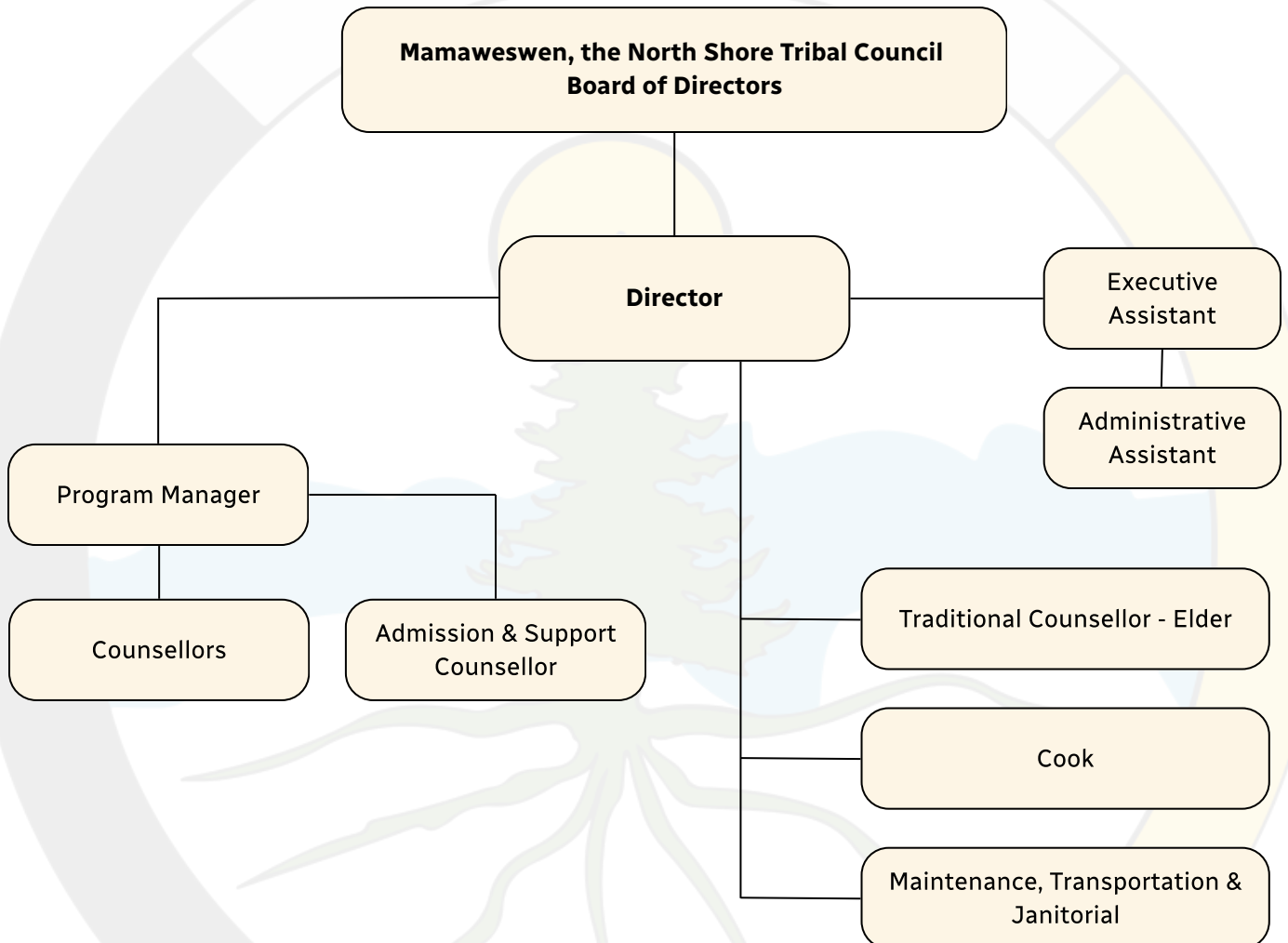


Ogimma Craig Nootchtai
Darrell Grenier
Atikameksheng Anishnawbek

Non-voting members



organizational chart



executive summary

Aanii Boozhoo! Welcome to the Benbowopka Treatment Centre Annual Report for fiscal year 2024-2025!

The 2024–2025 fiscal year was a transformative year for Benbowopka Treatment Centre, characterized by significant progress in capital development, enhancements to our residential treatment programming, expanded community outreach, and strengthened integration with cultural and primary health services. Guided by our mission to deliver holistic, culturally grounded care, we have adapted to emerging needs while continuing to build a strong foundation for the future. This report reflects our shared accomplishments, the lessons learned, and our priorities moving forward.

Miigwetch,
Chantelle Evans, Director

capital project

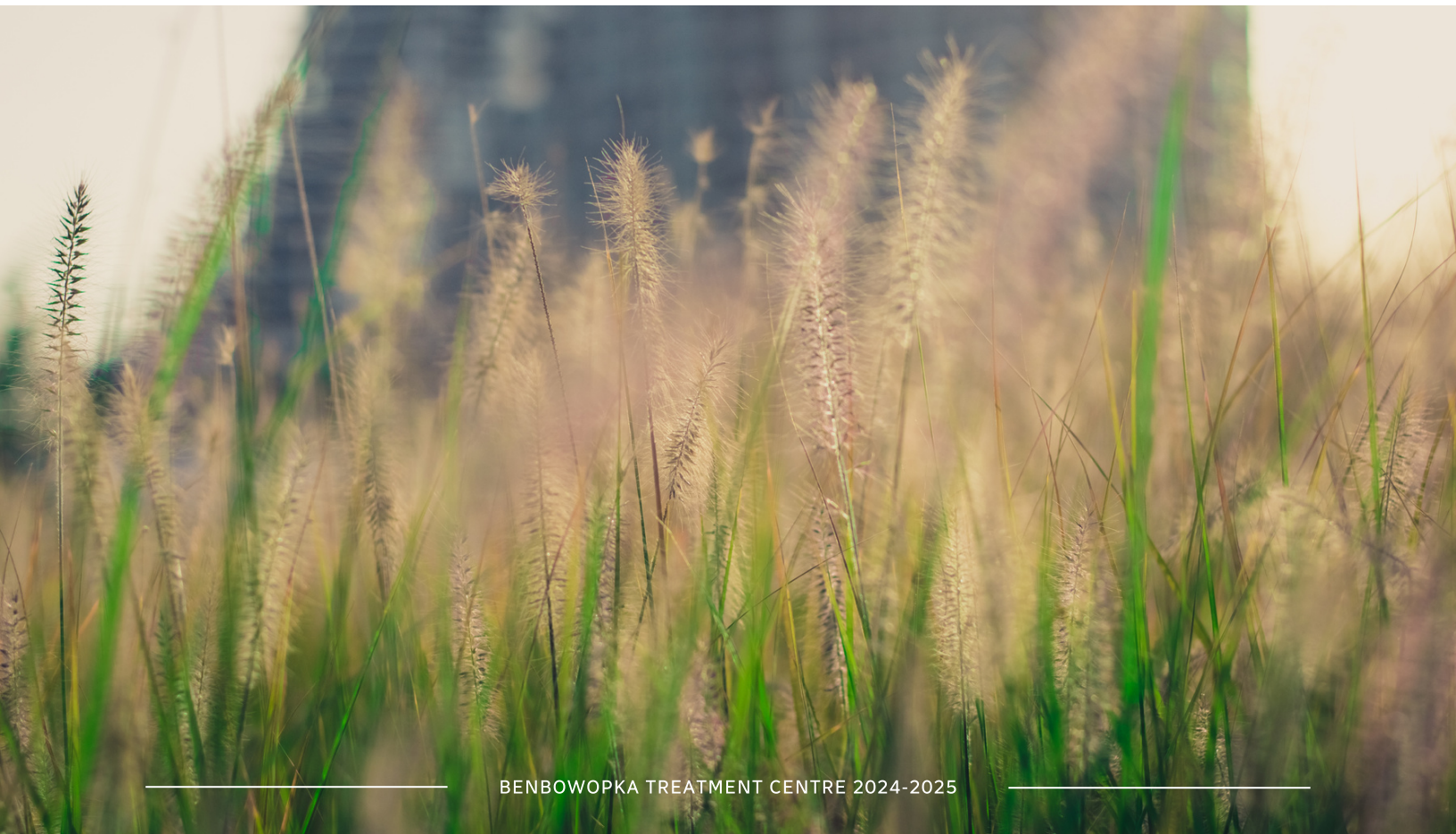
The year began with the groundbreaking of our new treatment facility, marked by traditional Pipe, Fire, and Water Ceremonies led by Elders and Shkaabewisag from the Seven First Nations along the North Shore. These ceremonies honoured the land and sought blessings for the new space, ensuring it will be a place of healing for generations to come. Construction progressed steadily despite seasonal slowdowns, with the structural framework and walls completed by year's end.

The 16-bed facility will provide expanded capacity for residential treatment and allow for new program opportunities, including potential use as a training site during program downtime. This forward-thinking approach will enable Benbowopka to not only serve more relatives but also strengthen the skills and knowledge of service providers across the region. Regular oversight by our project leadership has ensured the build remains on schedule for completion in late 2025.

administration & human resources

Benbowopka's integration within Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services (MNSCHS) continued to provide clients with seamless access to primary care, mental health, and community supports. This year, we expanded our reach by providing transportation for clients from Thessalon, Mississauga, and Serpent River First Nations to attend the Mino Clinic at Benbowopka, helping to address stigma-related barriers to accessing care in their home communities.

We strengthened our team with the hiring of a new Cultural Program Manager, cultural program leads, and additional counselling and support staff. Professional development was prioritized, with participation in national conferences, cultural safety training, crisis intervention workshops, and the full implementation of the AMIS (Addiction Management Information System) platform to improve assessment, intake, and program evaluation processes.



intake & service delivery

The Intake Support Counsellor serves as a vital link between individuals, communities, and Benbowopka Treatment Centre's services. As the first point of contact, they initiate outreach through monthly visits to the Seven First Nations along the North Shore and urban Indigenous service organizations. These visits build trust, educate about the program, and support clients through the application process.

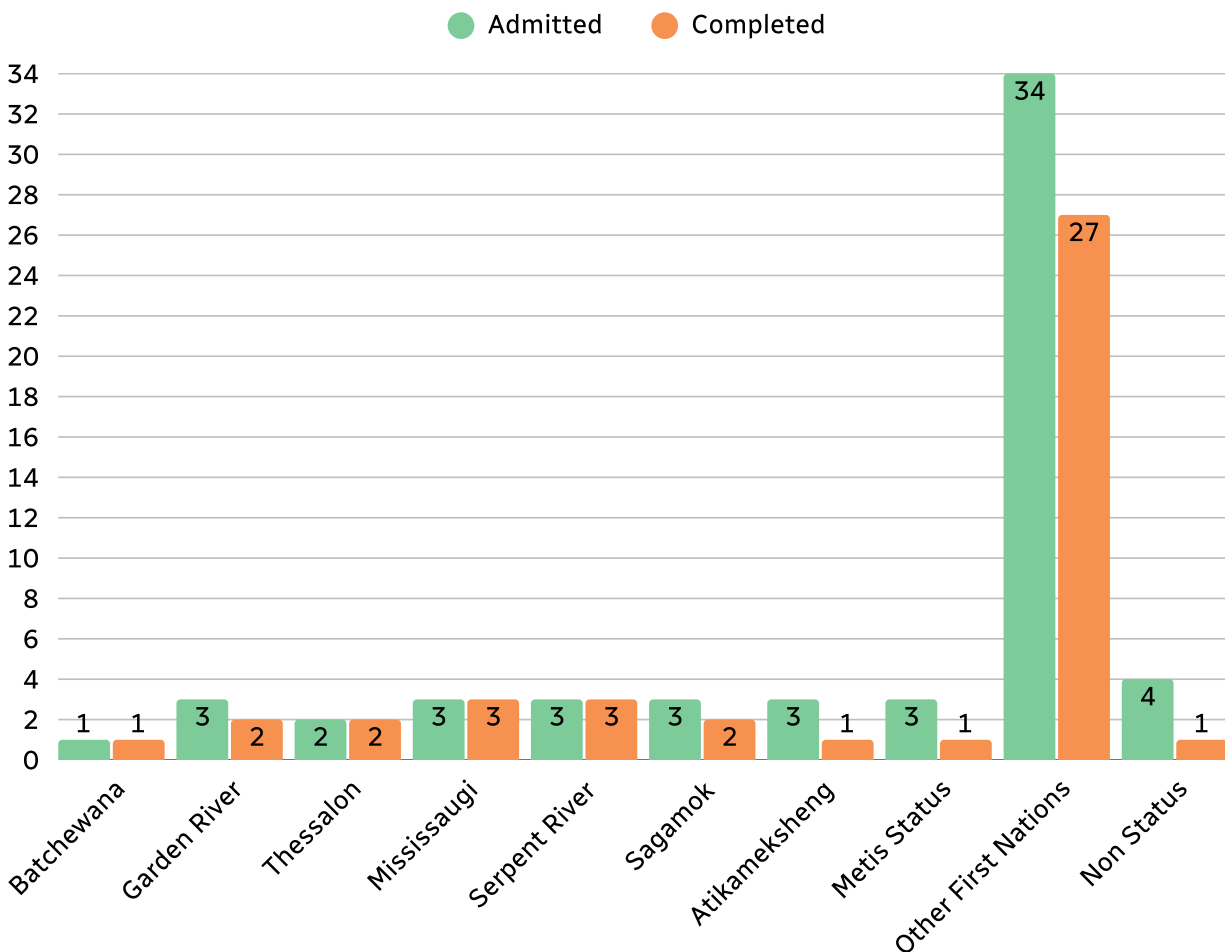
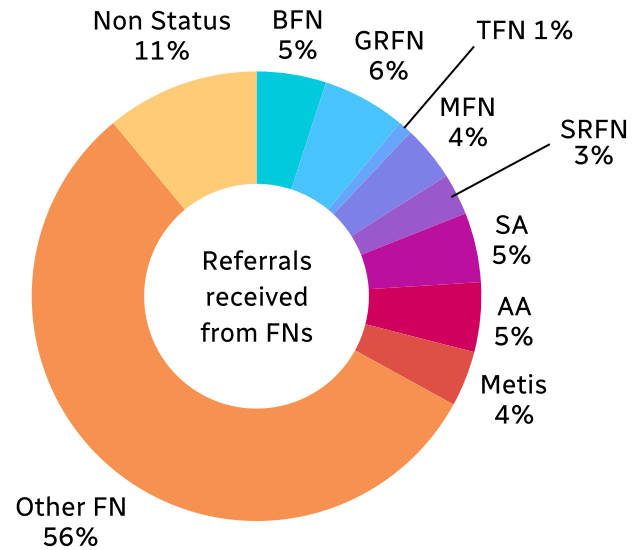
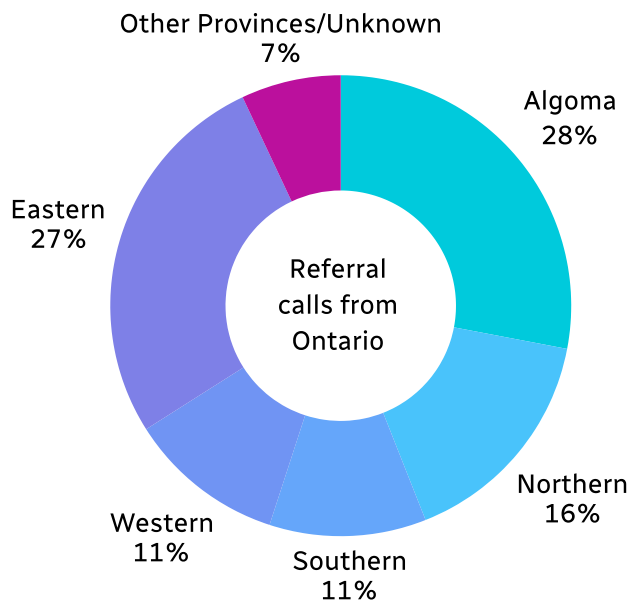
Upon receiving a referral or self-referral, the counsellor conducts thorough assessments to determine treatment readiness, identify immediate needs, and begin collaborative healing plans. This includes reviewing medical, social, and cultural history, and addressing barriers such as transportation, childcare, or ongoing medical care. For clients requiring opioid agonist therapy, coordination with the Mino Clinic and prescribing physicians ensures continuity of care.

The intake process is culturally safe, client-centered, and responsive. Cultural mental wellness surveys help tailor treatment plans that honour both clinical and cultural healing. From intake onward, the counsellor works with community support workers, Elders, and health providers to ensure smooth program entry and early aftercare planning.

This proactive, holistic approach has strengthened community relationships, improved accessibility, and enhanced client preparedness—leading to higher engagement and successful completions.

Each cycle begins and ends with sweat lodge ceremonies, supported by daily sacred fires, cedar baths, energy work, and pipe ceremonies. Clients engage in creative and skill-building activities like drum-making, beading, and leatherwork. Physical wellness is promoted through gym sessions, outdoor recreation, and guest presentations, while emotional and spiritual health is nurtured through Elder guidance, one-on-one counselling, nature-based healing, and community integration.

referral trends & completion rates



Cycle 1-24 / May 1, 2024 - June 19, 2024

First Nation	Referred	Admitted	Closed	Incomplete	Completed
Batchewana					
Garden River	1		1		
Thessalon	1	1			1
Mississauga	1		1		
Serpent River	3	2	1		2
Sagamok	1		1		
Atikameksheng	2	1	1	1	
Metis Status	2	1	1		1
Other First Nation	21	5	16	1	4
Non Status	4	1	3	1	

Cycle 2-24 / June 26, 2024 - August 14, 2024

First Nation	Referred	Admitted	Closed	Incomplete	Completed
Batchewana	4	1	3		1
Garden River	2	1	1		1
Thessalon	1	1			1
Mississauga	1		1		
Serpent River	1	1			1
Sagamok	1		1		
Atikameksheng	2		2		
Metis Status	2	2		2	
Other First Nation	12	5	7		5
Non Status	3		3		

Cycle 3-24 / September 4, 2024 - October 23, 2024

First Nation	Referred	Admitted	Closed	Incomplete	Completed
Batchewana	1		1		
Garden River	2		2		
Thessalon					
Mississauga					
Serpent River	1				
Sagamok	1		1		
Atikameksheng	1		1		
Metis Status					
Other First Nation	11	4	7	2	2
Non Status	2	2		1	1

Cycle 4-24 / October 30, 2024 - December 18, 2024

First Nation	Referred	Admitted	Closed	Incomplete	Completed
Batchewana					
Garden River	2	1	1	1	
Thessalon					
Mississauga	3	2	1		2
Serpent River					
Sagamok	2	2			2
Atikameksheng					
Metis Status					
Other First Nation	8	4	4	1	3
Non Status	3		3		

Cycle 5-24 / January 8, 2025 - February 19, 2025

First Nation	Referred	Admitted	Closed	Incomplete	Completed
Batchewana	2		2		
Garden River	1		1		
Thessalon					
Mississauga					
Serpent River					
Sagamok	3	1	2	1	
Atikameksheng	2	2		1	1
Metis Status					
Other First Nation	20	7	13		7
Non Status	5	1	4	1	

Cycle 6-24 / February 26, 2025 - April 9, 2025

First Nation	Referred	Admitted	Closed	Incomplete	Completed
Batchewana					
Garden River	1	1			1
Thessalon					
Mississauga	1	1			1
Serpent River					
Sagamok					
Atikameksheng	1		1		
Metis Status	2		2		
Other First Nation	16	9	7	3	6
Non Status					

service outcomes & impact

The 2024–2025 fiscal year demonstrated notable improvements in program outcomes, particularly in the latter half following the transition to the 42-day treatment cycle. This adjustment, informed by client feedback and staff observation, led to higher levels of engagement, reduced mid-program attrition, and improved graduation rates. These gains were also supported by enhanced intake readiness assessments, stronger pre-treatment engagement, and more robust aftercare planning in collaboration with community workers. While attrition due to treatment readiness remains a challenge, proactive strategies have been developed to strengthen pre-admission engagement, improve readiness assessments, and coordinate immediate aftercare support upon discharge. These measures are helping to ensure that relatives return to their communities with both a plan and the necessary resources to sustain recovery.

The importance of these deliverables extends beyond individual program metrics. Each successful graduation represents a strengthened opportunity for sustained recovery, healthier family relationships, and increased community wellness. By equipping clients with practical coping skills, cultural connections, and community-based support networks, the program reduces the risk of relapse and promotes long-term resilience. Graduates often return to their communities as advocates for healing.

From a systems perspective, improved service outcomes contribute to the broader goal of reducing the burden on emergency, acute care, and justice systems by addressing root causes of addiction through a holistic and culturally grounded approach. Tracking and analyzing these outcomes through tools like the AMIS system not only supports continuous quality improvement but also demonstrates accountability to funders and stakeholders, helping to secure sustainable resources for future programming.



conclusion & looking ahead

As we prepare for the completion and opening of our new treatment facility, Benbowopka remains committed to delivering culturally grounded, client-centered care that honours the strengths and traditions of our communities. Priorities for the coming year include completing the capital project, reinstating full methadone client intake once staffing levels allow, further refining program content, and expanding community-based supports.

Our successes this year are the result of the dedication, skill, and compassion of our staff, Elders, cultural knowledge keepers, community partners, and supporters. Together, we are building a future where every individual has the opportunity to heal, thrive, and live in balance—mind, body, and spirit.



144 Causley Street
PO Box 568
Blind River, ON P0R1B0
705-356-1681

www.benbowopka.com