

Developing a self-sufficient
community with one voice
Ours!

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Advancing through
a holistic approach

Annual Report

2019-2020

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Tobacco and Fuel Tax Rebates and Spending

April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020

	2019/2020	2018/2019
Total Tobacco Tax Rebate from Province of PEI	907,400	907,400
Amount of rebate relating to sales to FN members	544,440	544,440
Balance available to the Band	362,960	362,960
Fuel Tax Rebate from Province of PEI	238,611	199,639
Total tax rebates available to the Band	<u>\$ 601,571</u>	<u>\$562,599</u>
Distributed as bonuses to community members		
Summer	39,200	38,400
Christmas	208,400	198,500
Total Community member bonuses	247,600	236,900
Housing Expenses - NOT funded by AANDC	195,613	288,293
Employment - Seasonal workers	61,018	85,943
Cultural Events - Powwow	34,540	33,131
- Workshops	3,200	600
Elder Assistance - Cleaning, caretaking etc	1,715	4,570
Youth Assistance - School trips, awards, travel etc	1,000	3,022
Misc Community Expenses - Funeral/wakes, moose, BBQ's etc	23,598	21,015
Magic Mountain Trip	7,718	6,169
Christmas events	7,780	2,053
Elders Trips		1,100
Halloween	2,936	1,500
Oil and Electric community members	1,698	3,136
Education assistance	1,710	-
Storm assistance	29,673	17,600
Emergency travel/medical assist	4,800	4,100
Sports Activities	36,791	36,288
Heat and lights for Elders	43,200	41,436
Snow removal	14,744	11,875
Total expenses funded by tax rebates	<u>\$ 719,334</u>	<u>\$798,731</u>
Difference of revenues and expenses	<u>-\$ 117,763</u>	<u>-\$236,132</u>

Please note that when cigarettes and tobacco are purchased from the wholesaler, the Band pays tax on all purchases. When the Band sells cigarettes and tobacco to First Nation members they do not collect tax on the sale. Per GasBar Manager, approx. 60% of sales are to First Nation members so a large part of the rebate from the Province is to reimburse the Band for tax already paid when the products were purchased from the wholesaler.

ABEGWEIT FIRST NATION CHIEF'S FORUM

Date:
Feb 27th

Location:
Abegweit
First
Nation
Community
Room

Chief Gould held a forum in the Abegweit First Nation in order to share some initial plans for the community's future growth.



More than
30
Delegates from
the business
sector were
in attendance



Consultants from MRSB were used to provide technical expertise in sharing community-focused goals to the targetted audience.



Presenters and attendees included rep's from government & business.



Items covered, and well received, included the following:

- 1 Our Path Forward
- 2 People First
- 3 Outstanding Partnerships
- 4 Self-Sustaining Community
- 5 Business Opportunities
- 6 Community Enhancement

Ideas and disussions included business, government, and education focused on improving the Abegweit First Nation.



Message from the Chief

Hello to all community members. As your Chief it is my honour to present to you our 2019-2020 annual report.

The report and the work highlighted within showcases the accomplishments made between April 1st, 2019 through March 31, 2020. This includes the period before and the beginning of the current Chief, Band Council, and Administration's first year since the election in June of 2019.

The current council and I have continued to build upon this work to ensure that our community continues to grow and prosper. This report allows us the opportunity to share and showcase the collective progress and developments made by the Chief, Band Council, and various administration teams for you, our community.

As we all know at present, the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) has had great impacts in all areas of our lives as individuals, families, and as a community from it's onset to the present day. I would like to remind everyone that the information in this report only reflects the time period in which the pandemic was just beginning, but the effects that it has had and continues to have in our community at present are certainly not being overlooked.

As we look back on the previous year's accomplishments in this report, we can also look forward to new and exciting developments in the future. At this time, I'd like to personally thank each and every one in the community for the efforts and contributions in the 2019-2020 fiscal year as well as our community's past, present, and ongoing progress.

Together, as a community, we will continue to create a thriving future for all Mi'kmaq people of Abegweit First Nation, with one voice - Ours!

Welalin,

Chief Junior Gould

Band Employment Breakdown

Individuals Employed by the Band 2019-20	Community Members	Non-Community Members
Band Administration	23	4
Health Department & Early Childhood Centre	20	10
Commercial Fisheries	38	0
Band Owned Businesses	14	25
Summer Students	15	0
Other (Stream Enhancement, Seasonal)	42	8
Grand Totals	152	47
Total Number of People Employed by Band	199	

Education

It has been quite a different year for education in 2019-20. However, that has been the case for most students across Canada. We started our year started with a new bus and 78 students attending provincial/private schools and 4 students in K4 at our Band operated school. We are proud to have four university graduates and two high school graduates this year.

We are in the process of working with the Federal Department of Indigenous Services in a process which will change the way that it funds First Nation education programs. The new federal initiative is Education Transformation and they hope to provide funding by using a provincial funding formula for each province in Canada. This has been a slow process and is not near completion. We continue to move forward working together with the federal government, our First Nation, and the province of Prince Edward Island.

Our students were making good progress in a busy year while receiving many supports from Jordan's Principle to help them along, such as, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, psycho educational assessments, tutoring, Educational Assistants, educational equipment, and supports and respite care for parents when necessary. Then in March COVID-19 hit and our students were sent home, and expected to continue some online work from there. This was a difficult time, whereby some students did not have Wi-Fi to get the online work or computer equipment to use. We were able to get some chrome books and tablets and provided some funds for students to get Wi-Fi hooked up. Our Indigenous support teacher provided some assistance with online studies. Parents also struggled as they had to work from home and, in addition, the Montessori Charlottetown School, of which nine of our students attended, has now closed, and has no plans to re-open. Our hope is that we get to return to school and have a successful school year for 2020-2021.

In comparison to years prior, this was the first year that we were able to modify our license to take 6 infants. This changes annually depending on the ages of children enrolled, certified staff, and how many children are on our waiting list. We do our very best to service all Band Members' children, in a timely manner, but always best practice to get on our waiting list as soon as possible to help us plan for the years coming.

If any community members are interested in a career in Early Childhood Education, please come see us! We would be happy to help you get set up with courses and help you along the way navigating programs and assignments! Holland College offers a great 2-year program, some blended options, and there is lots of funding right now! Start your journey of becoming a Certified, Level 3 Early Childhood Educator, shaping the lives of tomorrow!



Early Childhood Centre - Headstart

The Abegweit First Nation Early Childhood Centre provides high quality education and care for Infants 9 months old to school entry, Monday to Friday, year-round. The Centre is Provincially Licensed and a designated Early Years Centre, following PEI's Early Learning Framework, as well as Aboriginal Headstart on Reserves' Core Values.

In 2019-2020, we have been focused on our Centre Action Plan created in partnership with the Province with our Coach, improving aspects of Environment, Relationships, and Experiences. Also this year, we were awarded a certification in AQI (Assessment for Quality Improvement) through Aboriginal Headstart on Reserves, in partnership with the City of Toronto.

In order to service the community better, our hours have extended this year to 7:45am – 4:15pm, to help accommodate Band staff working 8am-4pm.

Parents are children's first and best teachers. We are so honoured to be here working with families to make the first 5 years, the most crucial for brain development and early intervention, the very best Headstart for children in community! After all, we likely have a future Chief under our roof!



We have a staff of up to 9 members:

- 1 Director
- 1 Cook
- 2 Infant Early Childhood Educators
- 2 Family Grouping Educators (Toddlers & Preschoolers)
- 2 Jordan's Principle 1:1 Support Workers
- 1 Covid-19 Support Staff
- =9 Staff total

We also have a few substitutes that help out when staff are sick or have vacation.

If you, or someone you know would be a good fit for this position, please feel free to reach out to us!

Children:

- 6 Infants
- 12 Toddlers & Pre-Schoolers (Family Grouping)
- =18 children total

Educator to Child Ratios:

- 1 Educator : 3 Infants
- 1 Educator: 5 Toddlers
- 1 Educator: 10 Pre-Schoolers

3-Year Student Breakdown

Breakdown of Students Funded by the Band	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-20
Head Start	9	4	4
Elementary	42	50	54
Junior High	6	6	6
High School	15	20	18
Post-Secondary	7	7	8
Total Students Funded	79	87	90
High School Graduates	1	1	2
Post-Secondary Graduates	3	1	4
Post-Secondary Deferrals	0	1	1



Epekwitk Gas Bar

The Epekwitk Gas Bar has been an integral part of Abegweit operation and functions since its opening. It provides services to our community members and to numerous visitors as well. Through its operation it also provides ongoing



supports to our community, such as sponsorship of the 21st annual Pow Wow and of many community members in Sports and/or Cultural events.

Below are a few listed highlights of the Gas Bar and its operation:

- It employs a total of 25 staff persons from our community and the surrounding area;
- The grocery department has been growing to offer a larger variety of foods and snacks, including our new Ice cream cake line;
- It offers staff and customer incentives;
- A recent 10 year renewal contract was completed with Ultramar;
- It is introducing a new Journie rewards program with bigger savings on fuel and getting free concessions while doing that;
- Its monthly sales continue to increase;
- A Grand Re-Opening happened in Fall 2019;
- New Renovations were completed including: paving of complete parking lot, installing a new road sign with digital pricing, installing a new canopy face, and installing new LED lighting over the pumps– additionally, the Robins area and public bathrooms got new imaging, and new flooring was installed throughout the entire store; and

CHUCK AND THE FIRST PEOPLES' KITCHEN In October of 2019 Chief Gould, Elder Junior Peter Paul, and Brezyln Knockwood participated in an APTN filming with Chef Chuck Hughes on eel fishing. The filming was focused on highlighting past and present of traditional Mi'kmaq foods and customs.



The live airing on APTN was scheduled to be released sometime during the fall season of 2020. Following the live airing, the episode was also to be posted and archived on their website.

Art Class - Earlier in the year, youth express their interest in painting. With this newfound interest, we decided to hire Rebecca Sutherland from Art After Dark to come out and host a painting class. Rebecca is an interdisciplinary artist from Winnipeg and a second year MFA at Western who works between sculpture and painting. She was kind, patient, worked extremely well with the youth, and was happy to come out again. The youth had a great time making a new friend with our artist and got to bring home a masterpiece that they were proud of.



Youth Christmas Social - On December 13, 2019 just before Christmas break, we wanted to do something special for the youth for their last day group. We decide we would take extra time out of our day to put a little extra love into making a good and filling homemade meal. We served refreshments, ham, mashed potatoes, steamed veggies, cranberry sauce, stuffing, and had 2 different pies on hand for dessert. We also rent a movie and have some fun activities on the side to make their last day, a great day until we can see them again in the new year.

Summer Employment - During summer break, we partnered up with Linda O'Brien from MCPEI to help give the youth leadership skills, build their resumes, gain experience, and earn a school credit. During this time, we had many partnerships.

- On July 29, 2020 we partnered with our community police officer Greg Trainor to help teach our youth about road safety. While the younger youth was learning about safety, our employed youth partnered with Melody Swan to help with a smoothies and snacks.
- On August 11, 2020 we partnered up with a community elder named Barbra Jadis to share her knowledge on sweetgrass. She helps to teach the youth on how to pick, braid, and store their sweetgrass properly, as well as share where we can find sweetgrass on the island for our own time to pick.
- On August 12, 2020 we partnered up with Amber Jadis from STEAM to get the youth to try their hand coding. Here they were able to join a coding program to find a way to code their robots to water their plants automatically for them everyday.
- On August 13, 2020 we partnered up with Todd Knockwood from the community Hatchery to give the youth a tour of the building. Todd was able to explain everything from the courses you need to take in school for the job itself, to how to clean the hatchery properly.



Virtual Activities - During the time of March Break, right before we were about to host our own community Jack Frost. The first wave of COVID was about to hit the island. For safety precautions, our community Jack Frost was cancelled, and we were sent to work from home. For 2 – 3 months, we worked from home to organize online activities, future events, weekly updates, and giving out weekly prizes via Facebook lives for our community.

Youth Peer Mentors

Beading Workshop - On August 21, 2019 Schurman partnered up with Val Jadis to help teach the youth more about beading. This gave youth the opportunity to better understand the work behind beading and a great lesson in why we still bead to this day.

Dreamcatcher Workshop - On August 27, 2019 Schurman partnered up with a community elder named Mary Catherine. During her time with the youth, Mary was able to share some of knowledge of the dreamcatcher as well as teach the youth how to one of their own for home.

Traditional Dance Classes - On January 28, 2020 Schurman and Tyra partnered up with two community youth members to help teach other youth in our community on how to dance traditionally. Even though the youth may still be young, we still wanted to give them an opportunity to share their knowledge and teachings to their community.

Talking Stick – Sharing Our Stories - On January 31, 2020 we partnered up with Lori St. Onge from MCPEI to help assist with a Talking Stick Workshop. Elders were able to come together to share their stories with youth about what they have experienced during their lifetime and why it is so important to keep practicing our culture.

Quill Workshop - On March 10, 2020 we partnered up with Melissa Peter-Paul for a Quill Workshop. Youth were able to learn everything from where the materials come from to how it can be sold in stores for hundreds or sometimes thousands of dollars at a time.

Community Cook out - On January 17, 2020 we partnered up with Steven Cousins and Brezlyn Knockwood for a community cook out. Not only was Steven and Brezlyn amazing chiefs, but they are also great teachers. As the meal was cooking instead the Wellness Centre, our two facilitators were outside showing youth on how to cook their own bannock over an open fire. Youth was overwhelmed with joy when learning how to make their own food themselves giving them a sense of accomplishment.

Off the Wallz – Trampoline Park - On August 30, 2019 we were able to enjoy an evening out to the trampoline park alongside their community members. This was a great and fun way to get the youth up and running for some exercise and burn off some energy.

Archery Tag - On September 6, 2019 we connected with Bob Terpstra from Camp Saggie to come out and host an evening of Archery Tag. Bob was able to get the youth geared up, trained on how to play, and off the youth went enjoying their time with one another.

Brookvale Ski Trip - On February 26, 2020 we partnered up with Tyler Gould from the GoSports program for an evening of skiing. Transportation was provided as well as food and refreshments. Unfortunately, Tyler was not able to attend himself, but he was more than happy to fund the entire event for us.



Economic Development

In the spring of 2019, the community started construction of our new Jay's Care baseball field, with new bleachers, dugouts, and landscaping of the in and out field areas. Eastern Fence, G and P Trucking, and Construction companies worked with the community and the field was completed by the fall of 2020. The province of PEI, the Rotary Club of Montague, and Jays Foundation were partners with our community to implement this initiative.

"Every Child Counts, Every Child Can" a community project lead by Alishia Knockwood was successful in completing a community video on the importance of saving dollars for education through the Canada Learning Bond program. This video was produced by Eliza Knockwood with community members and Chief Gould. The project continues to be successful and several the communities' children have signed up for this free educational money. The video can be viewed at:



<https://vimeo.com/369684044/cf89fcceb8> - Once prompted, use the password: education

On November 07 and November 08, 2019, the community recognized our community's contribution of community members in front line and military services. On November 07, the Chief presented medals of recognition to a family member representing a community member who served in the First, Second World War the Korean War as well as community members who provided front line service work in conservation, fisheries, and policing.

On November 08, 2019, the Chief hosted Aboriginal Veterans Day. Attending in addition to community members was the Lieutenant Governor, Senator Francis, the Hon. Lawrence MacAulay, Premier Dennis King, MLA Sidney MacEwen, Military Leaders and members of the Canadian Armed Forces 4th and 5th Engineer Support Regiments, as well as the public.

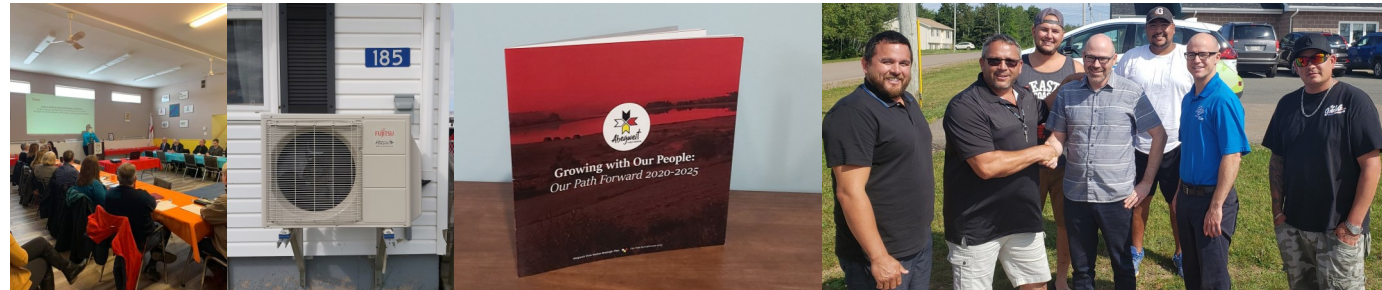


The community's Tourism and special events (2019) sector, continued to be reengineered and planned for the tourism season 2020. COVID 19 shut down travel tourism including special events, worldwide. Our community was significantly impacted resulting in no tourism activities as off March 2020. Abegweit had tourism initiatives through Dunphy's target Tours and Destination America ready to start the spring of 2020.

A pre-employment initiative through social was designed and the planning phase started in the winter of 2020. This initiative is being led by John Ryan Francis from the Social team with other community members. The project will provide job related supports to community members as they move from social to employment.

Abegweit worked with MRSB to complete a five- year economic plan for the community. This work included the Chief hosting a form here in the community with guests from private sector to the President of the University of PEI, Holland College, and ACOA. Results from this work help to provide the community with a plan of increasing meaningful work for community members and equity for business initiatives.

Abegweit has started the process to design and build a community building that would house a community commercial kitchen, our artisans, social enterprises and more. This infrastructure will also provide opportunity for the community to expand its economic base.



Abegweit developed a partnership with Efficiency PEI to complete energy audits on each home in Rocky Point, Morell Rear and Scotchfort for community members who were interested in participating. Phase one of this project was the audit with recommendations. Phase two was the implementation phase of completing the agreed upon energy recommendations. Heat pumps and blown in attic insulation were the top two recommendations from this work.

In August of 2019, the Band competed in a National Competition for Innovation for Housing for Indigenous communities across Canada. Over three hundred and forty-two proposals were submitted. In January 2020, Abegweit was one of thirty-four communities chosen for this initiative. Abegweit will be fifteen months in the accelerated phase followed by the construction phase which is expected to start in the spring of 2021. The goal of this initiative is to be built three to four homes using passive solar technology by Abegweit housing construction crew.

The 2019 wild blueberry season was successfully. The crop was slightly impacted by a spring frost. The field price for 2019, improved year over year, rebounding after several years of extremely low prices. A renewed focus from the industry is placing the importance of farm practices, fruit traceability and quality product.

Natural Resources

Following a short-term appointment that succeeded Joe Knockwood, who moved into a position with DFO, Roddy Gould was selected for the position of Director of Natural Resources in early 2020 through an open competition. Then, throughout the remainder of the 2019-2020 year, the Natural Resources Department (NRD) began reviewing and refining administrative processes while continuing forward on existing agreements.

The entire NRD has been collectively working toward defining and implementing new administration planning for all of the areas that fall within the department's responsibilities (fisheries, forestry, streams, EMO, and the Abegweit Conservation Society). Whether it has incorporated the strengthening of existing agreements or relationships, or the development of new supports and partnerships, the NRD team has been making great strides towards improving, building, and reinforcing the management of our natural resources - which will translate into an increase in the quality and amount of opportunities to be made available for our community.

Physical Activity with Richard Lush - Our ninth event was held on January 16 2019. The event was Physical Activity with Richard Lush. Richard is a very active individual who does work out sessions with groups of individuals. Richard modified his work out sessions to target elders. It was enjoyed by all.

Mi'kmaq trivia - Our tenth event were supposed to be Waltes game on January 30 2019 but due to the weather the event was cancelled. For the following Thursday (February 6 2020), as a result, we prepared an elder's meal with a Mi'kmaq trivia. The elders really enjoyed the Mi'kmaq trivia because they were able to answer the trivia questions in their own language. The questions were specific to their culture and traditional ways.

Beading Workshop - Our eleventh event was held on February 27 2020. The event was a beading workshop presented by an elder of the community. The event was to educate and teach other community members on how to do bead-work. We had 7 community members who participated in the event. They all beaded a necklace, they were shown how to put the tread in the needle, how to get the beads on the needle and how to finish the necklace to make sure the necklace was strong enough not to break.

Smudging - During the pandemic we sent out a care packages to each household in the community with a smudge kit and traditional medicine.

Mi'kmaq Drum Making Workshop This workshop has been postponed due to COVID 19. We are hoping to have this workshop soon.

Elders Christmas Meal - COVID-19 - The elders Christmas meal was held on December 3rd 2020. We made a big ham dinner and delivered the meal to 65 elders in all three communities and off reserve as well. This event was the biggest event we had held in 2020. We also had a gift for the elders: 25\$ gift card to Superstore, an ornament for the Christmas tree, Dishcloth made by Elder Lucy Knockwood and a card made by Melissa Peter-Paul.

Thank you to all the staff that helped.

Meals on Wheels - Our meals on wheels program is designed to help people who has food insecurity. Our program provides them with one meal a week. There is an application that needs to be filled out and there are qualifications to be eligible to participate in this program. If any questions, please reach out to Dominique Arsenault at the Abegweit First Nation Wellness Centre.

In Conclusion, our elders were very pleased with these elder group activities promoting healthy living, social interaction with each other and being familiar with their culture.

Hurricane Dorian was an extremely powerful and devastating Category 5 Atlantic Hurricane that hit PEI in September 2019. It was one of the most powerful hurricanes recorded in the Atlantic, in terms of sustained and peak winds at sea and on land.

The Abegweit EMO team was activated to take care of our community and keep everyone safe before, during, and after the storm. As a part of their essential efforts, the entire EMO team swiftly responded to all of the various needs throughout the community and even made time to lend a hand to our neighbours in Mount Stewart.



Elders Care Working Group Advance Care Plan - Our Fifth event was held on Sept 18 2019. The event was the Elders Care Working Group Advance Care Plan. This event was via a videoconference presented by Catherine Blomquist, a lawyer from McInnis Cooper. This videoconference educated the elders on what an Advance Care Plan is and how important it is. We were able to see other first nation Elders care working group from other communities in the videoconference. We also had snacks and had a game of bingo with prizes.

Are you at risk for heart disease or stroke? - Our sixth event was held on October 3 2019. The event was Are you at risk for heart disease or stroke? A representative from The Heart and Stroke foundation came to our centre to talk to our elders' group. They provided lots of information regarding heart diseases and stroke. An elder's meal was provided prior to the presentation and we also played Mi'kmaq bingo. Mi'kmaq bingo is a bingo that is made with Mi'kmaq words. The following Thursday we partnered up with the community nurse and had a breast cancer awareness event with the Woman Network who came to talk to our community regarding breast cancer awareness. The participant really found this session informative and had lots of questions regarding breast cancer.



Diabetes session - Our Seventh event was held on November 5 2019. The event was Natalie Dennis, a diabetes educator that came to talk to our elders' group regarding diabetes. Our elders had questions regarding diabetes and Natalie Dennis was able to give them answers as well as new knowledge towards diabetes.

Elders Christmas Social - Our eighth event was held on December 4 2019, the Elders Christmas Social was our biggest event. We cooked a big turkey dinner in our kitchen. We purchase 65 small tote bags with the double curve logo that represent plants. For the indigenous people, this has a protective curative and sacred meaning to the indigenous people. We ordered the tote bags from the local company: Mi'kmaq printing and design. In the bags, we included the following: toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, Qtips, a pair of gloves and a dishcloth that was made by our community elder Lucy Knockwood. After our meal, we had a special guest Santa who distributed the gifts to the elders that were present at the event. We had elders from the 3 communities, Scotchfort, Morell and Rocky Point.



Lobster

The 2019 lobster season employed 21 community members and started on time, with prices averaging \$6.25lb at markets and \$5.50 at canners.

Lobster Landings 2018 & 2019				
Vessel	Captain	Harbour	2018 Pounds	2019 Pounds
Fermoy Fisher	Bruce Jadis	Red Head	16,533	14,553
Madison & Noah	Jason Knockwood	Red Head	10,778	10,429
Captain's Quarters	Mathew Leslie	Red Head	9,650	7,801
Weather Oar Knot	John Scully	Red Head	10,312	9,653
Covehead Rover	Tim Paul	Naufrage	14,608	18,856
Gone Gulfig	Jr. Gould	Naufrage	14,924	16,759
Abegweit Spirit	Preston Peters	Naufrage	10,450	11,852



Snow Crab

The 2019 snow crab season employed 10 community members and started after a two week delay due to ice conditions, with average prices of \$5.50.

Snow Crab Landings 2018 & 2019				
Vessel	Captain	Harbour	2018 Pounds	2019 Pounds
Crabin Fever	Robert Jadis	Souris	102,361.17	134,964.19
Max'd out	Daren Knockwood	Souris	104,056.30	133,881.28

EMO

Abegweit EMO has been highly successful for the many years that its been active, pioneering and innovating in the area while keeping our entire community safe and healthy. The EMO team successfully led the community through yet another busy storm season, with the handling of Hurricane Dorian being the largest and most notable system of the 2019-2020 year, by far.



In February of 2020, just as the news of COVID-19 began to surface, Gordon Bernard was selected to become the Abegweit EMO Manager. Then as the news and impacts of the pandemic began to grow, the NRD's EMO team continued to perform and innovate in order to keep our community safe and healthy. From the onset of the pandemic the Abegweit EMO team has been leading the country in many areas of innovation, safety, and planning. That trend has also continued into present day, where Abegweit EMO continues to lead the way in many areas.

Conservation Society

The Abegweit Conservation Society (ACS) has been providing support and directing resources toward our many natural resource areas, such as the Biodiversity Fish Hatchery, since its inception and it has continued to operate successfully throughout the 2019—2020 year. As part of the larger NRD strategy, we are working toward the development of new partnerships and relationships to increase the amount of supports and potential opportunities that do and may come from the ACS.

Forestry

Each year Abegweit works with the Province of Prince Edward Island to co-manage 900 plus acres of crown land. We have been making positive strides in renegotiating our agreements to update this area and to breathe some new life into the Abegweit Forestry sector. This progress should be providing new opportunities and supports for Abegweit as we move into further into 2020 and beyond.

Streams

Annually, Abegweit works on stream enhancement projects with local partners, such as nearby watershed groups and the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund. During the 2019-20 year, the streams crew engaged in a number of project activities including a monitoring a fish counting fence, maintaining antenna for stock fish, brush-matting, planting, and other forms of erosion control along the Midgell and Morell watershed systems. This was all done in part of our long-term stewardship to maintain and enhance our natural habitats and resources.

Homecare

This project was created to bring the elders from three Mi'kmaq communities come together as a group in order to socialize, providing them information on different topics or cultural events. Our elders group is called "NESTUOLTITG MAOIA'TIJIG" The Gathering of our Wise Ones. In our community an individual that is 50 and over in age is considered an elder. For every group event, publicity was done by making flyers and sending it to the three communities, posting it on the Community Facebook page. As well, prior to the event a phone Calls was made to every elder. Prior to starting each event, tobacco was offered to an elder to do the opening prayer. A total of 15 elders participates at our events on a regular basis. At the Elders Christmas Social we had double the participants. We always ended our events by providing an evaluation form to every elder in order for us to receive constructive feedback in order to improve the elders group. Our events were as follows:

World Elder Abuse Awareness day - Our first event was on June 6th, 2019. A speaker from adult protection that came to do a presentation to our elders group A lobster dinner was provided and was donated by the fisheries. The presentation was to educate our elders on elder abuse awareness and who to contact if elder protection is needed. A question period was held and the elders felt it was very informative. To finish the day a Bingo game was held, and prizes were purchased with the Rotary funds. The elders really enjoy playing bingo.



Quill Workshop - Our second Event was held on July 25, 2019. It was a presentation by Melissa Peter-Paul, a community member who comes from a long line of Mi'kmaq entrepreneurs. She has been doing Quill work for 5 years. For this workshop we invited the youths from the community who were working with pride during the summer. The elders really enjoyed having the youth involved with them. The youths were able to learn how to ask an elder to do an opening prayer and learn how to do quillwork. Participants also learned about harvesting birch bark, porcupine and sweet grass, and protocols that they must follow for harvesting. Melissa Peter Paul had kits ready made for the event and everyone who participated made an 8-point star. Melissa also had a mat ready to frame with a protective sleeve for the participant to put their quill work in. Snacks and water were provided to our elders and youths. A few door prizes were purchased with the Rotary funds.



Community Sweet Grass Picking - Our Third event was held on August 7, 2019 with Barbara Jadis. Barbara is a community elder who has a lot of Mi'kmaq knowledge and teaching. We had elders participating and members from the Mi'kmaq printing and design company who attended as well. We went picking the sweet grass at Cranberry Wharf, then returned to the office to clean and braid the freshly picked sweet grass. Barbara did an excellent job teaching how to pick the sweet grass, to clean it and how to braid it.

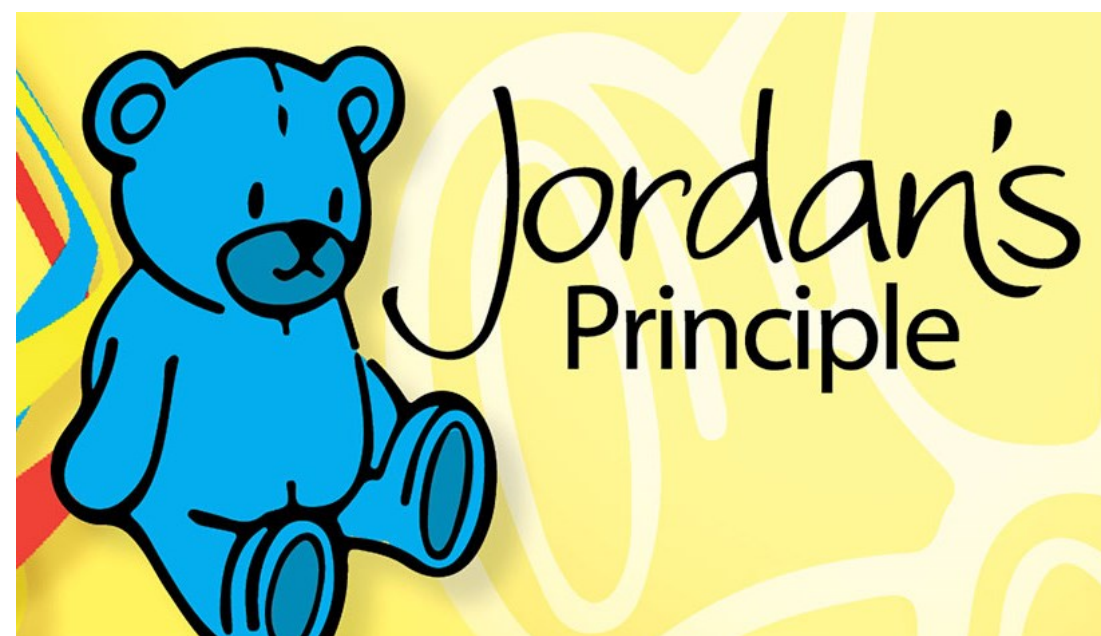
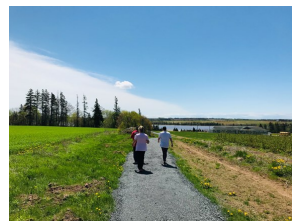
Elders Education Session on diabetes - Our fourth event was held on August 22, 2019. The event was the Elders education session on diabetes: A dietician student shared easy recipes for elders. She demonstrated how to do a healthy bean salad with vegetables. Elders ate the salad afterwards and were provided the recipe if they wanted to try it at home.

Epekwitk Gardens & Preserves The HPC works closely with staff from the Epekwitk Gardens project: connecting community members with education, resources and experiences to encourage a healthy lifestyle. Cooking classes, special projects (grant projects, etc.).

Aboriginal Sports Circle The HPC worked with the Aboriginal Sports Circle manager and program coordinator for a variety of events throughout the year. They were involved in The HPC provided short nutrition related videos for their Facebook page in March due to COVID-19 social distancing.

University of Prince Edward Island The HPC has a strong relationship with the UPEI Dietetics Professional Practice Coordinator. A dietetic intern split their time between Lennox Island and Abegweit during the fall of 2019. This relationship will continue for the upcoming years.

Physical Activity Heather Gunn MacQuillan came to the Scotchfort community and offered beginner classes in the spring of 2019 (2-3 participants). Walking club was offered every Tuesday and Thursday during the spring and summer months (2-8 participants). This was offered to community members and staff, ECC staff and children, etc. Snow Shoeing was offered in the winter months in 2020 (4-8 participants). Courtney Steel, fitness trainer, came to the Scotchfort gym one day a week (4-6 participants). The HPC partners with Eastern Sport and Recreation to offer these programs in the Abegweit community.



Jordan's Principle

It was another successful year for our children accessing services through Jordan's Principle. We had more than 50 children receiving over 170 approvals for services in health, social and educational. A few examples of services include speech language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, educational assistants, tutoring, assistive technology, as well as educational and psychological assessments. For any parent or guardian interested in learning more about Jordan's Principle, please contact Michelle Marshall at the Wellness Centre.

Social Development

The Social Development program provides a case management model to social assistance, pre-employment supports and connecting clients to meaningful employment through a collaborative approach to services.

During the this year, the Social Development program secured another position through Indigenous Services Canada and welcomed John Ryan Francis as the Case Manager and Assistant to the Director of Social Development. Additionally, the program purchased and implemented a new Software system to collect data, issue cheques, and to formulate reports.

Near the end of the year we entered into unprecedented times with COVID-19 affecting individuals, families, and employment. The Social Development Program worked hard and was pleased to secure two separate COVID 19 funding packages from Indigenous Services for clients on social assistance. The success in this initiative first went into securing funding in the amount of \$220.00 per family. A second initiative was to get the Federal Government to approve the disbursement of \$300.00 per family unit. The success of these efforts led toward securing the funds to provide these payments in the next, 2020-2021, fiscal year, for clients who were on assistance.

As the Director, Kateri sits on the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Technical Working Group for Social Development. In the year of 2019-2020 this group worked together to develop two proposals to the AFN Chiefs. The first was to study Income Assistance on-Reserve, which will involve reviewing rates, criteria, services, programs, and data, in hopes of providing effective solutions to current issues. The second was to study "appropriate measures of poverty for First Nations", which will collectively develop appropriate indicators and measures of poverty for First Nations in Canada and analyze Universal Basic Income. Social Directors continually engage regionally and nationally to ensure we are providing the best possible programs to our communities.

Registry:

In early March of 2020, Abegweit First Nation hosted Indigenous Services Canada Registry staff to assist with Secure Certificate of Indian Status cards. The two days were a success and over 175 applications and cards were issued. While COVID-19 delayed the processing of the SCIS cards, those who applied should have received them as of September 2020. If you or a family member did not receive your card yet, it may be the result of ISC awaiting paperwork they requested from you that day. If anyone needs assistance in submitting this paperwork, please contact Kateri Coadé at the Band Office.



During the 2019-2020 year, Abegweit community members created a trail system through Scotchfort, for community members to enjoy, with the greatly appreciated assistance of the Canadian Armed Forces 4th and 5th Engineer Support Regiments.

Housing

Housing in Abegweit was defined as a priority issue in the 2019-2020 year by the Chief and Council, as well as the Director of Housing, Danny Levi, and Director of Infrastructure, Chris Jadis.

In the 2019—2020 year, we had the following homes on our reserves:

Abegweit Homes on Reserves		
Scotchfort	Rocky Point	Morell
61	19	9
Total		89



Recognizing that we have a long list of families residing within homes intended for only one family, youth with no other housing options, and other areas of great need combined with a limited number of homes available, the entire Abegweit housing administration team began on seeking solutions to provide more homes for our entire community.

One important element to those solutions being sought was to apply for funding from the national Passive Solar Housing Complex competition. The housing team worked very hard to secure this funding and was very pleased to get word of the approval. Abegweit had to compete with 324 project proposals from across Canada and was one of twenty-four successful applications. It was the only successful First Nation out of 39 First Nation communities to apply and the only project from the entire Atlantic region.

Once approved, the team began to design and develop the idea, including some capacity development and planning in Vancouver in 2020. This required, formal planning step is called the “Accelerator Phase”. In this phase, we’re looking at building 3-4 homes for our community that will utilize our own community construction team. This means that this project will, most importantly, develop new homes for our community and our families in need. Yet, it will also be employing our community members while building capacity and skills that we can hold onto as we move into the future.



Though important, this is not the only project that was sought throughout the year. The housing and administration teams have been working diligently with federal, provincial, regional, and local partners to seek new avenues and opportunities to continue to address the community’s needs in this area.

So, as we begin to move into the 2020-2021 year, we can look forward to progress on the Passive Solar project and much more, meaning more homes for our community and its families.

Wellness Challenge & Support Group An initiative to support and guide interested community members throughout their wellness journey. Participants were encouraged to attend weekly support group sessions. These sessions promoted participants to set a holistic health goal and work towards them using small lifestyle changes.

May-June 2018 (13 participants)

Community Cooking Classes Monthly community kitchen-style cooking classes were led by the HPC during the 2019-2020 year. Participants learned how to read recipes, cut, measure, and prepare ingredients, use foods grown in the community garden, and sample a meal while at the workshop. Each month focuses on a different nutrition subject.



March 2019 (9 participants), April (8 participants), May: hypertension (5 participants), June: Summer Meal planning (11 participants), July: How to get more veggies (5 participants), August: Healthy School Lunches (8 participants), September: Family meals (9 participants), October: Reducing Sugar (12 participants), November: Holiday Themed sides (10 participants), January 2020: a fresh start, goal setting (9 participants), February: Healthy Environments Focus Group (12 participants)



Good Food Boxes Community members pay \$10 for a \$20 valued basket of fresh fruits and vegetables. Epekwit Garden’s provided supplemental fresh produce boxes when produce is available. Special good food boxes are provided on the holiday months (Christmas & Easter), with meat and all the trimmings.

October 2019 (25 participants), November (71 participants), January 2020 (15 participants), February (18 participants), March (13 participants), April (28 participants)

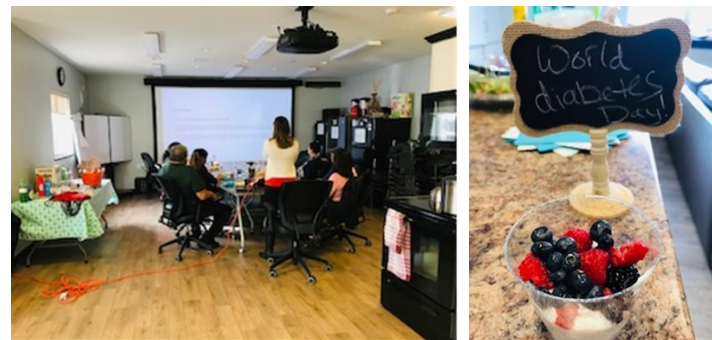


In October of 2019, after the Chief and his team spent a lot of time getting things in order, construction began on the new baseball field—a project that was sponsored by the Toronto Blue Jays’ Jays Care Foundation with community partnership from the Province of PEI and Rotary Club.



Diabetes Day Event On November 13th, 2019 the HPC collaborated with the UPEI Dietetic Intern to organize a community event to celebrate World Diabetes Day. A diabetes friendly lunch was provided along with a brief nutritional educational session, chair zumba, and diabetes bingo.

(8 participants)



Hypoglycemic Kits The HPC is responsible for updating the hypoglycemic kits. These kits are available to clients living with diabetes and who may be susceptible to having lows. These kits include Dex 4 tablets, apple juice and a chocolate chip Glucerna protein bar. Clients were provided education around how to treat lows by the HPC using the 'Hypoglycemia: Low blood sugar in adults' handout from Diabetes Canada (hardcopy provided in kit).

AKI Enterprises On January 21-22th 2020, Aki Enterprises, in collaboration with MCPEI, The Lawson Foundation, McConnell foundation, Raven Indigenous Capital Partners, Encompass, etc. visited Abegweit to host their 'solutions lab'. The HPC partnered with band office administration, MCPEI staff and AKI staff hold the conference in Abegweit. Thirty-five to forty individuals involved in the project traveled to Abegweit to partake in this lab.

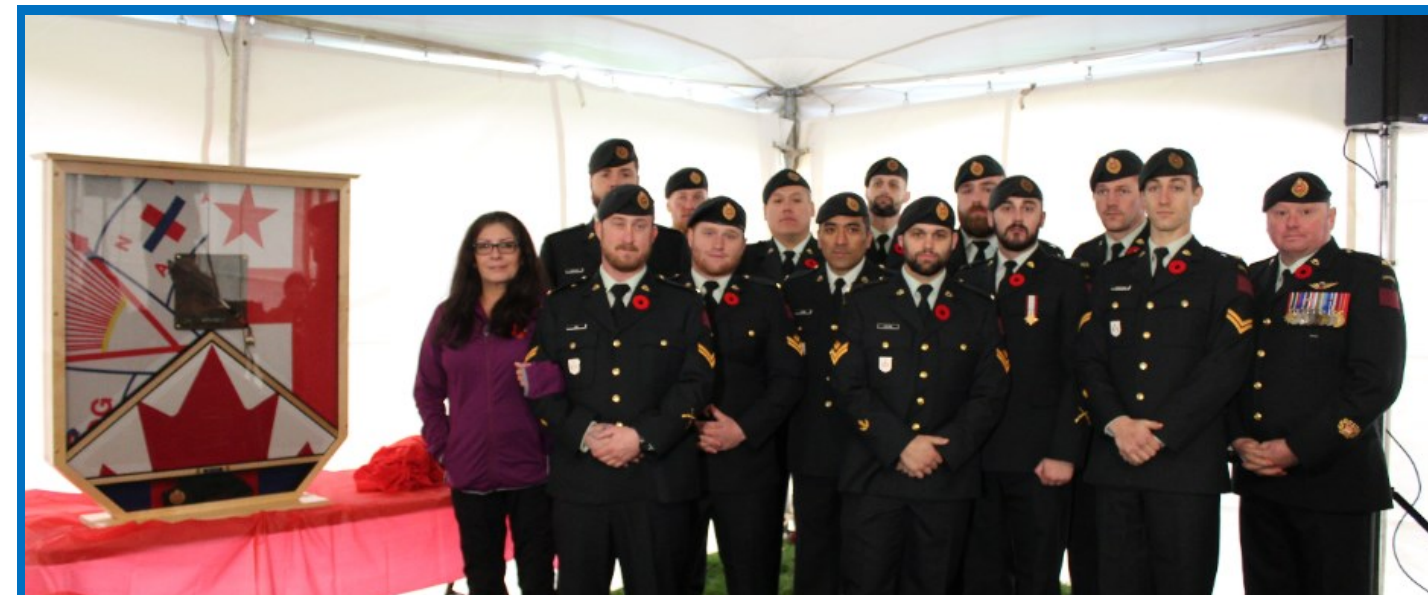


Prenatal Classes Group sessions are offered when numbers permit. Otherwise individual sessions are provided as needed. The dietician and maternal child health (MCH) nurse are excellent resources for breast-feeding information as they all have training in this important area of concern for many mothers and fathers. Emphasis is placed on both prenatal care of moms and babies and includes topics such as proper nutrition, gestational diabetes, physical activity, weight gain recommendations, and breast feeding. Post natal information is also provided to parents in terms of breast feeding support, healthy weights, baby food making skills, immunizations, Elyn Satter's division of responsibility, etc. The HPC partners with the MCH nurse on an as needed basis to provide individual/one-on-one services in this area as well.

(Three group sessions were held throughout 2019-2020: 4-7 participants each session)

Early Childhood Centre Throughout the year, the HPC teamed up with the ECC director, ECC cook and Epekwitk Garden Project Coordinator to develop and implement seasonal and nutritional menus for the ECC children (aged 0-4).

- **Farm to Fork Project: Digging Deeper-** the HPC worked with the ECC daycare director in developing and implementing the Farm to Fork project: Digging Deeper (funding through the PEI department of Agriculture and Fisheries). This project focused on transferring the knowledge and success from last year's project, to the families at home. This was done through increasing parents' awareness, eliminating barriers, and promoting confidence around heaving healthy, balanced meals and meal preparation at home. Weekly garden and education sessions were held at the ECC with the Epekwitk Garden crew; staff, parents and children.
- **ECC Cooking Class:** Snacks (10 participants)
- **ECC Meal to-go (X 2):** (20 families)
- **Walking Club-** ECC staff and children participated in weekly Wellness Centre walk (twice a week)



At the Remembrance Day ceremony this year, the Canadian Armed Forces 4th Engineer Support Regiment presented and provided a beautiful display piece in memorial of beloved community member Eric Bernard, who served with them.

Health and Wellness

The Health Centre provides a large number of different programs and services through their wonderful staff while supporting the community and administration office in many more ways than are listed out below:

Counseling - Justin MacArthur joined the Abegweit Mental Health & Addictions team in February 2020. The team is ever expanding to meet the growing needs of the community. Clinicians continue to build capacity by taking new training opportunities.

ASIST Workshops - Barbara Bernard and Shannis Gray provide ongoing Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) workshops.

Psychiatry - Dr. Schneider, Psychiatrist, offers a psychiatry clinic once a month within the community.

AA - Alcoholics Anonymous is offered on a continuous basis.

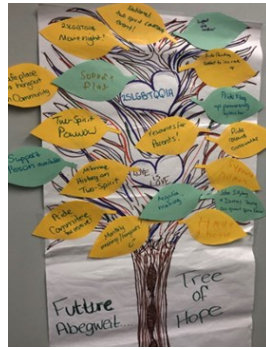
Support Groups - Continuation of various support groups such as men's group, girls circle, etc.

Day School Applications - Ongoing process that offers support for day school survivors to complete applications.

MMIWG Youth Group - Ongoing activities for youth in the community .

Mental Health Education Sessions - Offered on an as needed basis to various programs throughout the community.





Cancer Support Group- Is a support group for individuals living with Cancer and caregivers. The group meets regularly to share their journey through a talking circle that includes breakfast, tea, or coffee. On occasion group makes a craft and had a laughing yoga session.

LGBTQQIA support group – Support group for LGBTQQIA and allies meet to share their journey and safe space. To date, the group has had peer alliance attend a group session, Quill “Two spirit” workshop with Melissa Peter-Paul and went to the movies.

Fitness class with Cortney Steel owner of Full Throttle in Morell – Fitness classes were offered for 8 weeks and geared toward low impact and beginners.



Indian day school Lunch and Learn – Session over lunchtime to discuss the Indian day school and 60s scoop settlement. Presented by Elder Andrea Colfer.

National Child and Youth Mental Health day – Community participated in a Wellness walk followed by breakfast, yoga, and needle safety talk.



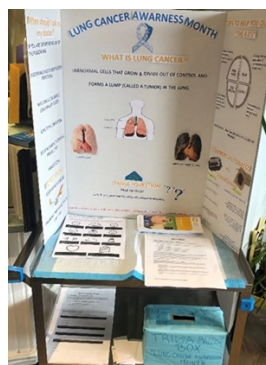
Chronic Disease “Living a Healthy Life Self-Management Program”- Program was 5 weeks. Participants learned various topics to assist in living with a Chronic disease. At the of every session participant work on making their own black ash basket with teachings from Elder Francis Jadis.

Spring social – was held at the Abegweit band office to celebrate the first day of Spring. There was drumming by the red moon singers and everyone was encouraged to wear regalia, followed by a feast.



Canadian Diabetes Educator (CDE)- Ongoing, CDE is a nurse who specializes in diabetes management. CDE works in partnership with community health nurse to deliver CDE visits once a month.

Needle safety Guide – Be smart with sharps. Feel free to pick up Needle safety guide and needle safety kit that include- Gloves, sharps container and tongs. Located at the Wellness Centre.



Narcan kit session – is provided annually or on a case-to-case bases. Session is provided by pharmacists and provided by community health nurse. Narcan is an open benefit through NIHB injection or Nasal spray. NIHB requires individual’s status card number and a pharmacist consult/teaching.

Cancer Wellness Events-Ongoing, events hosted to create awareness in cancer wellness for cancer survivors and caregivers, along with, cancer screening. Various events include CIBC run for the cure, breast screening, lung awareness session and National Cancer awareness event. Stay tuned for future events and screenings.

Diabetes Educator Certificate Program – Melody Hyde, RD and Melissa Jadis, RN, completed a 6-month Diabetes Educator Certificate program that is developed for health care providers to support clients and families management and control of diabetes. Feel free to contact Melody or Melissa at the Abegweit Wellness Centre (902)676-3007.



2019-2020 Well Women and Men Events & Dr. Armstrong Clinic		
Well Women’s Event	Well Men’s Event	Dr. Armstrong Clinic
November 20, 2019 27 women attended	November 2, 2019 13 men attended	356 people seen 29 people did not show for their scheduled appointments

Health Promotions

One-on-one consultation between community members and the Registered Dietician or Community Health Nurse occur on an as-needed basis. Individuals are referred by other health care professionals (i.e. provincial dietician, nurse, or physician), or they may self refer. Topics of discussion include: diabetes prevention and management, meal planning, blood sugar monitoring, blood work review, sick day management, chronic disease prevention and management, and/or weight loss/weight gain. These assessments or follow up visits are being done at either the health centre or in the home of the client to maximize access. Referrals are made when necessary.

Diabetes Breakfasts In April 2019-March 2020, the HPC partnered with the Community Health Nurse (CHN) and offered diabetes friendly breakfasts to individuals in the community who are living with diabetes. Various topics were discussed in a workshop style atmosphere using teaching tools such as the healthy plate, fibre/fat/salt visuals, glucose wands, as well as handouts and resources. Evaluations were filled out and recorded.

May (5 participants), June (6 participants), July (7 participants), August (8 participants), September (7 participants), November (5 participants), December (5 participants)

Diabetes Support Group In April 2019-March 2020, the HPC and CHN started offering biweekly support groups to community members living with diabetes. These sessions are client focused and client led; various diabetes topics were discussed.

April 2019 (6 participants/6 participants), May (4 participants/12 participants), June (3 participants), July (6 participants), August (5 participants) October (6 participants), November (9 participants), December (4 participants), January 2020 (3 participants), March (4 participants)