



# **INFORMATION AND RESOURCES GUIDE**

*Welcome to the KBIC Health System*





**WE WELCOME YOU  
TO THE KBIC  
HEALTH CARE  
CLINIC**

**This orientation booklet along  
with specific departmental  
orientation processes will  
provide you with the information  
that will be needed during your  
time here.**



A taxidermy of a bald eagle with its wings spread, perched on a wooden pedestal in a room with windows. The eagle is the central focus, with its wings fully extended. The background shows a room with light-colored walls and two windows. One window shows a dark SUV parked outside. The overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor setting with natural light from the windows.

# **OUR MISSION**

**Our mission is to be a leader in Tribal Health and Human Services by using traditional, evidence based, and innovative strategies that contribute to building a strong, healthy community.**

## **OUR VISION**

**Our future tribal community will be actively engaged in promoting healthy living through participation in prevention activities, including traditional practices, managing chronic conditions, and expanding services.**



# **A word from the administrator**

**Welcome to KBIC Health System.**

**Our tribal community is happy you've chosen to spend some time getting to know our wonderful people, our rich heritage and our beautiful lakeside community.**

**We hope this information is helpful in assisting you in getting to know our facility, our team, and some places you just might want to visit, photograph, hike, fish, eat or relax at.**

**Deanna Foucault  
KBIC Health System Administrator**



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## PARKING INFORMATION

You may enter the parking lot off of US highway M-38 or from State Ave. Parking is in front of the building. A phone directory, building map, and calendar have been included for your convenience.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

102 Superior Ave.  
Baraga, MI 49908  
Main Phone Line (906) 353-8700



## HEALTH CARE CLINIC ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Sophina Calderon MD, Chief Medical Officer.....Scalderon@kbic-nsn.gov  
Elizabeth Mayo, Administrative Assistant .....Popcorn@kbic-nsn.gov  
Deanna Foucault RN, Health Administrator.....Deanna.foucault@kbic-nsn.gov



# **KBIC HEALTH SYSTEM HISTORY**

**52 YEARS OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES FOR THE KEWEENAW BAY  
INDIAN COMMUNITY**

**JULY 16, 1971 - PRESENT**

**IN THE 1970S, THE KEWEENAW BAY INDIAN COMMUNITY WAS THE FIRST TRIBE, NATIONALLY, TO ESTABLISH A TRIBALLY OPERATED HEALTH CENTER, OUTSIDE OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE(IHS). THIS WAS DONE WITH VERY LITTLE IHS RESOURCES. THE KEWEENAW BAY INDIAN COMMUNITY RECRUITED THEIR OWN PHYSICIAN, WITHOUT THE HELP OF IHS - DR. BHUPENDRA H NANAVATI, A PHYSICIAN WHO STAYED WITH THE COMMUNITY FOR MANY YEARS.**

**THE KBIC PREPARED A PROPOSAL FOR THE HIRING OF THE FIRST COMMUNITY HEALTH NUTRITIONIST HIRED BY ANY MICHIGAN TRIBE.**

**THE KBIC IS ONE OF THE VERY FEW TRIBALLY OPERATED WIC PROGRAM SITES NATIONALLY. THIS WAS A MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT AT THE TIME OF NEW FEDERAL REVENUE STREAMS. OUR COMMUNITY WAS THE FIRST TO ESTABLISH A TRIBALLY OPERATED DENTAL CLINIC.**





# WHAT THE KBIC CLINIC OFFERS

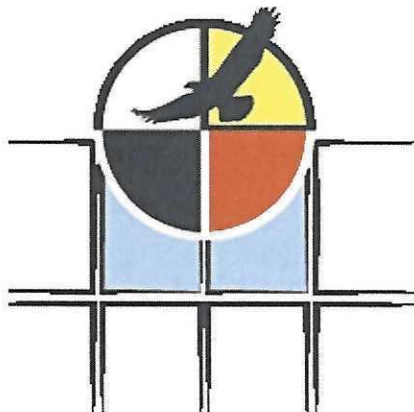
WE ARE THE ANISHNABE PEOPLE OF THE LAKE SUPERIOR BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS - THE OJIBWA TRIBE. OUR NATIVE LANGUAGE IS OJIBWEMOWIN. THE KBIC MEDICAL CLINIC IS THE FIRST TRIBAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT IN MICHIGAN TO BE DESIGNATED BY BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD AS A PATIENT CENTERED MEDICAL HOME ON AUGUST 6, 2012.

WE ARE A FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER SERVING THE PEOPLE OF KBIC IN THE AREAS OF:

- MEDICAL CARE
- DENTAL CARE
- BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
- PHARMACY
- COMMUNITY HEALTH
- DIABETES CARE
- MATERNAL / INFANT HEALTH CARE
- TRANSPORTATION TO APPOINTMENTS
- ACCUPUNCTURE
- NUTRITION
- TRADITIONAL HEALING

WE ARE OPEN FOR APPOINTMENTS FROM 8:00AM TO 4:30PM AND ON MONDAYS AND TUESDAYS WE OFFER HOURS UNTIL 6:00 PM. TUESDAY AND THURSDAY MORNING NURSE VISITS ARE RESERVED FOR LAB DRAWS.

OUR PHARMACY HOURS ARE MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM 8:00AM UNTIL 6:30 PM, AND SATURDAYS 8:00AM UNTIL NOON.



# KBIC Health System

DONALD A. LAPOINTE  
HEALTH & EDUCATION CENTER



# IDENTIFICATION

All individuals should have some type of identification badge or nametag.

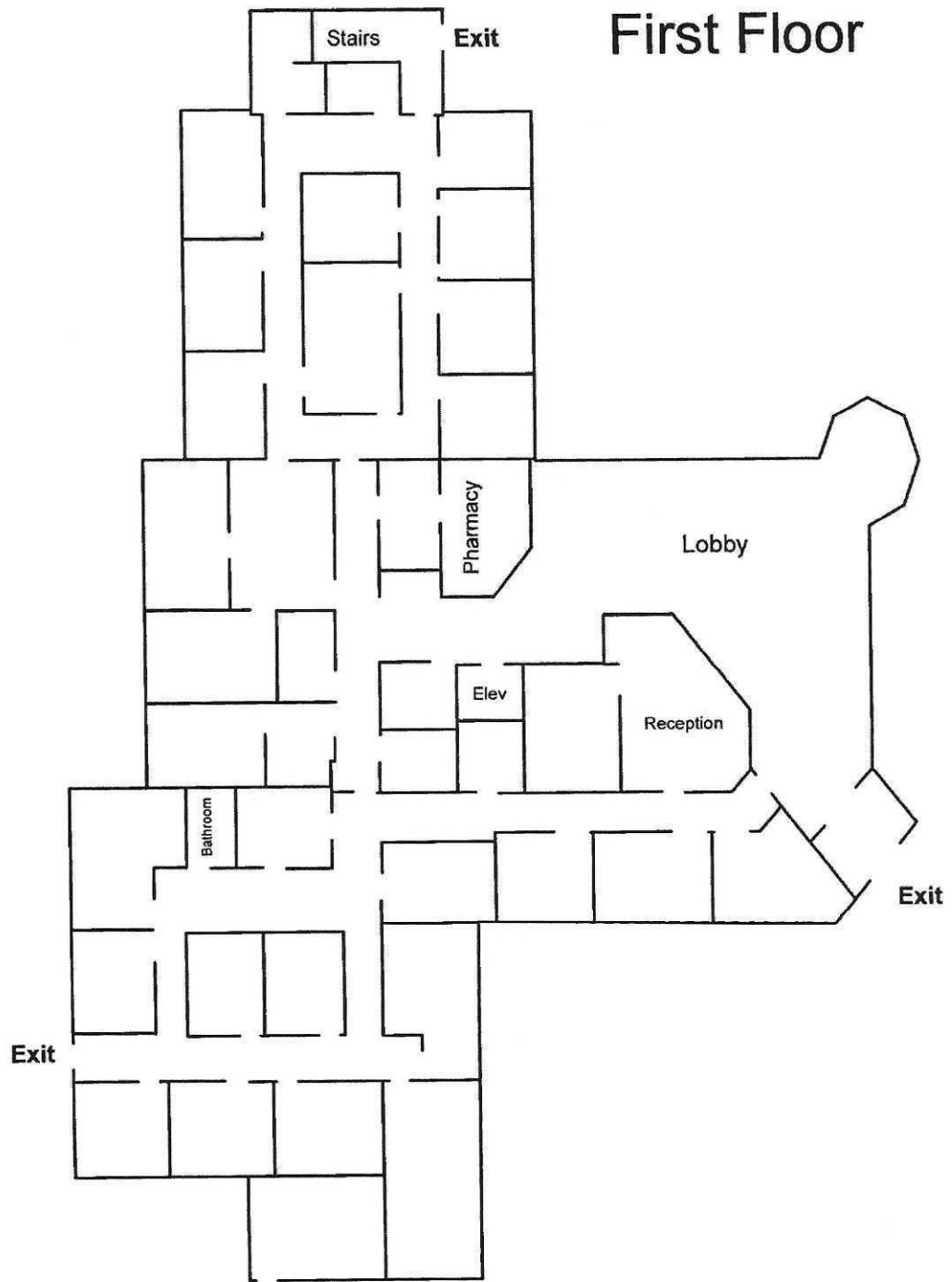
# CONFIDENTIALITY

KBIC Health Care System has a legal and ethical responsibility to safeguard the privacy of all clients and protect confidentiality of their health information. Throughout the course of your assignment at the KBIC Health Care facility, you may come into possession or become aware of protected health information. This must be maintained in the strictest confidence and not to be disclosed to any person. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information is grounds for immediate dismissal and/or termination of contract and/or is open to civil or criminal penalties.

As an individual working in this facility, you attest that you will;

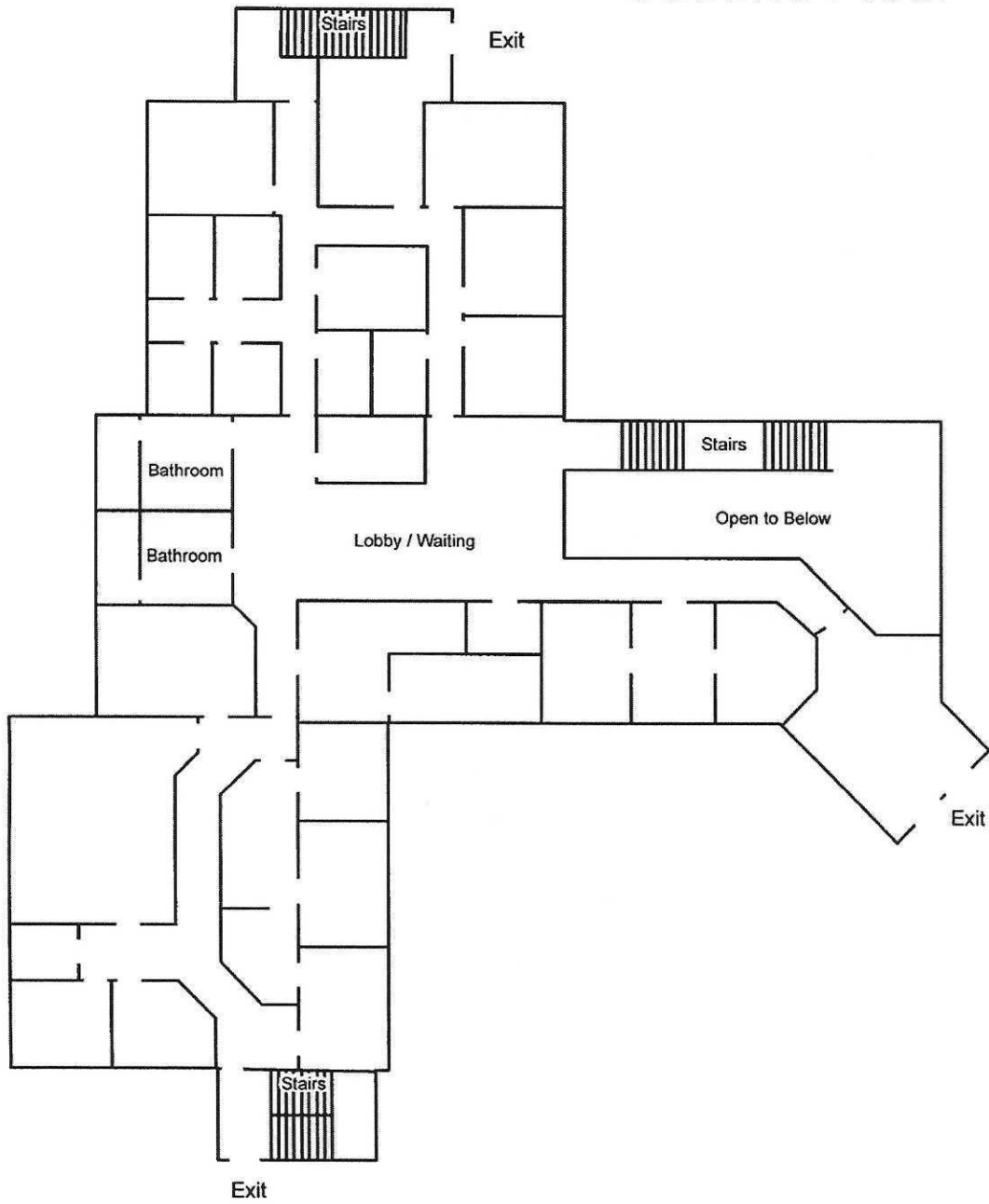
- Only access confidential information that you need to know and have been permitted to access as authorized within the scope of your duties.
- Report activities by any individual or entity that you suspect may compromise the use or disclosure of protected health information.
- Use discretion to ensure that conversations involving protected health information in the course of your work cannot be overheard by others who are not involved in the care of clients.

# First Floor





# Second Floor





# KBIC Health System

DONALD A. LAPOINTE  
HEALTH & EDUCATION CENTER

*Directory for  
Clinic Use Only*

FIRST FLOOR	EXT.	TITLE	SECOND FLOOR	EXT.	TITLE
Sharon Gilliland, MD	4514	Reception Phone	Kathy Mayo	4519	Health Administrator
Jody Jinkerson, FNP	4514	Reception Phone	Ann Marie Amsler	4506	BH Manager/Clinical Social Worker
Dr. Edward Lelonek, MD	4514	Reception Phone	Stephanie Bliss	4542	Community Disease Surv. Coord.
Rebecca Schultz, MD	4514	Reception Phone	Colleen Buzzo	4553	Clinical Social Worker
Jennifer Scott, FNP	4514	Reception Phone	Brandy Chosa	4510	Administrative Assistant
Brittany Wadaga, FNP	4514	Reception Phone	TO BE FILLED	4530	Community Health Worker
Brenda Brunk	4587	Medical Records	Dana Hansen	4527	WIC Coordinator
Tyler Hosking	4594	Clinic RN	Megan Johnson	4548	Family Health Educator
Catherine Lindstrom	4509	Clinic LPN	Dawn Kemppainen	4521	Community Health Clerk
Elizabeth Mayo	4531	Asst. Administrator	Brian Koupus		Audiologist
Kelsey Mayo	4514	Receptionist	Laura Lahti	4543	Community Health Nurse
Kirsten Nelson	4525	Receptionist	Kim LeClaire	3211	CHW
Suzan Ollila	4511	Lead RN	TO BE FILLED	4585	Maternal Child Health Nurse
Breanne Owens	4539	Office Coordinator	Ellie Miller	4524	Patient Transport
Jami Owens	4581	Receptionist	Miranda Mukka	4535	Breast Feeding Peer Counselor
Donna Pollard	4536	Lab LPN	Micah Petoskey	4538	IT Site Manager
Michelle St. George	4507	Benefits Coordinator	Dale Schmeisser		Registered Dietician
Megan Turunen	3212	Clinic LPN	Ashley Seppanen	4540	Child Wellness Coordinator
Janella Whiteman	4537	PRC Clerk	Joslyn Haataja	4532	CHW - Behavioral Health Reception.
<b>DENTAL</b>	<b>EXT.</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	Chris Schofield	4541	IT Technician
Brent Johnson, DDS	4520	Dentist	Mary Dee Shanahan	4530	LPN/CHR
Theresa Nygord	4513	Dental Assistant	Sabrina Snyder	4515	Community Health Coordinator
Jessica Velmer	4513	Dental Assistant	Heather Wood	4546	Health Promotions Coordinator
Heidi Voshkul	4513	Hygienist	<b>DENTAL CLINIC</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>906-353-8700</b>
				<b>FAX</b>	<b>906-353-8818</b>
<b>PHARMACY</b>	<b>EXT.</b>	<b>TITLE</b>			
John Lassila	4508	Chief Pharmacist	<b>MEDICAL CLINIC</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>906-353-8700</b>
John Toijala	4508	Pharmacist	<b>MEDICAL RECORDS</b>	<b>FAX</b>	<b>906-353-8818</b>
TO BE FILLED	3213	Pharmacy Tech.	<b>COMMUNITY HEALTH</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>906-353-4521</b>
Courtney Crittenden	3213	Lead Pharm. Tech.		<b>FAX</b>	<b>906-353-8799</b>
Brandon Nieskes	3213	Pharmacy Tech.			
<b>ON CALL STAFF</b>	<b>EXT.</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PHARMACY</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>906-353-4555</b>
Angelica Bogda	4518	Clinic LPN		<b>FAX</b>	<b>906-353-8066</b>
Dennis Lund	4508	Pharmacist			
Brittany Perrigo	3213	Pharm. Tech.	<b>BEHAVIORAL HEALTH</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>906-353-4521</b>
Amanda Wiggins	4518	Clinic RN		<b>FAX</b>	<b>906-353-5222</b>



# Keweenaw Bay Indian Community

## Pay Periods

# 2023

## LEGEND



- End of Pay Period
- Submit Time Card
- New Pay Period
- Pay Day
- Government Holiday

January

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# LOCAL SIGHTS

Enjoy some of the local vistas within easy driving distance. All of these can be found with GPS/Google Maps



## CANYON FALLS

A short distance South of L'Anse on US2, the Canyon Falls are a popular tourist destination.



## POINT ABBYE

A little distance from L'Anse, Point Abbye juts upward on a peninsula. From the top of the peninsula you can see Houghton and the Huron Islands on a clear day.



## MOUNT ARVON

The highest natural point in Michigan, Mount Arvon rises 1,979 feet above sea level.





### **BISHOP BARAGA SHRINE**

Between Baraga and L'Anse, perched on the Red Rocks perches the Bishop Baraga Shrine, which can be seen from US Hwy 41 during certain seasons.



### **QUARTZITE FALLS**

Quartzite Falls is located about 11 miles east of L'Anse. It is one of several drops within the scenic Slate River.



### **HANKA HOMESTEAD FINNISH MUSEUM**

The Hanka Homestead is a Finnish Homestead where you can experience the feeling of a 1920's era farm in an open space/open door museum. Tours available in some seasons.



### **STURGEON FALLS**

Sturgeon Falls is located in the Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness in Ottawa National Forest. The Sturgeon River has carved out a deep, forested gorge, that is 300 feet deep in some places. The falls are located deep in the gorge.



## **SECOND SAND**

This beach is the ideal place for swimming, paddling, relaxing and picnicking with picnic table and grills. Perfect for a summer day with the family, offering shaded area under the trees with water shallow enough to be safe for children.



## **L'ANSE WATERFRONT CONCERTS**

On Thursday evenings throughout the summer, there are free concerts at 7:00 pm at the bandshell. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy the music!

# **LOCAL RESTAURANTS**

There are plenty of restaurants around both sides of the bay. From burritos at Migizis-'s to Irene's Pizza and ice cream from the drive in.



## **CUE MASTER**

Family owned and operated since 2009, Menu features burgers, fries and baskets.





### **IRENE'S PIZZA**

Irene's Pizza is the area's oldest Pizzeria, focusing on 100% real quality cheeses, and homemade sauce.



### **PRESSBOX**

Watch your favorite sports teams play on the big screens, grab some grub and relax.



### **BARAGA DRIVE IN**

A classic drive-in experience on the shores of Lake Superior, the drive in is the spot for local car shows and you can choose dining outside or in your vehicle.



### **NANA'S DEN**

Coffee shop featuring Organic smoothies, non-dairy and regular hot and cold coffee drinks.



## **SKIPPER'S**

Featuring various ethnic foods on different days of the week and a view of Keweenaw Bay from the windows



## **LAKESIDE INN**

Breakfast, lunch and dinner on the shores of Lakes Superior's Keweenaw Bay. You will not want to miss breakfast in the dining room to start to your day with a spectacular sunrise! Our menus have a wide variety of options that will satisfy all.



## **CAFE L'ANSE**

Features a shared use kitchen and eatery that offers breakfast, lunch, dinner and fresh bakery. You never know what you will find here!



## **BURGER KING**

Popular fast food restaurant located in L'Anse, menu features fast food breakfast, lunch and dinners.





### **JB'S PIZZARIA**

Newly opened, home of the Crabmeat Rangoon Pizza and other Italian Cuisine. Also serving up burgers and sandwiches.



### **NITE OWL CAFE**

Featuring all you can eat fresh caught fish from Lake Superior with soup and salad bar.



### **PIZZA SHACK**

Classic pizza and sub shop located in L'Anse.



### **SUBWAY**

Part of a nationwide franchise, with full menu of sub sandwiches. Located in L'Anse.



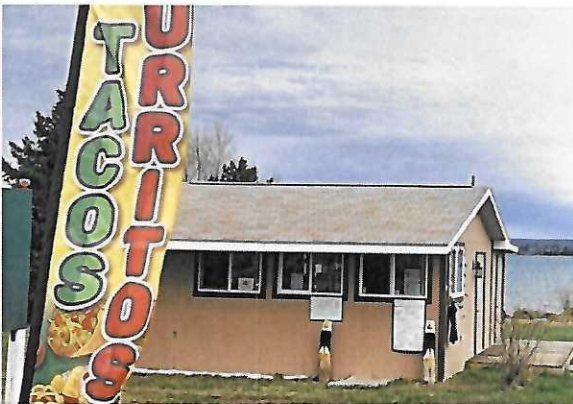
### **FROSTIE FREEZE**

For either cold treats or hot eats, this tiny shop has the option of drive-through or eating at one of the picnic tables in front of the building.



### **WHIRL-I-GIG**

From bowling to banquets, providing a vintage experience and the best pizza in town!



### **MIGIZI BURRITO AND COUSINS MARKET**

Mexican restaurant with authentic homemade meals. Featuring burritos, tacos and quesadillas. Al fresco or take-out dining. Huge portions at fair prices.



# LOCAL LODGING

From motels in town to AirBNB's on the water, you can choose the accommodations which suit you.



## LAKESIDE INN

On the shores of the Keweenaw Bay, the Lakeside Inn features a pool, a patio by the water's edge, and a restaurant.



## L'ANSE MOTEL

If you want to sit back and relax, all you need to do is ask for your own lazy boy room! Located on the snowmobile trail near area restaurants and attractions.



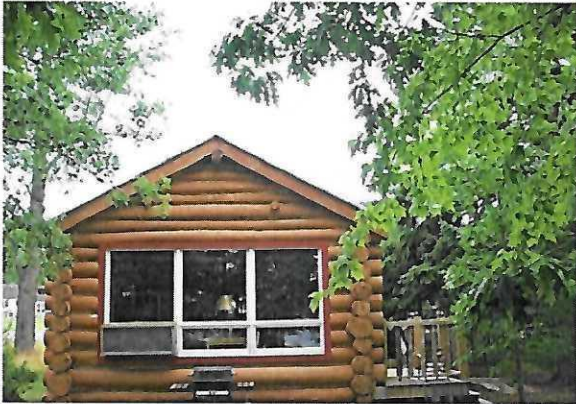
## MOTEL 41

Offers budget friendly stays in newly renovated rooms conveniently located in L'Anse. They also offer certain pet friendly rooms and are located directly on the snowmobile trail



### **THE RED ROCKS**

Wake up to stunning lake views and watch the beautiful sunsets over Lake Superior. Just steps away from the lake.



## **LOCAL AMENITIES**



### **OBJIBWA BP CAR WASH AND LAUNDROMAT**

24 hour car wash and laundromat with new change machine and washing machines.

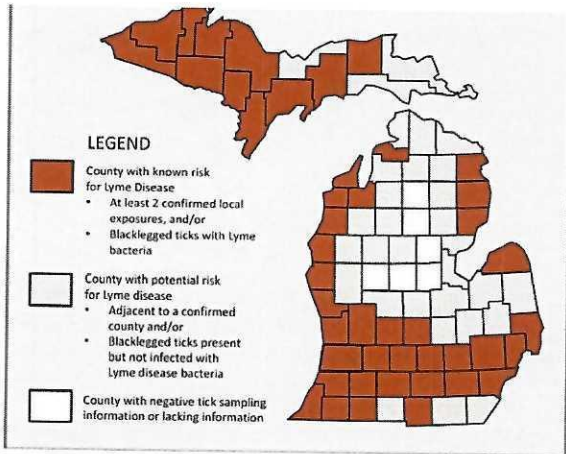


# LOCAL OUTDOORS

There are many outdoor activities during all four seasons, including swimming, hiking, taking your ATV or ORV out on the trails, snowmobiling, gold panning in some of the many streams in the area, boating and sailing, cross country skiing, and photography.



# LOCAL HEALTH



## LYME DISEASE

Baraga County ranks 4th in the state in Lyme Disease transmission, with 49 cases per 100,000 people.

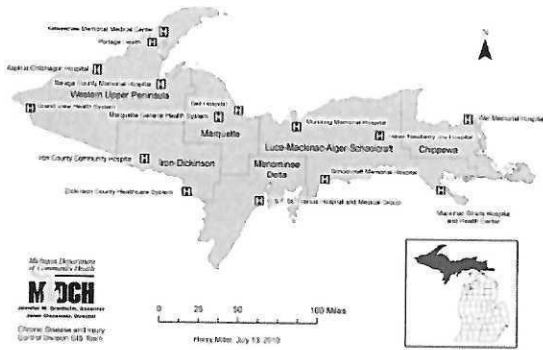


## COVID 19

As of August 1, 2023, Baraga County reported 2,653 Covid 19 cases and 62 deaths, with a 7 day average of 0.



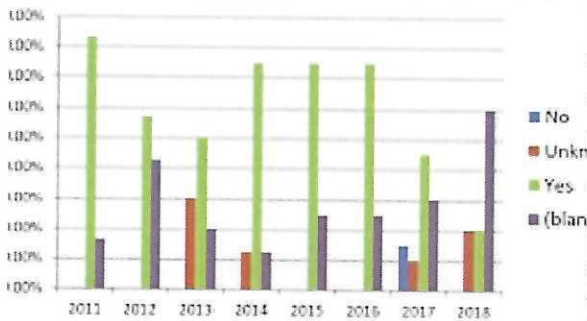
Hospitals and Local Health Departments  
Michigan's Upper Peninsula, 2010



**MENTAL HEALTH**

According to a Western UP Community Needs assessment completed in 2021, 15.5% of adults 18 and older reported their mental health was not good for 14 or more days in the past 30 days, higher than the national average by 2.8%.

**Baraga County Chronic HCV Injection Drug Use in the 18-35yr Age Group**



**SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER**

Baraga County was rated #1 for Hepatitis C outbreak among the 83 counties in Michigan. A study done on the available data for injection drug use in Baraga County in the 18-35 year age group. Very rarely in that graphic was an answer of "No" to the question of whether they had used injection drugs. From 2014-2018, the rate of alcohol impaired driving deaths in Michigan was 29%. That rate in Baraga County was 75%.

**COUNTY PROFILE**

Baraga County's population is higher in mortality, Ischemic Heart Disease, Cerebrovascular Disease, Diabetes, Cirrhosis, Heavy Drinking, Binge Drinking, Smoking, and Obesity than the state or local statistics.

It is lower in Female Breast Cancer, Malignant Skin Melanoma, Self-harm, Interpersonal Violence, Male Substance abuse disorders, and the same in Lung Cancer, recommended physical activity, and life expectancy for both females and males.







## 2020 CENSUS INFORMATION

Baraga County is comprised of 4.8% of people under the age of 5, 17.6% under the age of 18, 22.8 % 65 and older and is 44.7% female.

The population dropped 1.6% since the 2010 Census.

73% of the population is Caucasian, 7.8% is African American, 14.2% native, 0.4% Asian, 4.6% are two or more races, 2% are Latin or Hispanic, and Caucasian without Latin or Hispanic are 72%

13.9% are under the age of 65 and with a disability. 9.6% of persons under the age of 65 have no insurance.

15.8% live below the poverty level. The median income is \$45, 792.

# LOCAL PRIMARY CARE FACILITIES

From Portage in Houghton County to UP Health Systems Marquette, these are the facilities we refer patients to if we cannot meet their needs in a clinical setting.



## BARAGA COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Baraga County Memorial Hospital was opened in October of 1952. It was designated as a Critical Access Hospital in May of 2000 and at that time included 15 acute care, 28 skilled nursing unit, and 9 swing beds. Specialty clinics continue to be provided at BCMH, now being located within the physician clinic in the hospital building.

The current clinics include the specialties of Cardiology, General Surgery, Oncology, Ophthalmology, Orthopedic Surgery, Urology, and Pain Management. In addition to the physician clinic being located at the hospital, the building also includes a retail pharmacy, and conference center.



## UP HEALTH SYSTEM PORTAGE

UP Health System – Portage supports a multi-specialty medical community of over 40 physicians, and over a dozen allied health professionals, and has been serving the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan since 1896. The main campus is a 36-bed hospital, a verified chest pain center through the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care (SCPC), and possesses the area's only Open Bore MRI.

Other services include a dedicated physician for hospital stays, cardiopulmonary, arthroscopic surgery, emergency orthopedics, sports medicine, x-ray & diagnostics, advanced wound care center, certified sleep disorder center, two Express Care walk-in clinics, regional dialysis unit, pharmacy, 64-slice CT scanner, nuclear imaging, 3D mammography, radiological and laboratory services, rehab, home care and hospice, and a 60-bed senior living community.





### **UP HEALTH SYSTEMS BELL**

UP Health System – Bell is a Joint Commission Accredited Critical Access Hospital and one of three hospitals within UP Health System, providing a spectrum of health and wellness services across the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Established more than 100 years ago, UP Health System – Bell offers Inpatient, Outpatient, and Post-Acute care through its 25-bed critical access facility and many physician practices.

Comprehensive services include Physician staffed Emergency Services available 24/7, designated Hospitalist physicians for Inpatient Hospital stays, Family Birthing Services, an Express Care walk-in clinic, Full Laboratory Services, advanced imaging technology including 64 slice CT scanner, large bore MRI, Nuclear Imaging, Women's Imaging services including 3D mammography, Outpatient Rehabilitation, and Inpatient Swing Bed care, Sleep Center/ Diagnostics, Occupational Medicine, ENT, Orthopedics, Family Medicine, Pain Medicine, Pediatrics, Women's Health. Surgical Services include General, Orthopedics, Podiatry, Plastics/Hand, GYN, ENT, Urology, Gastroenterology, Ophthalmology, Dental, Vascular, and Pain.



### **UP HEALTH SYSTEMS MARQUETTE**

As a 222-bed specialty care hospital, UP Health System – Marquette receives patients from across the UP and provides care in 65 specialties and subspecialties. Its medical staff of more than 200 doctors works as a team with its more than 1,800 employees in caring for approximately 9,000 inpatients and more than 350,000 outpatients per year.

UP Health System – Marquette's major services include its Heart & Vascular Institute, Cancer Center, Brain & Spine Center, Rehabilitation Center, Behavioral Health, Digestive Health, Bariatric Medicine & Weight Management Center and Women's Health, Family Birthing, and Pediatrics Center. The hospital also provides the region's premier services in imaging, surgery and laboratory and is home to the UP Telehealth Network, a leading telehealth network in the nation. We also service many of the communities in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, with 42 primary and specialty care clinics spread throughout the region.



# CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS



## WE ARE ANISHNABE

### “NATIVE TEACHINGS ARE ABOUT A WAY OF LIFE”

The information stated is only a small portion of the many and extensive Native Teachings that exist.

Teachings vary from First Nation to First Nation and even from one geographic region to another. For more information, please consult with a Traditional Elder, Healer or Medicine Person.

Native American tribes are very diverse. Cultural teachings, philosophies, and social dynamics differ greatly from one tribe to another. Even within one tribe, stories and teachings may vary from region to region. The teachings shared in the Kinoomaagewin Mzinigas (Little Teaching Books) may be presented differently in other areas.



# TRADITIONAL HEALING

Traditional Healers and Elders say that the Great Spirit works through everyone, so that everyone can heal, whether it's the mother who tends to the scrapes of her child, a friend who eases your pain by kind words or the Healer who heals your sickness. Everything that was put here is healing - the trees, the earth, the animals and the water.

In the past, knowledge of the medicines was a natural part of everyone's learning. We knew what plant medicines were for and how to prepare offerings for them. When we needed special help beyond what was common knowledge, we looked to our Medicine People and Healers. This familiarity with the healing properties of the plants that grew around us was empowering. It was something that belonged to the community.

This knowledge is no longer widespread and many of the illnesses that our communities are faced with today were not seen in the past. Many Native people are seeking emotional, mental and spiritual healing for past abuses and traumas, for the pain that they are carrying as a result of what generations of their families went through and for a loss of identity due to separation from family and culture. Others are seeking help for physical illnesses such as diabetes and arthritis that affect Native people in disproportionately large numbers.

Native people know that everything in Creation -- the plants, trees, the water, wind, rocks, and mountains -- have spirit. As part of Creation, we also are sacred and have spirit. Healing is understood in terms of the spiritual basis of everything.

Our approach to healing is through ceremony. When we put our tobacco down as an offering to these things we call Creation, our spirit is making that connection so that we will be able to get that life source from them.

Our healing ways are referred to as Traditional Healing. This way of healing is holistic, based on an understanding of the interconnectedness of all life and the importance of balance and harmony in Creation.

# THE NUMBER FOUR IN CREATION

In all of Creation, there are four parts to everything that is natural. There are four parts to morning, four parts to the afternoon, four parts to the evening and four parts to the night. The human body has four sections: the arms, legs, trunk and head.

A tree has four sections: the roots, branches, trunk and leaves. They are all connected but have different functions.

Just as in Creation all things are connected but have different roles, so our mind, body, spirit and emotions are part of the sacred circle of life and are interconnected.

When one of them is out of balance, it affects the others. If you have a physical problem, it is connected to your spirit. If your mental state is out of balance, it will cause emotional turmoil.

Traditional Healing is the restoring of balance to the mind, body, spirit and emotions. There needs to be harmony and balance in us just as there is in all of Creation. When

that harmony and balance is lacking, sickness ensues. It is said that a significant amount of healing comes from ourselves because we want to be healed. In taking responsibility for our healing, we may participate in ceremonies. This can include our daily service of offering tobacco. It can also include other healing ceremonies that we participate in under the guidance of Healers and conductors, such as the sweat lodge, the shaking tent, the sun dance, the fast and the vision quest. When you start on a healing journey, you are making a commitment to help yourself, your family and your community.

Although ceremonies differ from First Nation to First Nation, fundamental beliefs are similar. We have all come to take care of the spirit. Use of sacred items such as the pipe, the drum, and the eagle feather can help us make the connection with Creation. It is said that all of Creation can give us teachings, which our way is a loving way that teaches us about kindness, caring, sharing, honesty and respect.



## THE NUMBER 4 IN CREATION (CONTINUED)

When we pray, the spirits that travel with us hear our prayers. They recognize us clearly when we let them know our spirit name. In this way, our spirit name is said to be fifty percent of our healing and balance and also, because, with it, we know who we are, we are aware where we belong, we know where we are going, and we know where we came from.

We can approach a Traditional Healer or Medicine Person for healing. We can also approach our Elder who heals through the sharing of their wisdom and the teachings. When we go to a Healer or Elder, they ask the Creator for help on our behalf. They have a gift to heal through spiritual powers which come from the Creator and their spirit helpers and from within themselves.

Healers and Medicine People work in a variety of ways. Each Healer has their way and unique gift. Healing involves ceremony. When a person comes for doctoring, that is a particular kind of ceremony. When Medicine People call in the spirit of the medicines to help, that is also a kind of ceremony. Some Healers know and work with the plants through their connection with the spirits of those plants. Healers and Medicine People prescribe medicines specifically for an individual. The way in which the medicine works is not exactly known and is sometimes referred to as "The Great Mystery."

Great respect is shown for the plants that are used in healing. Healers say that the spirit force of a plant directs them to the plant to use for an individual. Before the plant is picked, the Healer puts down a tobacco offering to acknowledge the spirit of the plant. The plant is addressed by its Native name as, it is said, at least half of the healing is done by the spirit of the plant. Some Healers do doctoring which may involve the extraction of illness.

Some Healers describe their way of working as working with energy, the mind, and the spirit. Some are seers, some are counselors, and some heal with their hands. All Traditional healing is holistic. If a person seeks help for an ulcer, it is not only the ulcer that is treated. The cause of the condition is addressed. The whole person is worked on. Maybe the whole family will be involved in the healing process. Or maybe the person will need to do something for the community.



# THE FOUR SACRED MEDICINES

The four sacred medicines are used in everyday life and ceremonies. All of them can be used to smudge with, though sage, cedar, and sweetgrass also have many other purposes. It is said that tobacco sits in the eastern door, sweetgrass in the southern door, sage in the West and cedar in the north. Elders say that the spirits like the aroma produced when we burn tobacco and the other sacred medicines.

## Tobacco

Traditional people say that tobacco is always first. It is used as an offering for everything and in every ceremony. "Always through smoking," the saying goes.

Traditional tobacco was given to us so that we can communicate with the spirit world. It opens up the door to allow that communication to take place. When we make an offering of tobacco, we communicate our thoughts and feelings through the tobacco as we pray for ourselves, our family, relatives, and others.

Tobacco has a unique relationship with other plants: it is said to be the primary activator of all the plant spirits. It is the key to the ignition of a car. When you use it, all things begin to happen. Tobacco is always offered before picking medicines. When you provide tobacco to a plant and explain why you are there, that plant will let all the plants in the area know why you are coming to pick them.

When you seek the help and advice of an Elder, Healer or Medicine Person, and give your offering of tobacco, they know that a request may be made as tobacco is so sacred.

We express our gratitude for the help the spirits provide us with through our offering of smoking. It is put down as an offering of thanks to the First Family, the natural world, after a fast. Traditional people make an offering of tobacco each day when the sun comes up.

Traditional tobacco is still grown in some communities. For example, the Mohawk people use a traditional tobacco that they grow themselves, and that is very sacred to them.



# SAGE, CEDAR AND SWEETGRASS

## Sage

Sage is used to preparing people for ceremonies and teachings. Because it is more medicinal and stronger than sweetgrass, it tends to be used more often in ceremonies. Sage is used for releasing what is troubling the mind and for removing negative energy. It is also used for cleansing homes and sacred items. It also has other medicinal purposes. There is male sage and female sage. The female sage is used by women.

## Cedar

Like sage and sweetgrass, cedar is used to purify the home. It also has many therapeutic medicinal purposes. Cedar baths are healing. When cedar is put in the fire with tobacco, it crackles. When it does this, it is calling the attention of the spirits to the offering that is being made. Cedar is used in fasting and sweat lodge ceremonies as a form of protection: cedar branches cover the floor of the sweat lodge, and a circle of cedar surrounds the faster's lodge.

## Sweetgrass

Sweetgrass is the sacred hair of Mother Earth. Its sweet aroma reminds people of the gentleness, love, and kindness she has for the people. When Sweetgrass is used in a healing circle, it has a calming effect. Like sage and cedar, sweetgrass is used for smudging and purification.

## Taking care of the Medicines

You take care of these sacred medicines by keeping them in a dry place. They can be stored in paper bags or wooden boxes. If you have been using alcohol or drugs, Healers say you should wait four to seven days before touching the medicines.



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