

# Services available for area hearing-impaired

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit will begin an audiology program with \$85,000 in annual operating funds from the Ministry of Health.

Lyn McLeod, Minister of Colleges and Universities and M.P.P. for Fort William, and Taras Kozyra, M.P.P. for Port Arthur, made the announcement today on behalf of Health Minister Elinor Caplan.

The new hearing program will serve people in Thunder Bay and the surrounding district. One audiologist and support staff will be hired. The program will start as soon as an audiologist is recruited by the health unit.

Audiologists test hearing to

identify impairments and suggest remedies. The audiologist will coordinate a health promotion program which will educate the public about hearing loss prevention.

The Thunder Bay area audiologist will provide hearing assessments and follow-up tests working from health unit offices in communities throughout the district. It is estimated that about 50 area residents will be examined and assessed each month.

In addition, the audiologist will prescribe hearing aids and counsel those identified as hearing-impaired.

"Our government wants to ensure that people in all communities have access to services that

are vital in maintaining health and well-being," Mrs. McLeod said.

Two new audiology offices will be established, one in Marathon and the other in Geraldton.

The ministry has approved a \$75,000 capital grant to establish the Marathon office, while portable audiology equipment will be used in the Geraldton office.

Office locations have not been finalized, but it is expected that the Marathon office will be located in the new medical clinic under construction and the Geraldton office will operate out of the existing health unit office.

Recommended for funding by

the Thunder Bay District District Health Council, the new audiologist will also conduct a public education program which will be operated from the Thunder bay office.

A study released by the Canadian Hearing Society of Thunder Bay in August found that hearing-impaired people are doing without because no services exist regionally.

The study identified 1568

hearing-impaired people of all ages living outside the City of Thunder Bay.

The report shows that nine organizations and thirteen individuals were interviewed in the Schreiber/Terrace Bay area.

## Thank You

We would like to thank Annette for having such a nice shower and special thanks to all who attended and help make it such a great success.

Christine and Aaron

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