

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

NTI Launches Community Engagement to Inform the Co-development of Indigenous Health Legislation

(October 8, 2021 – Iqaluit, Nunavut) This week, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) launched Nunavut specific engagement that will inform the co-development of the proposed Indigenous Health Legislation with the Government of Canada and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK).

Between October and November 2021, NTI will conduct interviews, host community radio shows, meet with community wellness committees and request written submissions through social media.

"Inuit have a right to health care, including the right to be involved in developing, determining and administering the health programs that affect us. Yet, Inuit experience troubling gaps in access to health services and in health outcomes. These engagements are designed to learn from Inuit experiences and aspirations as we prepare to work with the Government of Canada to co-develop Indigenous Health Legislation," said NTI President Aluki Kotierk.

The scope of the engagement will include Inuit-specific federal programs, midwifery and birthing services, mental health, community wellness organizations, training Inuit in health professions and accountability.

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For further information:

Malaya Mikijuk
Director of Communications Trainee
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Tel: (867) 975-4900/Toll-free: 1-888-646-0006
mmikijuk@tunngavik.com
www.tunngavik.com

Background

On January 28, 2021 the Minister of Indigenous Services publically launched the engagement on the Indigenous Health Legislation first promised in the 2020 Speech from the Throne. Then in March 2021 the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami Board of Directors which includes the President of NTI made a decision to participate in the engagement process for the co-development of the Indigenous Health Legislation.

Aligned with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls to Justice there is potential for the legislation to support the establishment of overarching principles as the foundation of health services for Indigenous peoples and transform health service delivery through collaborations with Indigenous organizations in the development, provision, and improvement of health services.

Article 32 of the Nunavut Agreement creates a mandate and a requirement for close and effective collaboration between the NTI, GN, and Government of Canada in the development of social and cultural policies and in the design of social and cultural programs and services including health. The 2014-15 Annual Report on the State of Inuit Culture and Society focused on Article 32, <https://www.tunngavik.com/files/2016/09/SICS-Report-2015-ENG091316.pdf>

The 2007-08 Annual Report on the State of Inuit Culture and Society titled "Nunavut's Health System" made four fundamental recommendations including the need to support the primary health care approach: <https://www.tunngavik.com/documents/publications/2007-2008%20Annual%20Report%20on%20the%20State%20of%20Inuit%20Culture%20and%20Society%20%28English%29.pdf>

Communities were selected from all three regions and include decentralized, non-decentralized, and with and without specialized health infrastructure. Community visits will be held, conditional on weather:

Grise Fiord, October 4-6
Rankin Inlet, October 18
Chesterfield Inlet, October 20
Igloolik, October 21
Cambridge Bay, to be determined
Pangnirtung, to be determined
Kugaaruk, to be determined
Kugluktuk, to be determined
Arviat, to be determined
Baker Lake, to be determined
Arctic Bay, to be determined