



Community Wellness Plan

Kugaaruk



Prepared by: Kugaaruk Community
Wellness Working Group as Part of
the Nunavut Community Wellness Project.



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Kugaaruk Community Wellness Plan

The Nunavut Community Wellness Project was a tripartite project led by Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. in partnership with Government of Nunavut, Department of Health and Social Services and Health Canada.

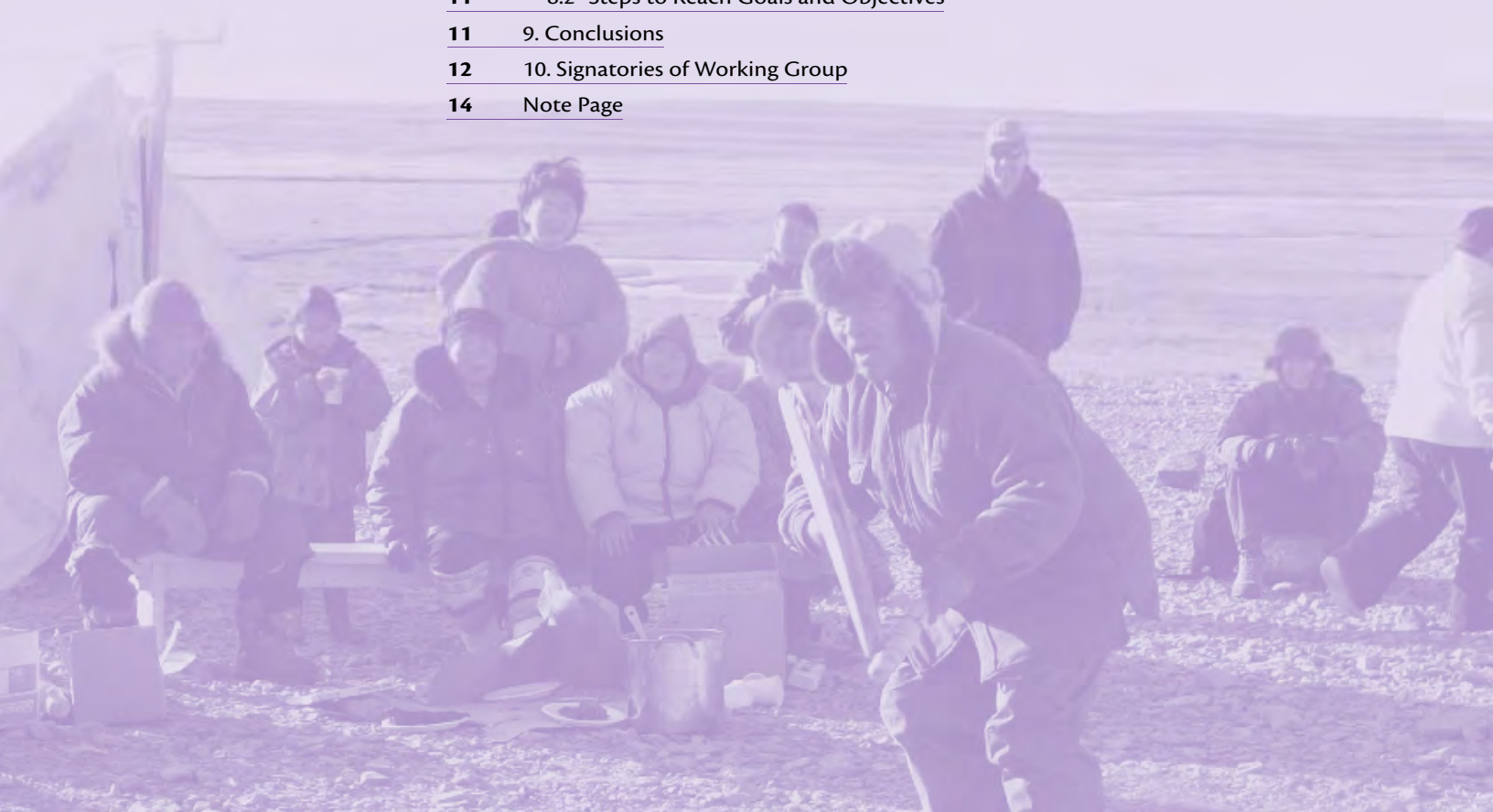
Community Wellness Planning Committee of Kugaaruk is happy to share photos of their land and community in this publication.

July, 2011

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Nunavut Community Wellness Project (NCWP) is a partnership between Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), the Government of Nunavut's Department of Health and Social Services (HSS), and Health Canada's Northern Region (HC). The stated goal of the NCWP is to increase the participation of Inuit in the development and delivery of health programs and services in Nunavut, which responds in part to the requirement outlined in Article 32 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. The NCWP results from recommendations made for a Community Wellness Strategy as outlined in the HII report, *Piliriqatigiinnngniq – Working Together for the Common Good*.¹

The six communities chosen for the project are Clyde River, Igloolik, Kugaaruk, Kugluktuk, Arviat and Coral Harbour.

The original **goals and objectives** of the project are:

- To develop and implement integrated Community Wellness Plans in six communities in Nunavut, in order to leverage existing capacity, increase human resource capacity, create economies of scale and broaden access to services in those communities;
- Use best practices from this project that could be developed into community wellness planning templates to facilitate similar wellness planning initiatives in other Nunavut communities; and
- Contribute towards the ability of individual Nunavut communities to identify and address their own health issues, needs, options and priorities, in order to improve the health and wellbeing of their people.

The following Community Plan is a result of extensive work undertaken by the community of Kugaaruk from March 2009 – October 2010.

1. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. *Piliriqatigiinnngniq- Working Together for the Common Good*. 2006



2. COMMUNITY WELLNESS WORKING GROUP

2.1 PURPOSE OF WORKING GROUP

During the preliminary research for the invitation process leading to the earliest Community Planning Workshop held in Iqaluit in February of 2009, three Kugaaruk community members¹ were selected to represent the community. The three individuals were chosen by the mayor's office, the Community Health Representative (CHR) and the Community Liaison Officer (CLO). The three people were selected based upon their extensive experience in dealing with health and wellness issues in the community. Following the Iqaluit workshop, the participants returned to Kugaaruk and formed the Kugaaruk Community Wellness Working Group (KCWWG).

Upon their return, the KCWWG members sent a letter of invitation inviting community members to attend a meeting to learn information gained from the workshop. The invitation letter was sent to community organizations and businesses including: the hamlet council, the Youth Committee, the Elders Committee, the Justice Committee, the Ladies Group, the Community Health Representative (CHR), the Nurse In Charge, the Social Worker, the Koomiut Co-operative, the school, the Mental Health Worker and the RCMP detachment. The first meeting was held in March of 2009 and reviewed the outcomes of the Iqaluit workshop, the purpose of the Nunavut Community Wellness Planning (NCWP) project, and the participation of the other five Nunavut communities in the NCWP pilot project.

The KCWWG² was designed to complete a specific purpose.¹ Each participating community developed its own structure and practices, but the overall purpose of the working group remained as follows:

- Establish a Community Wellness Working Group with membership from community leaders in health, social services, education, recreation, justice and community administration;
- Hire and supervise a coordinator reporting to the working group to manage the planning process;
- Inform the community about the project;
- Develop a list of wellness issues and community wellness assets;
- Write a Community Wellness Plan;
- Present a Community Wellness Plan to the GN, NTI, and HC; and
- Maintain ongoing communication and work with support team members from of New Economy Development Group/USIQ Communications (NEDG/USIQ).

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKING GROUP

The Kugaaruk Wellness Committee (KWC) consists of thirteen members and representing a range of organizations and committees in the community including: Elders, youth, education, hamlet council, the justice committee, a women's group, RCMP, the health centre's nurse in charge, the community wellness counsellor and a social worker. In spite of the significant number of representatives, the committee feels that the membership could be expanded to include hamlet representatives (i.e. the Senior Administrative Officer and the mayor) and representatives from economic development, recreation, the churches, the Co-op store and the Kitikmeot Inuit Association. The committee feels that representation from these additional groups would be beneficial to the KWC and for the project overall. The KWC has invited the Economic Development Officer, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association representative, and a member of the District Education Authority to become KWC members.

1. Katherina Qirnuq, Mary Karaqsak and Beatrix Apsaktaun

2. Consisting of Beatrix Apsaktaun, Lucy Akoak, Georgina Ningark, Josh Atkinson, Millie Dietrich, Canute Krejunark and Fraser Robb.

Membership

The KWC is made up of representatives from a variety of different committees in the hamlet including:

MEMBERS INCLUDE:

ROLE	NAME	COMMUNITY ROLE
Chairperson	Sam Inaksajak	Kugaardjuq School
Member	Canute Krejunark	Hamlet Council
Member	Georgina Ningark	Youth Committee
Member	Lucy Akoak	Community Wellness Council
Member	Otto Apsaktaun	Elders Committee/Hamlet Council
Member	Joshua Atkinson	RCMP
Member	Celine Ningark	Justice Committee/Justice Outreach Worker
Member	Maria Kokovak	Ladies Group
Member	Rita Dugas	NIC
Member	Ivan Sunerine	Social Worker
Member	Millie Dietrich	Mental Health Worker
Member	Fraser Robb	Kugaardjuq School
Coordinator	Beatrix Apsaktuan	NCWP

Governance Documents

The KWC endeavours to meet twice monthly. The NCWP Coordinator prepares agendas for impending meetings. While a template agenda is used, agenda items are generated and added as needed from the previous committee meeting. These agenda items are added by the members during the meetings. Each meeting lasts approximately one to one and a half hours, depending on the topics and discussion times to be addressed. The meeting minutes are kept by the NCWP Coordinator. Following the meeting, the minutes are circulated to members. When decisions are required to be made, a motion is put forward by the chairperson for a collective committee vote.

As part of the KWC, the KCWWG is tasked with researching resources, materials and assets related to action items identified by the KWC as a whole and reporting back to the KWC so decisions about these items can be made.



3. COMMUNITY OVERVIEW (POPULATION, ECONOMY, PLACES AND PEOPLE OF INTEREST)



Map made
available by Inuit
Tapiriit Kanatami,
www.itk.ca

Kugaaruk, formerly known as Pelly Bay, is home to approximately 833-850 residents. Set in a mountainous valley on the west side of Simpson Peninsula, Kugaaruk looks out over Pelly Bay and has an abundance of lakes and rivers nearby. The region is the natural habitat for caribou, ringed seal. Narwhals, bowhead whales and perhaps the best char in Nunavut abound in the area.

Kugaaruk has long been occupied by the Netsiligmiut (the people of the seal). Residents maintained a semi-nomadic lifestyle up until 1965, when the government of Canada moved prefabricated homes into the area. The population of the hamlet is comprised of 94% Inuit and 6% non-Inuit.

Outside of government employment, there are a number of private businesses; the Koomiut Co-op, an inn and grocery store, a post office and a local electrical and general contractor. Well known carvers in the community are Emily Illuitok, Solomon Iqqiuituq, Alina Tungilik, a jewellery maker and Nicholas Sikkuark, an artist.

4. CREATING AWARENESS IN THE COMMUNITY

4.1 DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY-BASED AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

In wanting to create awareness of the NCWP in the community, the KWC discussed and prepared two posters for display in the Koomiut Co-op store. The posters outlined a list of Community Wellness Assets and a ten-Year Plan, which identified what the community wanted to see established in their community within ten years. In addition to the posters generated by the committee, the NCWP Coordinator held two one-hour radio shows, providing an overview of the NCWP project, a description of what was accomplished in the Iqaluit workshop, and requesting feedback on what community members wanted to see attained in the community within ten years.

Following the radio shows, the coordinator visited the hamlet, health centre, the RCMP, the school and the Co-op to provide more information. During the initial visit to the hamlet office, the coordinator requested an audience with the hamlet council in order to provide council members with more information on the project. Pamphlets were handed out to each council member, a copy of the committee's minutes were presented to the Senior Administrative Officer, and a verbal update on the project was provided by the coordinator. As the KWC has considerable community committee representation, no other presentations were made.

Letters were sent out to community organizations such as the Parish committee, the women's group, the youth committee, the Elders committee, the justice committee, the Koomiut Co-op, RCMP, the health centre and the school. The letter outlined the project as well as invited these groups to be a part of the KWC/KCWWG. It explained the difference between the KWC and the KCWWG which is a working group within the committee that consists of four members who perform action items from the agenda. The KWC has representation from all existing community committees as identified above. These representatives report back to their respective committees on the NCWP project. All the committees that are represented on the KWC are supportive of the project and the community overall was receptive to the idea of a wellness working group.

Despite some resistance on the part of the Senior Administrative Officer, the KWC continues to strive to accomplish what is best for Kugaaruk. Community members have approached various committee members, as well as the NCWP Coordinator, to voice their support for the project as it is felt that it is something that is needed in the community. Residents have stated that if the hamlet does not want to play an active role, then this will be something that they will try to accomplish on their own.

On September 13, 2011, the KWC hosted a radio phone-in show which elicited a large listener response and resulted in increased community awareness and input.

5. WHAT ARE THE RESOURCES IN OUR COMMUNITY

5.1 COMMUNITY MAP AND DESCRIPTION (FROM ASSETS EXERCISE)



The community map was completed by KCWWCP members Katherina Qirnuq, Mary Kayasark and Beatrix Apsaktaun, along with a NCWP team member. They discussed the community, its assets and then developed the asset map. The three invitees were community members representing the KWC, the hamlet Health Committee and a regular community resident resulting in a solid base from which to build on their collective knowledge of the community.

Kugaaruk has a multitude of buildings that are represented in the asset map including: the Pierre Henry Building (which is home to the hamlet office and the community hall), the Kugaaruk Ilinniavik, the CPNP & Elders Building, the Natsilik Arena, St. Peter's Church, St. Theresa's Health Centre, the Business Development Centre (which houses the HTO, KIA and the MLA's office), the Koomuit Co-op store, the Inns North hotel, RCMP, Arctic College, the daycare building and the airport.



5.2 COMMUNITY ASSETS AND DESCRIPTION (FROM ASSET MAPPING EXERCISE)

Kugaaruk has several types of people who are considered assets in the community. People that are a direct link to wellness such as the social worker and the mental health worker but also people that are outside the aspect of traditional wellness, like the members of the Youth Committee, the Elders Committee, the Justice Committee, the Parish Committee, the RCMP, and Search & Rescue. Each of these committees or individuals offer different “services” but they all seem to work together when it comes to community wellness.

The Youth Committee applies for funding in order to hold youth camps, community events like square dances, and fundraise for youth to go to regional sporting events. The Elders’ Committee holds Elders’ camps and drum dance festivals. The Justice Committee is responsible for crime prevention programs. The Parish Committee hosts after-church tea and snacks, as well as games during special occasions. The Social Worker helps families in crisis and need. The Mental Health Worker assists in counselling people. The local RCMP detachment members have a community barbeque on National Aboriginal Day and are responsible for community crime prevention. Search and Rescue provides search and rescue services, along with gas supplies and radio/satellite phone equipment, when required. With such a stable foundation of services in the community, it is no surprise that all work together in providing a variety of reliable wellness services to Kugaaruk.

Kugaaruk has not only committees and committee members, but also local and regional organizations that could assist in overall community wellness. In Kugaaruk, the Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) every year donates an all terrain vehicle, snowmobiles, boats and motors to community residents who are considered low income. The HTO pays local hunters to harvest country food including caribou, fish, seal, musk ox and bowhead whales in order to provide meat to the community. The Kitikmeot Inuit Association provides grants to seamstresses and carvers for the purchase of equipment they need for their craft. The District Education Authority takes students fishing on day trips and they provide after school programs including dances for students, movies nights etc. The local church offers Sunday services, a meeting place for community members, Sunday school, and Sunday snacks after services and donations.

Regardless of the size of the community, local business could be assets in regards to enhancing to community wellness. The Koomiut Cooperative store sells food supplies for different events, clothing, dry goods, hardware, and sewing material. The Apsaktuan Contractor business, along with Aulijuut Plumbing Services and Oogaaq Electrical Services, offers building services, materials, renovation services, plumbing services and electrical services. Should the need arise for these services, these local companies are always willing to help out.

Physical space for community projects and programs, and community events can be found throughout in the community. The playground, the school gym, the community complex/hall and the arena all offer large spaces for different events to be held.

Traditional skills and knowledge are abundant in Kugaaruk to encourage wellness, traditional healing, traditional justice committees, a kayak-making program, sewing traditional clothing, traditional camping, storytelling, tanning, fish cutting, and tool making. These are all skills that could be linked to wellness, teaching and learning.

6. COMMUNITY VISION FOR WELLNESS

6.1 PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING VISION

The Kugaaruk Wellness Committee identified what they wanted their community to look like. Healthy youth was the most important priority in the community, therefore a lot of their discussion revolved around this issue. The committee discussed the issues amongst themselves and developed a list of concerns and priorities. During the radio phone-in on September 13, these issues were shared with the community and received positive and helpful feedback.

7. ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

7.1 PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING WELLNESS ISSUES

The issues identified in our community were a result of the two radio shows and the KWC-sponsored meetings. Among the top priorities identified were to decrease alcohol and drug use or to stop drug use completely, creating after-school jobs for students, establishing men, women and elder's support group which could teach budgeting etc., create a program to encourage students to stay in school, suicide prevention programs, establish a food bank, teach residents how to budget, Elders providing counselling to people in a traditional manner.

As a result of consultation with the community, the KWC has now clearly established a vision for wellness in Kugaaruk consisting of priorities and goals and is currently developing a strategy for next steps including specific programs and activities to enhance the quality of life.

7.2 WHAT ARE THE WELLNESS ISSUES

The KWC identified several priorities as follows:

- Decrease drug and alcohol use;
- Promote students staying in school and graduating;
- Creating after school jobs;
- Establish Elders' counselling programs;
- Develop men's and women's support groups;
- Eliminate violence and abuse;
- Address suicide prevention; and
- Establish a food bank.

7.3 COMMUNITY GOALS (PRIORITIZED)

Initial discussions by the KWC identified the following goals:

1. To establish a place where activities for wellness can be held, a place that will help create jobs for all ages - a place that will assist in creating jobs for Elders and youth. The new facility could provide sewing classes, an activities hall, and a meeting/gathering place;
2. Have a number of workshops held in the community - request on-the-job training programs in the community, education programs, traditional skills, life skills programs, employment skills etc.;
3. Reduce overcrowding in homes - increase the number of housing units. A related long-term goal would be to move the airport to allow for community expansion; and
4. Address challenges to job creation for all ages and organize activities that can help people improve their lives (i.e. sewing classes).

At this time the committee has clarified the following goals as immediate priorities:

- Life skills education;
- Reduction of alcohol and drugs; and
- Foster first language and cultural values.

8. COMMUNITY PLAN

8.1 CONNECTING ASSETS TO WELLNESS VISION (FROM ASSETS EXERCISE)

The priorities identified above could be hosted in various locations in the community such as the Pierre Henry Building, the wellness centre, the school and the health centre. These priorities could be supported and addressed through programming delivered by members of the community represented by existing committees and services (mental health, social work, RCMP, community wellness counselor, etc.).

To address potential gaps in program delivery, the KWC is currently identifying existing services and materials from outside the community which could be set up to meet the needs of the community (i.e. drug and alcohol abuse videos or 'train-the-trainer' workshops).

8.2 STEPS TO REACH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Life Skills Education
 - Programs to support parenting skills and financial planning;
 - Programs to be developed for families and delivered through consultation with mental health, social work and community wellness worker; and
 - Programs to offer information and practical skills within a year.
- Reduction of Alcohol and Drugs
 - Community and school programs to raise awareness; and
 - RCMP to deliver DARE.
- Foster Language and Cultural Values
 - Elders group at the wellness centre; and
 - Counseling and healing.

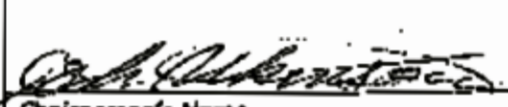
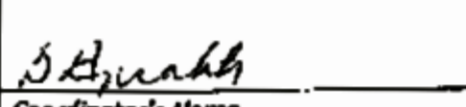
9. CONCLUSIONS

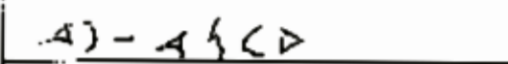
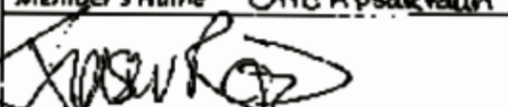
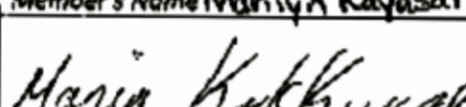
From the beginning the KWC has brought together members from various groups and agencies which represent Kugaaruk. These representatives have made it possible to identify the primary issues and concerns facing the community and to develop a clear vision of how to address these issues. The project was directed through consultations via public meetings and radio phone in shows as well as posting the results of the work in public locations. Through this process the community has become more aware of issues surrounding wellness and generated positive strategies to enhance the quality of life in Kugaaruk. The process has also developed a much higher level of communication between the groups and agencies responsible for promoting wellness. The end result of this has been to draw together and unite the various groups which were working with these issues and to reduce overlap and develop a much more coherent approach to addressing the needs of Kugaaruk.

The KWC has established a planning sub-committee. The sub-committee is responsible for finding and writing proposals for funding to support programs and events planned by the KWC in consultation with other groups in the community.

The planning sub-committee received funding through Nunavut Public Health Strategy to run two programs. The first of these was a Drop-In Centre for children ages 6-12. This program ran twice a week from January until the end of March and entailed such activities as arts and crafts, games, traditional skills with elders and healthy snacks. The second program, the Youth Leadership Program ran once a week from January until the end of March. This program focussed on personal development, communication skills, career planning and on-site visits to community facilities (such as the Health Centre, RCMP and Hamlet Council meetings). The purpose of these visits was to raise awareness of the workings of the community on the part of youth, discover opportunities for service and gain a greater understanding of potential careers.

10. SIGNATORIES OF WORKING GROUP

	
Chairperson's Name	Coordinator's Name
Joshua Atkinson	Beatrix Apsaktuan

	
Member's Name Otto Apsaktuan	Member's Name Marilyn Kayasari
	
Member's Name Fraser Robb	Member's Name Maria Kukkuak
Member's Name	Member's Name



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