

FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

## IKAJUQATIGIILUTA CONFERENCE ON MEN'S WELLBEING

**Kuujuuaq, November 27th, 2023** – More than fifty men from across Nunavik and allies from various organizations gathered in Inukjuak from November 20 to 24 for the Ikajuqatigiilluta Conference to discuss their wellness and identify priorities for improving their wellbeing.

Tommy Palliser who acted as a facilitator during the conference, explained that “Inuit still suffer from the traumatic legacy of the Residential School system that prioritized western education over our own culture and the forced relocation of many of our fellow Inukjuamiut to the Canadian Arctic. The role of men in their families and communities was disrupted by colonization. For example, the dog slaughter prevented men to provide for their families, which led many to depression or unhealthy coping strategies such as abuse of alcohol. We're still feeling the impact today, many of us don't know how to ask for help and when some men do, there aren't many services specifically for men.”

“In one man's lifetime, the Inuit have gone from a simple way of life to the experience of complex and traumatic social problems. Many of our fellow Inuit men are suffering and sometimes their pain and anger manifest in acts of violence against themselves or their loved ones. We have come together this week to understand why so many are suffering and what can be done to overcome our traumas and difficulties. Inuit know that from great challenges come great rewards” said Charlie Nowkawalk, President of Unaaq Men's Association of Inukjuak.

Priorities were identified during the gathering, which include:

- A complete communications campaign around men's issues and positive masculinity
- Creation of men's groups in all communities
- Strengthening of therapeutic services for men across Nunavik
- Specialised services for victims and instigators of violence and sexual abuse
- Temporary lodging for men in distress

Jennifer Munick-Watkins, Executive Director of Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, stated that “The NRBHSS is uplifted by the mobilization of men for their wellbeing. To support this movement, we are developing the first Regional Action Plan for Men's Wellbeing around several of the priorities identified by the participants of the Ikajuqatigiilluta Conference”.

Men working for community organizations, men's associations and public organizations vowed to continue participating in the movement for men's wellbeing in Nunavik and are planning to join a regional advisory committee to support and monitor the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for Men's Wellbeing.

About the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services:

The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services is a public agency created in 1978 under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. It is responsible for nearly the entire Quebec territory located north of the 55th parallel in terms of the provision of health and social services for the inhabitants of the 14 communities.

**Source:** Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS)

**For information:** Virginie Richard  
Communication Officer, NRBHSS  
[media.nrbhss@ssss.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:media.nrbhss@ssss.gouv.qc.ca)  
Tel.: 514-475-6364