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NUNAVIK 2017

# PUVIRNITUQ

## COMMUNITY PORTRAIT

Results from the Community Component  
of Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Health Survey



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RÉGIE RÉGIONALE DE LA SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX DU NUNAVIK  
NUNAVIK REGIONAL BOARD OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

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## This community portrait for Puvirnituaq is a result of the Community Component of the *Qanuilirpitaa?* Health Survey, conducted in 2017 across the 14 communities of Nunavik.

### The objectives of the Community Component were to:

- 1) **describe Inuit conceptions of health and well-being** as they relate to health determinants and community living;
- 2) better **understand** how **community conditions and resources contribute to the health** of people living there;
- 3) focus on the sources of **strength and resilience** in each community to describe how the community responds to challenges to health;
- 4) **measure and describe community health and well-being** across all 14 communities of Nunavik;
- 5) provide **information** to the **Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services and community representatives** who will work to develop action plans and interventions to respond to the needs identified in the Community Component.

To ensure cultural relevance and to get a full appreciation of the social and cultural context surrounding health, we developed a model of health and well-being that structured our data collection, analysis, and results. The **IQI model of health** and **eight themes** – elements shaping the health of communities and people – were developed through an exhaustive analysis of data collected through workshops, discussions, and in-depth interviews with Nunavimmiut from the 14 communities in Nunavik. The model was validated by leaders, community members, and the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services.

The information presented in this community portrait is based on the analysis of 4 long interviews conducted with community leaders, and 34 short interviews with service providers (resources). Through these interviews, participants shared what they thought of their community, what they perceived as strengths and challenges in Puvirnituaq, and improvements they would like to see for their community.

This portrait starts with a description of the IQI model of health and of the eight themes, or determinants, shaping the health and well-being of Nunavimmiut. Then for each theme, the following information is presented: organizations offering services or programs, main assets and strengths of the community, sociodemographic groups that are most or least served by programs and services (see: What about the People?), and what Puvirnitumiut would like to see improve in their community.

**We want to thank all Puvirnitumiut for their participation and collaboration throughout the Community Component of the *Qanuilirpitaa?* 2017 Nunavik Health Survey.**



# THE IQI MODEL OF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**Ilusirsusiarniq, Qanuinggiarniq and Inuuqatigiitsianiq are three key concepts of health and well-being. They build on the foundation of language and culture to make up the IQI model of health and well-being in Nunavik.**

**Ilusirsusiarniq** concerns the body, in general. It is a condition of normal functioning without disease, pain, injury or sickness that impedes people from doing what they want and need to do. The concept carries the idea that health is the way the body is intended to develop and change over time. Ilusirsusiarniq is “the taking of intended form” progressing from birth to old age.

**Qanuinggiarniq** is a broad sense of “well-being” that encompasses feelings of being unworried, without pain, comfortable, free of emotional distress, and happiness. It is related to peace of mind, calmness, fulfilment, and being able to move forward and carry on with ease. A specific emphasis is placed on the importance of being with other people in emotionally warm and safe environments.

**Inuuqatigiitsianiq** refers to an ideal state of relations between people. Specifically, it is composed of the quality of interactions with people sharing the same place. Good relationships with family members, friends, neighbours, people in the community and beyond are a significant part of the definition of health.

# SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Eight social determinants of health that support people to be healthy and well were identified. Each of them influences the others and all eight are linked together within the broader conceptual IQI model.

**COMMUNITY** consists of the social, physical, and built spaces of the municipalities of Nunavik. It encompasses three sub-themes: ways of living together, infrastructure and housing. *Ways of living together* refers to a range of relational issues like respect, altruism and social support; the role of elders and intergenerational knowledge transmission; and interactions like visiting, the place of non-Inuit and inclusion. Infrastructure concerns buildings, essential and municipal services, leisure, sports and recreation, and justice. Housing concerns accessibility, quality and appropriateness of dwellings, their structural characteristics, and sense of home.

**FAMILY** focuses primarily on kinship and affective relations between family members across generations, with an emphasis on youth. The sense of family belonging, with its particular attention to harmonious relations, calls directly upon the inuuqatigiitsianiq dimension of Inuit health. This determinant encompasses the extended family or ilagiit and Inuit-specific cultural customs, like the practice of customary adoption.

**IDENTITY** details the connection to culture, language, pride, cultural activities, history, childhood and adolescent experiences, as well as the influence of southern culture. Questions of identity, including perceptions of the strength and value of Inuit culture today are important aspects of the definition of community health and well-being.

**FOOD** is a necessity of life that carries important social, economic and knowledge dimensions. This determinant encompasses the knowledge and practices of harvesting and sharing, the quality and quantity of food available, food preferences, and the regulations that govern hunting. Likewise, food includes the many influences around the acquisition and consumption of store-bought foods. The harvesting of country food requires skills and knowledge. Who goes on the land, how, when, and where is linked to social and historical ties of families with different places in Nunavik. Sharing food and meals brings all foods into family and community practices.

**LAND** is practically and symbolically a fundamental determinant of individual and collective health, healing, and well-being in Nunavik. This determinant includes issues of accessibility for food gathering, travel between communities, healing, caring for the land and outdoor activities. Safety and security on the land are also important aspects and include search and rescue, practices and knowledge.

**KNOWLEDGE** is a prerequisite to effective action in the home, on the land or at work. As such, it is the first step leading to health, healing and well-being. This determinant incorporates aspects of leadership, governance, empowerment and inter-agency collaboration as well as skills development, schooling and administrative knowledge. Knowledge is inclusive of Inuit and Western or southern traditions.

**SERVICES** encompasses the many different aspects of community, regional and provincial resources that people access and which contribute to health. These include health-related services (mental, physical and community initiatives), as well as community-level institutions and actions that are sought out to address trauma and healing.

**ECONOMY** refers to the ways in which people make a living, either through the land-based and/or the market-based economy, and to local and regional development. It encompasses income, access to goods, cost of living, expertise, skill and funding.



# COMMUNITY

## Resources

- > Aaniavituqarq Crisis Centre
- > Adult Education Centre
- > Arena
- > Baseball field
- > Community gymnasium
- > Community wellness worker
- > Coop restaurant
- > Justice committee
- > Elders' Home
- > Fire station
- > FM station
- > Group Home
- > Ikaarvik school
- > Ilagitsuta Family House
- > Isaruit
- > Maternity Centre
- > NV
- > Post office
- > Project coordinator
- > Recreational coordinator
- > Swimming pool
- > Youth Protection
- > Uvattinut Supervised Housing
- > Youth House

## Community strengths

Puvirnitumiut perceive their community as a place where people stick together and help each other. People are also very supportive when a trauma happens or when someone is in need.

Puvirnituiq is considered very lively and offers multiple activities in the community, such as gatherings, feasts, clean-up days, picnics, tournaments, and sports events. One popular event is the Snowfest, which attracts people from all over Nunavik and showcases the work of local artists.

Sports, especially hockey, represent a popular activity that has positive impacts on youth. Puvirnitumiut feel youth are less likely to take part in vandalism or other destructive behaviours when they participate in sports.

The Crisis Centre, the Uvattinut Supervised Apartments, and other programs have helped increase social acceptance of mental health issues in the community. These resources help people to be active community members.

People feel the FM station is an efficient way to communicate with the community. It is used widely to provide information about what is going on, to inform people about health, and to enable community members to express their opinions.

In Puvirnituiq, non-Inuit employees are encouraged to learn about Inuit culture and participate in community life. By doing this, most of them feel they have gained the confidence and trust of the community.



## COMMUNITY *(continued)*

### WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Elders are highly valued and respected in the community. Monthly gatherings with games and food are organized.
- + Youth have access to many sports activities, clubs, committees, and recreational facilities.
- People with physical or mental disabilities lack infrastructure and adequate housing.
- There are few services or resources for people between the ages of 40 and 60 years old.

### PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- Quality installation and better infrastructure, as some buildings need major renovations and are not fit for community needs.
- More community involvement in activities.
- More housing in general and more housing for those with special needs.
- A justice system that is compatible with Inuit culture.
- Activities for 40-60-year-olds, for men, and especially for fathers.
- More activities that bring together youth and Elders.
- Stricter rules, night guards, and collaborative work between the NV and police officers to find solutions to social problems.
- Less bullying on social media.



# FAMILY

## Resources

- > [Arqsuivik Childcare Facility](#)
- > [Community wellness worker](#)
- > [Core Child Committee](#)
- > [CLSC](#)
- > [Ilagitsuta Family House](#)
- > [Isaruit](#)
- > [Maternity Centre](#)
- > [Sarliatauvik Childcare Centre](#)
- > [Youth Protection](#)

## Community strengths

Puvirnitumiut feel they have strong family values, and children are a priority in the community. The Core Child Committee is a good example of the many positive initiatives geared toward children.

The Maternity Centre and the Ilagitsuta Family House are considered great resources for pregnant women, as they provide culturally-based activities and material support.

The Ilagitsuta Family House, the CLSC, and social services all ensure strong follow-up for infants and support for new mothers, which are highly appreciated.

The Ilagitsuta Family House in particular is a well-recognized institution in the community. People feel the employees are devoted, and all activities, such as baby showers, workshops, infant vaccinations, feasts, and baby book activities, are well attended and aim to empower parents.

The Ilagitsuta Family House also organizes a youth summer camp where parents are invited to be involved. People believe it provides a good opportunity to enjoy an enriching experience while reinforcing family ties.

Educational programs at daycares, schools, and camps are culturally based in order to foster Inuit values and knowledge.

People recognize that grandparents play a crucial role in the community by supporting their children and grandchildren.

## FAMILY (continued)

### WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Pregnant women and new parents have access to multiple resources.
- + Several programs are offered to support the healthy development of babies.
- Grandparents who are raising their grandchildren lack support.
- Struggling families do not have access to many services, such as parenting skills development or supportive networks.
- Fathers have few resources to help them learn about parenting.
- Some parents struggle to learn how to raise their children the “Inuit way.”

### PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- Education about the importance of child support and discipline.
- Better understanding of the Youth Protection process and its role.
- More support for grandparents who are responsible for their grandchildren.
- More support services for families who are facing issues and struggles with raising their children.
- Safe shelters for children.



# IDENTITY

## Resources

- > Aaniavituqarq Crisis Centre
- > Adult Education Centre
- > Arqsuivik Childcare Facility
- > Community wellness worker
- > Coop store
- > Elders' Home
- > Group Home
- > Iguarsivik school
- > Ilagitsuta Family House
- > Isaruit
- > Northern store
- > Pigiatsiaq program
- > Project coordinator
- > Sarliatauvik Childcare Centre
- > Sewing shop
- > Woodworking shop
- > Youth Fusion
- > Youth House

## Community strengths

Summer camps provide many activities to teach cultural skills to youth. They have opportunities to fish and hunt and can also learn how to make nets, dry fish, or weave baskets.

A youth's first catch is a great event in the community and is celebrated by everyone. Youth still share their first catch with their godmother/godfather.

Hunting, fishing, sewing, camping, and throat singing are highly practiced in Puvirnituk. Most organizations encourage people to practice cultural activities to reduce harmful behaviours. The Pigiatsiaq program, Arctic survival camp, Healing on the Land Program, and sewing and woodworking shops are among the many valuable resources in the community.

The cooperative movement represents a crucial part of Puvirnituk's history and is a great source of pride for the community. People feel it's a strong tool for economic and social development. The Coop store sells essential goods and food, encourages local artists by promoting and selling Inuit arts and crafts, finances the Petits-déjeuners program through alcohol sale profits, and donates regularly to events and activities.

The Snowfest is perceived as an excellent initiative to showcase Inuit talents and encourage people to acquire cultural skills and learn about their culture.

## IDENTITY *(continued)*

### WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Elders' knowledge is highly valued in the community. They are sought out and sometimes paid to share their knowledge.
- + Sewing is very widespread and easily accessible to youth and women.
- Younger generations are less knowledgeable about cultural skills.
- There are fewer programs for middle-aged men, and they struggle to attract participants.

### PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More intergenerational activities in order to pass on knowledge and history.
- New ways of interesting youth in the culture and teaching them cultural activities.
- Interesting activities and programs for men.



# FOOD

## Resources

- > Aaniavituqarq Crisis Centre
- > Arena
- > Arqsuivik Childcare Facility
- > Community freezer
- > Coop store
- > Elders' Home
- > Fish plant
- > Ikaarvik school
- > Ilagitsuta Family House
- > Northern store
- > Hunter Support Program
- > Coop restaurant
- > Cooking classes (Youth Fusion and Youth House)
- > Pigiatsiaq program
- > Sarliatauvik Childcare Centre
- > Youth Protection (emergency supplies)

## Community strengths

Sharing is a strong community value in Puvirnituk. Many people feed their family members and invite people over for food using the radio and Facebook.

Many resources provide free food, such as the community freezer, the community kitchen, the Crisis Center, and the Individualized Pathways for Learning (IPL) program. There is a great collaboration between the restaurant and the Crisis Centre: the restaurant gives excess food to the Crisis Centre, then clients of the Crisis Centre cook food to distribute to people in need.

Harvesting is believed to be an important component of health and well-being, as people crave country food. The Hunter Support Program, the Crisis Centre, and the community wellness workers provide many opportunities to go pick berries, hunt, or fish.

The community organizes many feasts to celebrate and bring the community together. Examples include the monthly Elders' meeting at the Ilagitsuta Family House, picnics for Coop day, or Christmas gatherings.

There are multiple opportunities to learn about healthy food and how to cook nutritious meals. The Ilagitsuta Family House organizes the community kitchen and the food show at the Coop and also provides information through Facebook or the radio. The restaurant tries to encourage people to try new food. Schools, the Youth House, and the Group Home also have programs to teach youth about healthy snacks.

## FOOD *(continued)*

### WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Community kitchens are mostly popular with women.
- + Youth and pregnant women have many opportunities to educate themselves about healthy food.
- + Youth, men with mental health issues, and Elders have opportunities to go on the land to pick berries or go hunting.
- People who do not hunt, or have no hunter in their family, might have difficulty accessing country food.
- Hunting is very costly, and hunters are unable to share as much as before.
- Middle-aged people, who have no vehicle, have limited opportunities to go harvesting.

### PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- Fewer regulations in order to enable the development of interesting initiatives, such as country food meals at the restaurant or fish plant expansions.
- More fresh produce and cheaper food in the stores.
- Initiatives to provide regular income to hunters.
- Paid hunting activities where hunters are paired with youth and bring country food to families in need.



# LAND

## Resources

- > Aaniavituqarq Crisis Centre
- > Arqsuivik Childcare Facility
- > Community wellness worker
- > Elders' Home
- > Group Home
- > Hunter Support Program
- > Ilagitsuta Family House
- > Isaruit
- > Search and rescue
- > Pigiatsiaq program
- > Project coordinator
- > Sarliatauvik Childcare Centre
- > Swimming pool

## Community strengths

The land is perceived as an important component of well-being. Many people go on the land to relax, spend time with friends and relatives, and focus on positive things. Going on the land is also used as an intervention for people with addiction or mental health issues or for people at risk of committing crimes.

The practice of going out and enjoying the land is learned from a very young age. Youth follow their parents on the land, and the schools, daycares, and Group Home organize regular outings with children and youth, as going on the land is perceived as an important part of their development.

There are also many initiatives to educate youth about cultural and survival skills. The Ilagitsuta Family House and the NV, for example, organize camps to bring youth on the land. One of them, the Arctic survival camp, teaches hunting and survival skills to youth who have dropped out of school in order to help them become good hunters and guides for the community. The community wellness worker also provides many opportunities to bring people hunting and fishing.

Swimming is perceived as an important skill to learn. The swimming pool provides swimming lessons, and summer camps teach youth about water safety. Life jackets are provided by the Coop to every young camper, a safety behaviour that is quickly spreading to the whole community.



## LAND (continued)

### WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + The community provides many opportunities for people with mental health issues to go on the land to cope and heal.
- + Even if their families are not going on the land, the Family House and schools organize outings for children and youth.
- + There are swimming lessons for every age group.
- Regular workers can't go on the land easily.
- Many people with lower incomes can't afford to go on the land.
- Male teenagers have more opportunities to go on the land than female teenagers, and many teenagers lack interest in outdoor activities.
- There are few programs for adults and Elders with disabilities to go on the land.

### PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- Opportunities for regular workers to go hunting.
- To find ways to interest youth in outdoor activities.
- More initiatives to help people with lower incomes and no vehicle to go on the land.
- Reinforced rules related to drinking and driving or driving underage.



# KNOWLEDGE

## Resources

- > Aaniavituqarq Crisis Centre
- > Adult Education Centre
- > Arqsuivik Childcare Facility
- > Fish plant
- > Group Home
- > Hospital
- > Iguarsivik school
- > Ikaarvik school
- > Ilagitsuta Family House
- > Maternity Centre
- > NV
- > Sarliatauvik Childcare Centre
- > Swimming pool
- > Uvattinut Supervised Housing
- > Youth Fusion

## Community strengths

Various organizations combine their efforts to provide an enriching cultural experience to youth, families, and Elders through summer camps, survival camps, and organized outings.

The Youth House, the schools, and the NV provide activities to empower youth and teach them how to be positive leaders. Hockey, for example, is a popular activity for teenage boys, and several initiatives have been developed over time to motivate young hockey players to behave well. Another example is high school graduation, where graduates are highly celebrated and receive many gifts to congratulate them, but also to inspire the other students to achieve the same goal. The orchestra, at the Adult Education Centre, is also an example of an activity aimed at developing self-esteem and pride.

Puvirnitumiut have many on-site training opportunities within the community, as well as vocational training through the Adult Education Centre. This is highly appreciated, as people do not have to travel outside the community for school. The Maternity Centre also provides a solid and well-recognized training for future midwives.

Existing collaborations are perceived as very helpful. Many places have the same vision for the community and work toward the same goals.

## KNOWLEDGE *(continued)*

### WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Youth have many possibilities to learn cultural skills through camps, the sewing centre, schools, and radio.
- + Anyone, including adults, can go back to school and finish their secondary education.
- + People with mental health problems have access to several programs.
- Many people struggle with basic life skills, such as budgeting, filling out paperwork, or understanding the justice system.
- Youth need more support and motivation to stay in school.

### PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More leaders and positive people willing to bring strong positive changes to the community.
- Inuit role models who can motivate youth to stay in school and become leaders.
- Stronger Inuktitut education.
- Steady teachers and substitute teachers to provide stability to students.
- Positive reinforcement for education.
- To find innovative ways to address community social issues through global collaboration between all organizations.



# ECONOMY

## Resources

- > Aaniavituqarq Crisis Centre
- > Arena
- > Bank services
- > Coop services
- > Coop store
- > Coop garage
- > Coop hotel
- > Fish plant
- > FM station
- > Group Home
- > Hunter Support Program
- > Ikaarvik school
- > Northern store
- > NV
- > Swimming pool
- > Uvattinut Supervised Housing
- > Youth Protection

## Community strengths

Working environments that provide culturally-based services or employ a majority of Inuit employees, such as the Ilagitsuta Family House, the Maternity Centre, the Coop store, and the daycares, enjoy a good reputation. Their services are valued, and they are perceived as great assets in the community. People are very proud of these organizations.

The Hunter Support Program, the fish plant, and the NV all provide culturally-based jobs for hunters and guides. These jobs are highly appreciated, as they allow people to practice their cultural skills while being paid. Because they bring food for the community or teach younger people survival skills, the whole community benefits from these jobs.

People feel there are many opportunities in the community to work or gain work experience, either through the Coop businesses, the stores, the hospital, or the NV.

People are proud and appreciative of the Coop businesses, as they help support the local economy while giving profits back to the community.

Many people love their job, and when they do, they provide excellent service. Workers said collaboration and steadiness are essential to their well-being. Mutual support and trust between employees combined with a welcoming atmosphere also help to provide a good working environment.

Fundraising is usually very efficient in the community. Bingos and the arena's canteen are popular ways to raise money. The Coop also donates money and materials for different events.

## ECONOMY *(continued)*

### WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Youth have multiple part-time job opportunities, either through the stores, the restaurant, the hotel, or organizations.
- + Even without a school degree, people can find work in the community.
- + Many places offer training for people.
- Some hunters, without paid jobs, struggle to make ends meet.
- Few people are passionate about their work.
- Tension in the work environment can cause a lot of stress and discourage people from going to work.
- Substance abuse and absenteeism have impacts on the whole community.

### PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- Better staff retention and more training.
- More resources to hire more staff.
- More certified employees and experts for specialized work in the community.
- Hunting certificates to recognize hunting as an official job.
- More jobs fit for a culturally-based lifestyle, and better job benefits to support this lifestyle.
- More funding for sports and activities.



# SERVICES

## Resources

- > [Addiction counsellor](#)
- > [Adult Education Centre](#)
- > [Anglican Church](#)
- > [Full Gospel Church](#)
- > [CLSC](#)
- > [Community wellness worker](#)
- > [Dentist](#)
- > [FM station](#)
- > [Group Home](#)
- > [Family House](#)
- > [Hospital](#)
- > [First responders](#)
- > [Maternity Centre](#)
- > [Social services](#)

## Community strengths

Culturally-based health and mental health services and programs are more efficient than those based on a non-Inuit approach. The Maternity Centre, for example, is perceived as a huge asset, as most midwives are Inuit, allowing women to give birth in a culturally-safe environment and to express their needs in their mother tongue.

Inuit community workers are greatly appreciated by Elders for home care and social services.

The hospital tries to provide services that are adapted to the community. Interpreters play an important role in cross-cultural communication and are highly valued.

Health professionals try as much as possible to work together to provide a multidisciplinary approach to their clients. There is a strong collaboration between health care providers, but also with the Ilagitsuta Family House, the police station, the schools, and community workers.

The community has many success stories of people who struggled for years and who are now able to live happily within the community because of local programs, such as Pigiatsiaq.

When the community goes through hardship, people band together and organize events (such as the Walk of Hope for suicide prevention) to show support.

## SERVICES *(continued)*

### WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Elders have access to many services, such as special housing and home care.
- + Women have access to many services and programs related to healthy pregnancy, healthy living, infant and child follow-up, and parenting.
- Even though initiatives have been developed for men over the years, it can be difficult to reach out to them.
- Very few health and mental health services are delivered by male employees.
- In certain services, some of the positions reserved for Inuit employees are difficult to staff, mostly because they are often perceived negatively in the community.
- Outside of the Youth Protection, there are few resources for children and youth suffering from trauma or dealing with hardship.

### PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More male employees in health and mental health services.
- Culturally-based material for health promotion and education.
- More staff and other resources dedicated to preventing FASD, tobacco and drug use, and STDs.
- Improved infrastructure for all health services.
- Open public discussions on sensitive subjects to increase awareness and healing.
- Street workers who are dedicated to helping people with family issues or substance use problems.
- Initiatives to reduce the impacts of alcohol.
- A designated place for sobering up and a treatment centre for people with substance use problems.
- More mental health services.



