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NUNAVIK 2017

TASIUJAQ

COMMUNITY PORTRAIT

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



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This community portrait for Tasiujaq 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 wellbeing** 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 21 short interviews with service providers (resources). Through these interviews, participants shared what they think of their community, what they perceived as strengths and challenges in Tasiujaq, 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 Tasiujarmut would like to see improve in their community.

We want to thank all Tasiujarmut 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, Qanuingsiarniq 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.

Qanuingsiarniq 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

- > Ajagutak school
- > Arena
- > CLSC
- > Cultural committee
- > Firefighters
- > Fitness room
- > FM radio
- > Gymnasium
- > Justice committee
- > Men's Club
- > NV
- > Police
- > Post office
- > Public safety officer
- > Recreational coordinator
- > Sewing shop
- > Snowmobile shop
- > Water supply
- > Wood workshop
- > Youth Committee
- > Youth House

Community strengths

Tasiujaq is perceived as a very tight-knit community with high levels of civic engagement, community involvement, and social support. People visit each other often in order to stay in the loop on current events and look after each other.

Residents view their community as safe and quiet. Few people have criminal cases, and the NV has hired a night guard and a public safety officer to reinforce safety in the community. Firefighters and police officers also lead various prevention activities at school, such as fire drills and safety lessons.

Overcrowding is decreasing in the community, and new houses are considered comfortable.

The Youth House is considered a safe and beneficial resource to youth. They can go there to enjoy educational activities and stay off the streets.

Even if Facebook is becoming more popular than the FM radio, the local broadcast network is still perceived as an important communication tool. People use the radio to stay aware of what is going on in the community and learn about the legal system.

The cultural committee is an important resource for Elders, as it organizes many activities for them. They either bring them on the land or invite them over for a small feast.

There are many exchanges between Elders and youth, which are considered important for social cohesion. Elders share their knowledge, while younger generations take care of them by helping them with their daily tasks.

COMMUNITY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Men have access to several recreational resources in the community, such as the Men's Club, the fitness room, and the wood workshop.
- + Elders have various opportunities to gather and participate in activities in the community through the NV or the cultural committee.
- There is an overall lack of recreational activities in the community, especially for youth.
- Elders lack general resources for support.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- An intergenerational building, a recreational facility, or a community centre where the community can gather, participate in cultural activities, and play games.
- An Elder coordinator to support Elders with administrative paperwork, provide activities, take them out, and help them navigate the health system.
- More recreational activities for youth.
- Major repairs on the Youth House.
- A garage to keep the ambulance in during winter months.
- An evening radio show with storytelling for youth.
- A bigger school.
- A legal system that comprehends Inuit culture and takes it into consideration.



FAMILY

Resources

- > [Qulliapik daycare](#)
- > [Social services](#)
- > [Youth Protection \(YP\)](#)

Community strengths

The community is very family-oriented, and parents are highly involved in their children's lives. Many parents, when they encounter personal issues, are becoming more aware of how to identify and acknowledge their problems and search for existing solutions.

The daycare is a much-appreciated resource, as it allows parents to work.

Grandparents are very important and are involved in bringing up children. They pass on their knowledge to their grandchildren.

Youth begin following their parents on the land at a very young age, which allows them to acquire skills early on. Transmitting cultural knowledge is seen as an important part of educating children.

FAMILY (continued)

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Parents have access to various workshops, such as parenting and trauma healing, to help them with bringing up their children.
- People without family members within the community may find it difficult to obtain support.
- Young parents who don't have access to babysitting services struggle to remain involved in community activities.
- Some grandparents find it hard to be caregivers for their grandchildren. Parents often want to go out, participate in activities, and travel more than they used to, which leaves grandparents with a larger share of the childcare responsibilities.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More education about the role of the YP.
- YP programs and interventions that are adapted to Inuit culture.
- Babysitting services during workshops or community activities.
- More foster homes within the community.
- An intergenerational building to foster quality bonding between Elders and youth.



IDENTITY

Resources

- > Cultural committee
- > FM radio
- > Hunter Support Program
- > NV
- > Sewing shop
- > Wood workshop
- > Youth Committee,
- > Youth House

Community strengths

Practicing cultural activities is important for Tasiujarmiut, who still take part in many activities, such as carving and sewing.

Elders share a lot of their knowledge with the community, either during outings on the land, with their family members, during community workshops, or over the FM station. They teach sewing, medicinal plant knowledge, handicrafts, and survival skills to younger people. They also tell stories about their ancestors, Inuit history, and the language. People feel empowered when Elders speak about the past.

The Youth Committee organizes ulu making, carving activities, and sewing activities for the youth to help them stay connected to their culture.

When they have funding, the sewing shop organizes a tent-sewing workshop. It also occasionally hires an experienced local seamstress to teach sewing or carving. This activity is highly appreciated by the women.

The wood workshop organizes carpentry classes and provides all the necessary tools, which allows men to learn woodworking.

The Hunter Support Program (HSP) buys all carvings and pieces of clothing that are nicely made to encourage people to master their skills. People are proud when they sell their clothes and carvings.

Inuktitut is still very strong in the community. Most people speak it at home.

Technology and the Internet have a positive impact on students and help them become more aware of what is going on in the world.

The cultural committee is very active and provides many activities in the community, such as fishing and berry-picking outings, and carving and sewing workshops.

IDENTITY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + The sewing shop is active and organizes many workshops for women.
- + Men can do carpentry at the wood workshop.
- + Youth have access to various cultural activities through the Youth Committee, the cultural committee, and culture classes at school.
- Some youth are more interested in video games and technology than in learning about their culture.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More cultural activities at the Youth House.
- More storytelling by Elders.
- More opportunities for Elders to teach cultural skills.



FOOD

Resources

- > Arena
- > Community freezer
- > Coop store
- > Hunter support program
- > CLSC

Community strengths

People are always ready to share and help other people. They mostly share country food to ensure everyone has access to it when it's scarce.

Providing country food is a priority for the NV, which tries to ensure that it is available year-round and that there is enough food to feed the community. Through the Hunter Support Program, hunters are hired to hunt game and fill the community freezer.

When the community has access to special food, like beluga, people make sure to give a part of it to everyone.

Many organizations, such as the NV, the Youth Committee, and the cultural committee, organize community feasts, which are well attended and highly appreciated.

The nursing station is a good resource for educating people about healthy food and nutrition and focuses mainly on the nutritional aspects of country food.

The Coop store provides free oranges and apples for youth at the arena, and also gives food for the Christmas community feast.

FOOD *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + When there is not a lot of country food, Elders are prioritized, followed by widows and single mothers. Food is delivered to their homes.
- + Pregnant women and new mothers receive food coupons to lower the cost of their monthly grocery bills.
- Some people have less access to country food than others because they lack the necessary equipment to go hunting or don't have a vehicle.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More country food. Even though the HSP budget has increased over the course of the year, there is a need for more country food because the population is growing.
- Initiatives to lower the prices of store-bought food.



LAND

Resources

- > [Ajagutak school](#)
- > [CLSC](#)
- > [Community boat](#)
- > [Cultural committee](#)
- > [FM radio](#)
- > [Hunter Support Program](#)
- > [NV](#)
- > [Wildlife committee](#)
- > [Youth Committee](#)

Community strengths

The land is considered an important component of health and happiness. People mostly enjoy the land during spring, when the whole community goes back on the land and community organizations put together a variety of activities, such as fishing and berry-picking contests.

The community has many hunters, and many youth love to hunt. They learn from a very young age by following their parents, or by participating in day camps or cultural classes.

Elders teach youth survival skills, such as how to make an igloo, through various activities provided in the community. The teaching is done directly in town or out on the land.

Even though the community boat budget is not high, it's an important resource in terms of allowing the community to have access to country food. It also permits hunters to go further out on the sea to catch marine mammals.

The NV provides different opportunities to help people without the necessary supplies to go berry picking or hunting. They hire guides and rent equipment (such as canoes). The cultural committee also organizes outings to bring youth on the land, where it carries out prevention activities and teaches youth survival skills.

The wildlife committee works to promote safety and security on the land, and also enforces rules to protect the wildlife. When they have concerns, they work in collaboration with the Nunavik Marine Regional Wildlife Board.

The Landholding Corporation collaborates with universities to gather information about food contaminants in order to ensure the safety of the food consumed by the community.

The NV provides several opportunities to help people who don't have equipment to go berry picking or hunting. They hire guides and rent vehicles, such as canoes.

LAND (continued)

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + The Hunter Support Program enables many unemployed hunters to go on the land.
- + Outings are organized for youth, Elders, and people who can't afford to go on the land.
- Elders cannot go on the land as much as they would like to because of the lack of resources.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More incentives to wear a helmet.
- Recognition of Tasiujaq as the place with the world's highest tide.
- Displacement of the garbage dump and the sewage lagoon.
- More summer camps on the land for youth.
- More resources for bringing Elders on the land.



KNOWLEDGE

Resources

- > Ajagutak school
- > Firefighters
- > First responders
- > FM radio
- > Hotel
- > Landholding Corporation
- > NV
- > Sewing shop
- > Wildlife committee
- > Wood workshop

Community strengths

The community organizes multiple workshops with representatives from all organizations in order to gather everyone's perspectives and knowledge. They also hold regular meetings to provide updates about what they are doing and what is going on in the community, to brainstorm how to improve community life, and to ensure everyone understands their mandate.

The NV involves the community in all major decisions. The FM radio is often used as a consultation and engagement tool and as a way to get feedback on different projects.

The first responders and firefighters receive regular training. The emergency team is perceived as efficient and fast, and the community appreciates them.

The school has developed the law project to improve legal knowledge among youth. Lawyers, police officers, Elders, and former inmates come to school to educate the youth about the legal system.

The school also organizes visits to the nursing station. Youth interested in learning about health care can get an initiation at the nursing home.

Even when facing multiple challenges, all teachers, assistants, and trainees do their best to ensure high-quality education for all of their students. When challenging situations arise, parents are understanding, and the education committee is very supportive.

Youth feel empowered and proud of themselves when they learn new skills. The Youth Committee is a great resource for teaching them new abilities.

KNOWLEDGE *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Youth are empowered and encouraged to get involved in the community.
- + Leaders feel they are doing rewarding work.
- + Men and women have several opportunities to learn cultural skills through the sewing shop and the wood workshop.
- Many youth drop out of school.
- Parents are unable to be very involved at school because they are too busy.
- Many people lack knowledge about human rights and the legal system.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More education about the law and how to fill out administrative paperwork.
- A steady teaching team with less turnover.
- Better involvement from parents at school.
- Better college preparation for students.
- More job shadows, assistants, substitutes, and student support workers.



ECONOMY

Resources

- > Bank services
- > CLSC
- > Coop store
- > Gas station
- > Hotel
- > Hunter Support Program
- > Landholding Corporation
- > NV
- > Sewing shop
- > Snowmobile shop
- > Social services
- > Wood workshop
- > Youth Committee

Community strengths

The wood workshop is a warm and spacious shelter that provides power tools for people who want to build furniture or make equipment.

Anyone who sews or carves well can sell their crafts to the Hunter Support Program and earn a bit of income.

The Hunter Support Program also provides an income to hunters who do not have a regular job. When these hunters have money, they are able bring Elders and youth on the land more often.

Many people share vehicles and equipment to go hunting or go on the land.

The NV has led several initiatives over the years to eliminate the deficit, such as renting a transit house, hiring a stable secretary-treasurer, and applying to multiple sources of funding that would help to create jobs.

The NV also implemented stricter employee regulations to ensure the municipality runs smoothly.

The Landholding Corporation is a good source of income for the community.

ECONOMY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Youth have access to a variety of work experiences, such as Youth House animator or Coop cashier.
- + Women and men are encouraged to practice their skills to become good seamstresses and carvers in order to earn an income.
- Many people cannot afford vehicles, canoes, or other equipment needed to go on the land.
- Organizations struggle to find reliable employees because many people have problems resulting from trauma or other serious issues.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More funding for the Youth Committee.
- Dedicated training time for the emergency team.
- For trainees and assistant teachers to earn the same salaries, as they usually have the same tasks.
- More funding to build a community centre.
- Better collaboration between Inuit and non-Inuit employees.



SERVICES

Resources

- > Church
- > FM radio
- > CLSC
- > Community wellness worker
- > Cultural committee
- > Doctor
- > Dentist
- > Firefighters
- > First responders
- > FM radio
- > Police station
- > Social services

Community strengths

The community organizes casual workshops around a variety of subjects, such as decolonization or mental health. The whole community is invited, and every organization must appoint someone to be part of the workshop.

Community members are very supportive of each other after a stressful event. They gather and participate in prayer circles. The religion teacher also delivers bible talks over the radio, especially to inform parents about what they are studying in class.

Interpreters play an important role in acute care and health promotion. They also learn basic medical skills, such as how to take vital signs and weigh babies and are very important in providing quality services.

The Tasiujaq Health Facebook page has been successful in reaching out to youth and, as a result, an increasing number of teenagers now come to the nursing station to get health advice.

The nursing station is very active in the community and tries to be as helpful as it can to Tasiujarmut.

People are generally willing to help families that are struggling with the YP by translating and acting as a bridge between the workers and the parents.

Tasiujarmut have access to funding to perform healing sessions related to suicide. Once the workshop is finished, participants have the opportunity to share the knowledge they gained with the community.

Dry periods in the community, when alcohol is prohibited, tend to result in increased community involvement and participation in activities. People are more active during these periods and take part in numerous games and gatherings.

SERVICES *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Youth tend to be less shy about asking health-related questions or advice through Facebook.
- + Emergency team members are encouraged to debrief after traumatic events.
- Many youth are numbing themselves with drugs and alcohol because they lack support services.
- People have a hard time reporting abuse and violence because everyone is related.
- Despite multiple efforts to educate people about the role of the YP, there is still mistrust and misperception.
- Young men do not seek consultation on health issues.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- For social services and the YP to be in different buildings so that people won't confuse their roles. The services need to be well divided.
- To have a street worker, a certified social worker's assistant, and Inuit social workers.
- To empower the community wellness workers and interpreters, whose jobs are highly demanding.
- Substitute social workers who can be available during holidays and vacations.
- More consistency within the health team in order to foster trust toward social services and the YP.
- More services dedicated to addressing mental health issues.
- To find innovative ways to identify and stop bootleggers.



