

EVALUATION OF THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM IN NUNAVIK: THE USERS' PERSPECTIVE

AS PART OF THE 2021 NUNAVIK REGIONAL CLINICAL PLAN



What are the top three recommendations based on the results of this evaluation?

1. Improving access to healing and mental health services

- The intergenerational impacts of Nunavik colonial past on the health of the Inuit population are still strongly felt today; further, services are deemed clearly insufficient to adequately respond to the needs of individuals suffering from the psychological distress, mental health and addiction problems resulting from the effects of complex trauma.
- There is thus an urgent need to set up a full continuum of mental health services, including holistic healing services, prevention and promotion programs in the area of mental health, addictions, and support to young families, as well as front-line clinical services for detection, diagnosis and care for common psychosocial difficulties.
- Hiring, training, and adequately supporting Inuit staff will enable deployment of services accessible at all times, and in all the communities, while ensuring interventions are consistent with Inuit values and practices.

2. Reinforcing the cultural safety of services

- Considering the importance of relationships in the definition of Inuit health and wellbeing, we understand why the creation of a relationship of trust between caregiver and user is essential to the Inuit users' perception of what constitutes quality of care; for many, the attitude of non-Inuit workers need be characterized by empathy, respect and openness toward the Inuit culture and the communities' local realities.
- Improvement of cultural safety of services will therefore require the implementation of multiple, yet complementary strategies, including:
 - The reinforcement of the key role played by Inuit staff in the direct service delivery, whether as professionals, paraprofessionals or natural helpers;
 - More attention need to be given in the selection and training of non-Inuit workers, to ensure they understand and value the principles of decolonization, self-determination of Inuit and cultural safety of services.

3. Developing a complete continuum of care in Nunavik

- The people consulted all mentioned that they would like to see more services delivered in their community, not only to limit transfers to the South for health reasons, but also to improve the efficiency of follow-up and the quality and continuity of services within the communities.
- To do so, two complementary strategies should be applied:
 - Improving the availability of service in the region, including the full scope of basic, primary health care services, and the development of some of the most commonly used specialized services;
 - Increasing the support to users in navigating services at all levels of their trajectory of care, ensuring continuity of information between various service providers in the South and in the region.