



PRESS RELEASE



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THE END OF A JOURNEY, THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ONE

Kuujjuaq, Québec – October 6th, 2017 – The Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 health survey has been completed. It is the end of a seven-week journey that examined the physical and mental condition of residents of all Nunavik communities, which will serve to draw a portrait of the health and well-being of Nunavimmiut.

As one journey ends, a new one begins. The data compiled over the past seven weeks will now be carefully analysed. In the coming months the information and conclusions drawn from the survey will determine future public health policies that will serve to improve the lives of Nunavik residents.

“I want to highlight that this is Nunavik’s survey. It is Inuit led and the results will belong to the Inuit. It will help us understand the state of health of Nunavimmiut and it will provide us the tools to work together with the communities. It will help us improve and provide more and better services. Our journey started here and it now continues,” said Minnie Grey, Executive-Director of the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services.

The survey began in Kuujjuaraapik on August 19 and ended in Kuujjuaq on October 5. Participants underwent clinical tests and filled-in questionnaires administered by a team of 40 nurses, researchers, medical technicians, dentists and interpreters. The medical examinations were conducted on board the Canadian Coast Guard Ship *Amundsen* which travelled along the Hudson Bay and Ungava Bay coasts stopping in each of the 14 Nunavik communities.

“This was just part of the journey. The real work now begins for us here in Nunavik because we have all of this information and we will have to make it useful for the people of our communities,” said Dr. Françoise Bouchard, Director of Public Health at the NRBHSS.

The survey was hampered by several unforeseeable events. For instance the *Amundsen* was requisitioned to conduct a search and rescue mission in the Hudson Strait. Bad weather conditions were also a factor. Nonetheless more than 1,300 randomly chosen participants willingly accepted to take part in the survey.

While clinical tests were being conducted on board the ship, a team of experts held interviews on land to assess the social challenges of Nunavik. The community component will become an important element of the survey in helping to profile the needs of individual communities.

“I can scream and yell to the governments all I want. But when I show up with the community component part of Qanuilirpitaa... I can go to the governments and say: This is what we think and now what are you going to do to help us...This is going to make our lives a lot easier for things that need to be done in my community,” said Tunu Napartuk, Mayor of Kuujjuaq.

The core group of researchers from the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, the CHU Quebec Research Centre Laval University and McGill University will now compile the data. The results will be handed over to the Steering Committee overseeing the project and which is made-up of representatives of all major regional organizations and mayors of Nunavik.

More information is available on our website at nrbhss.gouv.qc.ca/en and on our Qanuilirpitaa? Facebook page at facebook.com/qanuilirpitaa/

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

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Source: Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services
Department of Public Health

Information: Rhéal Séguin
Communication Officer
Cell.: **418 564-6974** or
text messages at: rseguin.seguin@gmail.com
E-mail: rheal.seguin.ciusscn@ssss.gouv.qc.ca