

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM GRIEVING TO HEALING, A SELF-CARE JOURNEY FOR OVER 70 NUNAVIMMIUT

Kuujjuaq, October 21, 2016 – The past four days have been emotionally enriching for participants across the Nunavik region that are attending the Puttautiit Conference in Kuujjuaq. After joining Decolonization, Honouring our Grief, Safe Talk, Addictions and Sexual Abuse and Healing workshops, all led by Nunavimmiut, participants are moving forward today on an empowering journey. The 6-day conference is not a typical week of meetings, with focus on promoting healing and self-care for participants.

"The Puttautiit Conference is a unique event that brings together community members and representatives of various organizations to join efforts to prevent suicide in our region. We are very proud to have made this dream come true by featuring Inuit expertise in suicide prevention. This means that all workshops and activities are presented in Inuktitut by Inuit from Nunavik that have knowledge on suicide prevention and intervention, as well as on grieving and healing from trauma." announced Valerie Lock, chairperson of the Regional Suicide Prevention Committee.

Because this conference focuses on the themes of grieving and healing, the Committee has ensured that Inuit psychosocial support staff are available 24 hours a day throughout the conference. The NRHBSS, through the department of Inuit Values and Practices (IVP) have contributed greatly by collaborating with a team of nearly 20 supporters to listen, support and care for their fellow Nunavimmiut who are going through difficult times. "Inuit have great knowledge and years of experience and the time has come to share that knowledge with the younger generations in order to take pride in our culture and strengths. For the Puttautiit Conference, we created a safe environment to learn about grieving steps and begin the journey of participants' healing. Each day, caring rooms are available where participants can meet 1-on-1 with a member of the psychosocial support team. We also extend the individual counselling to the entire community of Kuujjuaq, this week. Healing circles and storytelling sessions are also the core of the evening activities open to the public." said Executive director of the NRHBSS, Minnie Grey.

The Puttautiit Conference 2016, followed the much needed and successful first annual conference in Puvirnituq last year and is intended to be held in a different community each year. "Inuit have a way to gather their strength, regroup and to support each other in good and difficult times. I think we owe our ancestors a great deal of credit for creating this sense of strength for survival. They knew that without helping each other, they would not be able to survive the harsh climate of the North. The Puttautiit Conference is a perfect example of an inspiring project to improve the services and actions to prevent suicide in the region", proudly shared Kuujjuaq mayor Tunu Napartuk, who is honoured to host the conference in his community.

The Conference is also a great opportunity to organize evening activities for both participants and the entire community to help everyone relax, connect, and enjoy life. They include storytelling sessions, mindful movements for healing, artistic activities, healing circles, a music jam and a community country food feast. The Puttautiit Conference will wrap up with a sky lantern releasing and a closing ceremony featuring local artists.



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On Saturday, the conference will also host the *NUNAVIMMI KAMAQATIRIITSIANIK* Fair to meet and network with representatives of programs and services that contribute to self-care and healthy living lifestyles in the region.

About the Puttautiit Conference

During the 2010 Ilusiliriniqmi Pigutjiutini Qimirruniq (IPQ) consultation process, organizations from across Nunavik identified suicide prevention as a regional priority. Following the IPQ recommendations, the Regional Suicide Prevention Committee (RSPC) turned ideas into actions by creating the first conference on suicide prevention and healing in the region. Puttautiit is created by and for Nunavimmiut, and proudly places Inuit expertise at the centre of the planning process and facilitation. The program addresses the complex issue of suicide, by increasing public awareness of the risk factors, promoting healing and well-being for community members, and providing support and training to interveners.



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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