

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN NUNAVIK

Kuujjuaq, March 23, 2018 – The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS) is adding its voice in deploring the abuse that far too often targets women in Nunavik. This situation has gone on for much too long and the profound causes conjoin and perpetuate one another: colonization, intergenerational trauma, social problems, housing shortage, etc. The abuse in turn becomes the cause of problems of addiction, mental health and other forms of abuse.

The NRBHSS has lent its support to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls since the consultation prior to the inquiry, organized in Kuujjuaq by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and attended by participants from all corners of the region. Forums already held in other Inuit regions of Canada have largely dealt with violence and sexual abuse against women. In accordance with its mandate, the NRBHSS is deploying efforts to prevent such abuse.

To prevent violence and ensure the best possible support for victims, several services have been set up besides the existing social services. Good Touch / Bad Touch is a program for preventing child sexual abuse and trains schoolchildren at both the primary and secondary levels to recognize violence, learn safety rules, know which persons can help them and know how to react if they feel threatened or hurt. Good Touch / Bad Touch teaches them the skills necessary to be safe while respecting the level of development corresponding to their age group.

A regional team for the prevention of sexual violence and designated centres for victims of sexual abuse have also been set up. The goal is to offer psychosocial and medical support to assist the victims in dealing with the consequences of assault and to ensure their safety. These initiatives include the possibility of gathering medicolegal evidence for the purposes of criminal proceedings.

These efforts must, without question, continue and intensify in order to prevent all forms of violence and provide victims with all the support they need. The programs already developed are important, but their scope depends more broadly on concerted efforts to which all public and private organizations of Nunavik are invited to contribute.

The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services is a public agency created in 1978 under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. It is responsible for nearly the entire 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

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