

NEWS RELEASE

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NUNAVIK HEALTH OFFICIALS MEET WITH QUEBEC'S PREMIER FRANÇOIS LEGAULT

Kuujjuaq, August 19, 2020 – The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS), along with the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB), met with Quebec's Premier, Francois Legault, on Friday, August 14, 2020 by videoconference. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the current situation during the COVID-19 pandemic in the two regions and in particular in Nunavik. Makivik President, Mr. Charlie Watt, and the Chairperson of the Kativik Regional Government (KRG), Ms. Jennifer Munick, were also invited to take part in this meeting.

During the meeting, the Executive Director of the NRBHSS, Mrs. Minnie Grey, reiterated that Nunavik had seventeen (17) positive cases, in three communities, and of those cases, all have recovered with zero (0) deaths since the beginning of the pandemic.

Although Nunavik currently has no active COVID-19 cases, the lack of human resources, in particular laboratory technicians as well as nurses, poses a challenge within the health network. "Before the pandemic, we were already facing a huge challenge in terms of staffing shortages, but during these unprecedented times, this shortage is all the more felt," said Mrs. Grey. "Nunavik could carry out 600 tests per day, but only a third is done due to lack of personel," added Dr. Marie Rochette, Director of public health for the NRBHSS.

At the end of the meeting, Premier Legeault understood the needs of Nunavik and expressed his government will work with the NRBHSS to help meet their needs.

"It was a good opportunity for the Nunavik health sector to share the challenges we faced during the COVID-19 outbreaks in our region, our continued efforts to keep Nunavik safe and our concerns for preparedness in the event of an emergency if we are hit with a second wave", said Mrs. Minnie Grey.

"I was very pleased that the Premier took the time to have a conversation with us and that he was very open to supporting us in our efforts in dealing with the pandemic", said Mrs. Elisapie Uitangak, Chairperson of the NRBHSS.

"The Public Security Department of KRG has been working in close collaboration with the NRBHSS Public Health during the pandemic to ensure that all northern villages are well informed and equipped for emergency preparedness. I acknowledge Premier Legault for his interventions before COVID-19 affected Nunavik. Most importantly, we acknowledge and appreciate the strong collaboration of Nunavimmiut during these unprecedented times", said Ms. Jennifer Munick, Chairperson of the Kativik Regional Government.

Makivik President Mr. Charlie Watt told Premier Legeault, "Makivik fully supports the efforts and work the NRBHSS is doing in ensuring the safety of Nunavimmiut during the pandemic and, the measures put in place have resulted in no other active cases in the region which is reassuring".

If you think you have symptoms related to COVID-19 or if you have been in contact with an infected person, call 1-888-662-7482 Monday to Friday from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Outside of these business hours, please leave a message.

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

-30 -

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