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## CONTINUED EFFORT TO ELIMINATE TUBERCULOSIS

**Kuujuuaq, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025** – Since 2015, the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS), in collaboration with health centres and communities, have devoted tremendous effort in its plan to eliminate tuberculosis (TB). On March 24<sup>th</sup>, World Tuberculosis Day serves as a reminder that this fight is far from over. Despite being a preventable and treatable disease, TB remains a serious public health issue in Nunavik, where the rates continue to be among the highest in the world.

In 2024, Nunavik recorded its **highest TB rates in recent history**. Six out of 14 communities are experiencing active outbreaks — **the highest number of simultaneous outbreaks** ever recorded. The incidence of TB in Nunavik is 1,000 times higher than among non-Indigenous, Canadian-born individuals and in some communities it is 10,000 times higher. This situation is unacceptable and demands urgent action.

### Strengthening TB Care and Prevention

Over the past year, the NRBHSS has continued to implement measures aimed at improving TB prevention, screening and treatment:

- **Expanding local public health capacity:** More Public Health Officers from the community are assisting TB patients in ways that are culturally appropriate and supportive.
- **Bringing care closer to home:** A mobile X-ray unit was deployed during community-wide screenings, providing high-quality diagnostic services without requiring patients to travel.
- **Improving treatment options for TB infection (sleeping TB):** Shorter, more effective regimens such as 3HP (once weekly for 12 weeks for latent TB) are now available instead of longer daily treatments making it easier for patients to complete their care.
- **Innovative remote care models:** The Inuulitsivik Health Centre is developing new remote support systems to improve treatment accessibility for patients.

### Addressing Inequities

While TB has nearly been eliminated in the rest of Canada, Nunavik continues to face a severe epidemic. This stark contrast highlights the urgent need for greater commitment at all levels:

- Local health workers need the resources and support necessary to provide compassionate, culturally safe care.

- Continue to work closely with the provincial and federal governments to engage in strong commitments for TB elimination in Nunavik, and invest in solutions that address the widening health gap.

To raise awareness on World TB Day, the NRBHSS invited all 14 communities to ask for funding to organize activities. In collaboration with Makivvik, the NRBHSS is organizing activities in Kuujjuaq, on Saturday March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and Sunday March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025.

The NRBHSS thanks all those who contribute to the fight against TB by supporting patients, following Public Health recommendations, advocating for better care and participating in the awareness activities. Together, we can move towards a TB-free future in Nunavik.

*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 55<sup>th</sup> parallel in terms of the provision of health and social services for the inhabitants of the 14 communities.*

– 30 –

**Source:** Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services

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