

NEWS RELEASE

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REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE ELIMINATION OF TUBERCULOSIS

Kuujjuaq, December 12, 2023 – Nearly thirty people gathered in Montreal, from November 21st to 22nd, 2023 to take part in the Regional Committee for the Elimination of Tuberculosis. Among those present were the majority of Nunavik's Mayors, as well as employees from the Inuulitsivik Health Centre (IHC), the Ungava Tulattavik Health Centre (UTHC) and the NRBHSS.

The Regional Committee for the Elimination of Tuberculosis was set up 4 years ago to bring together the main local actors around this important issue. Tuberculosis is a contagious infectious disease unknown to many, and represents a priotiry issue in Nunavik.

The objectives of the meetings are to give an overview of the activities of the Regional Action Plan for the elimination of TB, to provide an update on the situation in Nunavik, to present research results, and above all to discuss concrete actions for the future.

Over the course of these two days, the Mayor's commitments to discussions on the fight against tuberculosis in Nunavik was evident. Several community leaders shared the social and historical aspects of the disease. The testimonies highlighted the efforts made to keep affected patients in their communities, to avoid repeating the traumas of the past associate with sending patients South for treatment.

Dr. Faisca Richer, Acting Director of NRBHSS' Public Health Department, stated: "It's important to recognize the positive impact of mayoral leadership in community efforts to prevent the spread of the disease. Regular screening in all communities is one of many objectives for our tuberculosis elimination plan."

Participants expressed their views on various issues and identified numerous priorities:

- Recognize intergenerational traumas linked to tuberculosis;
- Improve communications concerning tuberculosis in communities, by making information more widely available;
- Strengthen communication between municipalities and the TB team in the field, by clarifying everyone's role;
- Prioritize and deliver patient-centered, community-oriented health care from a decolonization perspective, with greater emphasis on traditional practices and the hiring of Inuit staff.

In the coming year, awareness and screening campaigns will continue throughout Nunavik. The Regional Committee for the Elimination of Tuberculosis plans to meet again in April 2024.

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.

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Source: Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services

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