

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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## WORLD TB DAY TAKES ON SPECIAL MEANING IN NUNAVIK

**Kuujjuaq, March 22, 2018** – As is the case every year, March 24 marks World TB Day. In 2018 this important event takes on a special a meaning in Nunavik and in other parts of Canada.

The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS) is launching the first phase of an information campaign aimed at increasing greater public awareness about TB.

The number of active TB cases has risen sharply in Nunavik over the last few years. The spread of tuberculosis has become a major concern for health officials and community leaders across the region. A concerted effort is being planned to eliminate the disease.

Information flyers about TB have been sent to the homes of every community in Nunavik. The NRBHSS website (<u>nrbhss.gouv.qc.ca</u>) was upgraded to include a special segment on tuberculosis that includes:

- Videos about TB with some involving the participation of youths. They will also be aired on social media
- Audio capsules on how to detect, how to treat and how to support those who have the disease
- Texts and stories about TB and its impact on communities in Nunavik
- Links to various documents, press releases and information about TB

The campaign will also include public service announcements, newsletters and visual tools to support patient care as well as information geared towards health care professionals and community wellness workers. Later the campaign will specifically deal with the problem of stigmatization faced by TB patients and what needs to be done to overcome it. The campaign will unfold gradually over the coming weeks.

Nunavik's intervention is part of a national and world-wide effort against TB. Last month the federal government announced \$27.5 million over five years aimed at eliminating TB in Canada. The NRBHSS will seek its share of the funds as it moves to define new initiatives to eliminate tuberculosis.

The NRBHSS reached out to mayors, elders, youth representatives and other community leaders to improve its action plan against TB and to seek their support in mobilizing Nunavimmiut. A special workshop held last month set the stage for new initiatives to be taken in the near future.

With the proper funding, the right measures, and the partnerships between different sectors of society, the fight against TB may be on the verge of a major breakthrough.

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.

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Source:	Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services Department of Public Health
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