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NUNAVIK 2017

AUPALUK

COMMUNITY PORTRAIT

Results from the Community Component
of Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Health Survey



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RÉGIE RÉGIONALE DE LA NUNAVIK REGIONAL
SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES BOARD OF HEALTH
SOCIAUX DU NUNAVIK AND SOCIAL SERVICES

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This community portrait for Aupaluk is a result of the Community Component of the *Qanuilirpitaa?* Health Survey, conducted in 2017 across the 14 communities of Nunavik.

The objectives of the Community Component were to:

- 1) **describe Inuit conceptions of health and wellbeing** as they relate to health determinants and community living;
- 2) better **understand** how **community conditions and resources contribute to the health** of people living there;
- 3) focus on the sources of **strength and resilience** in each community to describe how the community responds to challenges to health;
- 4) **measure and describe community health and wellbeing** across all 14 communities of Nunavik;
- 5) provide **information** to the **Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services and community representatives** who will work to develop action plans and interventions to respond to the needs identified in the Community Component.

To ensure cultural relevance and to get a full appreciation of the social and cultural context surrounding health, we developed a model of health and well-being that structured our data collection, analysis, and results. The **IQI model of health** and **eight themes**—elements shaping the health of communities and people — were developed through an exhaustive analysis of data collected through workshops, discussions, and in-depth interviews with Nunavimmiut from the 14 communities in Nunavik. The model was validated by leaders, community members, and the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services.

The information presented in this community portrait is based on the analysis of 6 long interviews conducted with community leaders and 24 short interviews with service providers (resources). Through these interviews, participants shared what they thought of their community, what they perceived as strengths and challenges in Aupaluk, and improvements they would like to see for their community.

This portrait starts with a description of the IQI model of health and of the eight themes, or determinants, shaping the health and well-being of Nunavimmiut. Then for each theme, the following information is presented: organizations offering services or programs, main assets and strengths of the community, sociodemographic groups that are most or least served by programs and services (see: What about the People?), and what Aupalummiut would like to see improve in their community.

We want to thank all Aupalummiut for their participation and collaboration throughout the Community Component of the *Qanuilirpitaa?* 2017 Nunavik Health Survey.



THE IQI MODEL OF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Ilusirsusiarniq, Qanuingsiarniq and Inuuqatigiitsianiq are three key concepts of health and well-being. They build on the foundation of language and culture to make up the IQI model of health and well-being in Nunavik.

Ilusirsusiarniq concerns the body, in general. It is a condition of normal functioning without disease, pain, injury or sickness that impedes people from doing what they want and need to do. The concept carries the idea that health is the way the body is intended to develop and change over time. Ilusirsusiarniq is “the taking of intended form” progressing from birth to old age.

Qanuingsiarniq is a broad sense of “well-being” that encompasses feelings of being unworried, without pain, comfortable, free of emotional distress, and happiness. It is related to peace of mind, calmness, fulfilment, and being able to move forward and carry on with ease. A specific emphasis is placed on the importance of being with other people in emotionally warm and safe environments.

Inuuqatigiitsianiq refers to an ideal state of relations between people. Specifically, it is composed of the quality of interactions with people sharing the same place. Good relationships with family members, friends, neighbours, people in the community and beyond are a significant part of the definition of health.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Eight social determinants of health that support people to be healthy and well were identified. Each of them influences the others and all eight are linked together within the broader conceptual IQI model.

COMMUNITY consists of the social, physical, and built spaces of the municipalities of Nunavik. It encompasses three sub-themes: ways of living together, infrastructure and housing. *Ways of living together* refers to a range of relational issues like respect, altruism and social support; the role of elders and intergenerational knowledge transmission; and interactions like visiting, the place of non-Inuit and inclusion. *Infrastructure* concerns buildings, essential and municipal services, leisure, sports and recreation, and justice. *Housing* concerns accessibility, quality and appropriateness of dwellings, their structural characteristics, and sense of home.

FAMILY focuses primarily on kinship and affective relations between family members across generations, with an emphasis on youth. The sense of family belonging, with its particular attention to harmonious relations, calls directly upon the inuuqatigiitsiani dimension of Inuit health. This determinant encompasses the extended family or ilagiit and Inuit-specific cultural customs, like the practice of customary adoption.

IDENTITY details the connection to culture, language, pride, cultural activities, history, childhood and adolescent experiences, as well as the influence of southern culture. Questions of identity, including perceptions of the strength and value of Inuit culture today are important aspects of the definition of community health and well-being.

FOOD is a necessity of life that carries important social, economic and knowledge dimensions. This determinant encompasses the knowledge and practices of harvesting and sharing, the quality and quantity of food available, food preferences, and the regulations that govern hunting. Likewise, food includes the many influences around the acquisition and consumption of store-bought foods. The harvesting of country food requires skills and knowledge. Who goes on the land, how, when, and where is linked to social and historical ties of families with different places in Nunavik. Sharing food and meals brings all foods into family and community practices.

LAND is practically and symbolically a fundamental determinant of individual and collective health, healing, and well-being in Nunavik. This determinant includes issues of accessibility for food gathering, travel between communities, healing, caring for the land and outdoor activities. Safety and security on the land are also important aspects and include search and rescue, practices and knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE is a prerequisite to effective action in the home, on the land or at work. As such, it is the first step leading to health, healing and well-being. This determinant incorporates aspects of leadership, governance, empowerment and inter-agency collaboration as well as skills development, schooling and administrative knowledge. Knowledge is inclusive of Inuit and Western or southern traditions.

SERVICES encompasses the many different aspects of community, regional and provincial resources that people access and which contribute to health. These include health-related services (mental, physical and community initiatives), as well as community-level institutions and actions that are sought out to address trauma and healing.

ECONOMY refers to the ways in which people make a living, either through the land-based and/or the market-based economy, and to local and regional development. It encompasses income, access to goods, cost of living, expertise, skill and funding.



COMMUNITY

Resources

- > Arena
- > Community gymnasium
- > Fire hall
- > FM station
- > Justice committee
- > Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau (KMHB)
- > Landholding Corporation
- > NV
- > Police
- > Post office
- > Project coordinator
- > Tarsakallak school
- > Sukliateet daycare

Community strengths

Aupalummiut feel they live in a safe and quiet community. People care about each other and there is a strong sense of community. When there is a major problem, the community sticks together.

Elders are active and involved in the community. They are always willing to help when asked. They also have an excellent relationship with youth, who do not hesitate to ask for advice or guidance. Youth like to be around Elders and to learn from them.

The radio is an important means of communication for the community. People depend heavily on it, as the Internet is not always reliable. It is considered very useful for keeping people informed about what is going on. Anyone can go on air to announce something, reach out quickly to people, or advertise events and activities. The radio is also used to conduct important discussions and to provide games during holidays.

The justice committee is perceived as a useful resource for people with legal problems. It aims to suggest alternative options to jail, especially for first offenders, and facilitates communication between the justice system and the offender. It also makes sure the offender fully understands what is going on.

Many people feel their house is suitable for their lifestyle and are happy with the maintenance. Elders are especially satisfied with their housing conditions because they have access to water and heat, and those services are usually delivered efficiently by the Municipality. Additionally, people with disabilities have been able to obtain modifications to their homes to make their lives easier.

The school provides multiple sports and other activities for youth, which are highly appreciated.

People like having visitors, such as hunters from other communities or people who come for a festival. They like big gatherings and festivities. Holidays are also a very happy time for the community.

Emergency services are considered reliable and efficient. The police officers are also respected by the community and people trust them. They try to do prevention activities linked to the needs of the community. They hold meetings on a regular basis with the Municipality to see what needs to be improved in the community.

COMMUNITY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Youth have access to various activities, either at school or at the Youth House.
- + Elders are well taken care of by the community.
- People do not visit as much as before.
- There are some family feuds affecting the tightness of the community.
- Many youth cause mischief in the community because they are bored.
- Most houses in the community are four-bedroom houses, which is unsuitable for small families or single-person households.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More preventive work and education about the law and the justice system.
- More recreational activities.
- Initiatives to involve people who have mobility problems in community events.
- To put a stop to gossip on the radio.
- Cybereducation for youth.
- More firefighters.
- More two-bedroom houses.
- A bigger and cozier Youth House.
- Better security at night, and guards.
- People who are able to repair broken equipment in the community and take care of community infrastructure.



FAMILY

Resources

- > [Justice committee](#)
- > [Sukliateet daycare](#)
- > [Youth Protection](#)

Community strengths

Working parents appreciate having access to high quality, safe, and proper childcare. Every activity is culturally based, and the education is conducted in Inuktitut. People are also happy that there is no waiting list at the daycare.

The community has a few resources to support families with issues. One of these is the justice committee, which has a conjugal violence program to support both men and women who are going through major difficulties. They lead various exercises and hold discussions about healthy relationships.

The community also organizes casual parenting workshops to support families. It hires people from other villages who teach various parenting and life skills. It is considered helpful to provide useful tools for parents.

Grandparents are highly valued in the community. They provide their families with guidance and advice and ensure that their grandchildren remember where they are from. They are well respected. They also get visited a lot by their grandchildren.

Family members are usually close. They have solid bonds and support each other. People usually take good care of their elderly family members and help them with physical tasks.

FAMILY (continued)

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Most Elders have solid support from their families.
- + Usually, there is a very good relationship between grandparents and grandchildren.
- Some people do not have access to daycare because they have too much debt.
- Many people mistrust the Youth Protection, as they believe the workers “steal” the children.
- There are many very young parents in the community who have very little knowledge about parenting.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More substitutes for the daycare to ensure it is always open.
- A family house and a SIPPE program.
- More couples counselling.
- A women’s shelter.
- A children’s haven.
- Parenting courses for youth.
- Better collaboration between the Youth Protection and the community.
- Initiatives to stop family violence and encourage people to denounce violent acts.



IDENTITY

Resources

- > FM radio
- > Men's workshop
- > NV
- > Tarsakallak school
- > Sewing centre
- > Sukliateet daycare
- > Youth Rangers
- > Youth House

Community strengths

Aupaluk is the first Inuit-designed village of the Canadian Arctic, and people are very proud and happy to see that the village has become a real community, like the others around Nunavik. They didn't have access to the same resources and yet, Aupaluk provides all the services needed for its community members. People are especially proud of the Coop.

Aupalummiut feel they have kept their cultural practices and values alive and thriving. Most people in the community practice cultural activities. Carpentry and hunting are very popular among men, while women do a lot of sewing. They usually learn either from family members or from the various opportunities provided by the community, such as culture classes at school or special workshops conducted at the sewing centre.

The sewing centre is an important resource for Aupalummiut. It is open every night and women can get advice from other people. Special workshops are also conducted once in a while, for which all the material is provided. Elders are always willing to share their knowledge at the sewing centre and they sometimes teach other skills, such as how to tan skins or cook bannock. Many youth go to the sewing centre, where they benefit from being around older women who are more experienced.

Elders are perceived as the wise guides of the community. When important messages need to be shared with the community, Elders are asked to make people aware of what is going on. They do storytelling over the radio every month and happily share their knowledge when asked. Youth like to listen to and learn from Elders.

Inuktitut is still very strong in the community and is the primary language spoken at home.

IDENTITY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Most men and women are very knowledgeable and have strong cultural skills.
- + Youth have various opportunities to learn about cultural activities if they are interested.
- Youth who grew up without a father or mother might have fewer cultural skills.
- Children are losing bits of the Inuktitut language.
- Some youth are uninterested in the culture and prefer playing video games or chatting on the Internet.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- A youth coordinator who can talk about culture over the radio.
- More discussions for and about youth on the FM radio.
- Different initiatives to motivate all youth to be interested in their culture.
- More Inuktitut lessons.



FOOD

Resources

- > [Community freezer](#)
- > [Coop store](#)
- > [Hunter Support Program](#)
- > [Tarsakallak school](#)
- > [Sukliateet daycare](#)
- > [Youth House](#)

Community strengths

The community freezer is an excellent resource for feeding the community. It provides free country food to the whole community and is generally well filled. There is no priority list, and everyone can receive a share. It is also used by people who do not have a big freezer at home and need to store big pieces of meat.

Sharing is a strong value for many people. Many Aupalummiut will give food to those who are in need, especially Elders. Elders, who grew up eating only country food, feel their body is weaker with store-bought food. People are aware of Elders' needs and try to share and invite them as much as possible to ensure they get enough game meat and fish.

The community really enjoys having access to a variety of different animals. It is located near many lakes and is on a caribou migration path. People can easily fish, hunt, and harvest berries, seafood, and duck eggs.

The community has positive relationships with the surrounding communities, and they help each other access various kinds of country food. Because the wildlife is very diverse, many hunters come to Aupaluk to hunt around the community. The community boat goes close to Quaqtaq, where belugas are more numerous, and sells caribous annually to Kangiqsualujjuaq.

The school has various programs to feed the students, such as the Breakfast Club and the Asuma program, which provides lunches three times per week, and free, healthy snacks made by teachers and students. The school also has a very popular and well-attended cooking class, where students learn how to butcher, prepare, and cook country food. The meals are then given to Elders.

The Youth House also provides cooking classes to youth as well as free snacks.

The community benefits from the skills of talented hunters and butchers.

FOOD *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Elders have access to many sources of country food.
- + Outside the household, youth have many opportunities to access food.
- Some people, especially youth, prefer junk food over healthy food.
- Sharing practices have changed over time, and people feel they don't always get their fair share.
- Environmental changes have had impacts on the quantity of country food available.
- Because subsidies are determined by weight, people complain that light-weight subsidized foods are less discounted than heavy ones. Therefore, berries are pricier than canned vegetables.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- A better subsidies program to encourage people to eat healthier.
- To have recipe cards that are placed near fresh produce in the store to encourage people to cook with these ingredients.
- Food baskets.
- A bigger country food budget.



LAND

Resources

- > [Hunter Support Program](#)
- > [NV](#)
- > [Youth Rangers](#)
- > [Rescue boat shelter](#)
- > [Tarsakallak school](#)

Community strengths

The practice of engaging in outdoor activities is very strong in Aupaluk and is deemed highly important for health and well-being. Most families bring their children on the land, and everyone goes out when the weather is nice. Youth are taught about the land from a young age and learn from their parents or relatives. When they are teenagers, they are already very comfortable going on the land.

Community members have a thorough knowledge of the surroundings areas, and the community was settled close to traditional hunting grounds. People have mapped and documented all the hunting places in order to transmit this knowledge to future generations and to regain ownership over these places. The community also has many skilled hunters.

The school, the Hunter Support Program, and the Youth Rangers are perceived as great resources for youth to learn about the land. They organize outings, camps, and activities to teach the youth about Arctic survival. The Youth Rangers is considered an excellent program, which teenagers love, and which aims to prevent abuse and harassment through education and outdoor activities.

When there is an outing for students, Elders like to help by following them, guiding them, and teaching them about the surrounding nature. They share their knowledge about the plants and animals and about how to “read” the land.

The land is perceived as a place for therapy for many people. They believe that picking berries is not only good for the stomach, but also for the soul. People like to listen to the sound of nature when camping, as it reminds them of happy childhood memories. Going on the land is also a very pleasant and joyful activity, especially during springtime and fall, when there are plenty of animals around to hunt.

The community boat is perceived as an important community asset. It is used to catch marine mammals and seafood for the community, but also to bring people to harvest eider down on Little Island, or for students at summer camps.

LAND (continued)

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Youth have various opportunities to learn about the land and become knowledgeable at a very young age.
- + The community provides various outings opportunities through the community boat.
- A few families do not go on the land because they either do not have the means or they prefer to stay home.
- Teenagers who have dropped out of school are excluded from the Youth Rangers.
- Older hunters with bad equipment do not benefit as much from the Hunter Support Program because they are unable to catch as many animals as those with good equipment.
- A few companies are interested in Aupaluk's natural resources, but their activities could seriously affect the quality of the water and the land, which scares many Aupalummiut.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- To have more and un-biased information about potential mining activities.
- A clean-up of the former mining company construction camp.
- A fairer Hunter Support Program for unequipped hunters.
- An Arctic survival program for drop-outs.
- To be highly involved in all decisions regarding land development in order to ensure the safety of the environment.



KNOWLEDGE

Resources

- > Firefighters
- > First responders
- > FM station
- > Hunter Support Program
- > KMHB
- > NV
- > Sewing centre
- > Social services
- > Sukliateet daycare
- > Tarsakallak school
- > Youth Rangers
- > Youth House

Community strengths

The school is considered an important asset in the community, especially because people feel there is a dedicated team that cares about the students. Because the classes are small, the teachers can be very involved with their students. The school burned down in 2014, and people are very proud of the new building, especially those who were involved in the project.

Leaders are aware that communication is the most important aspect of managing a community. They feel they have a duty to keep people informed about what is going on and to educate them to ensure the community can make good decisions as a group. Leaders go on the radio or ask Elders to help them communicate with community members. People listen to Elders and trust their wisdom.

Overall, people feel that collaboration is strong between the different organizations in the community. One of the successful joint projects was the men's workshop, a collaboration between the Municipality and the Landholding Corporation.

Social workers are a great resource for many people who are struggling with administrative processes. Few people understand French or know how to fill out paperwork. Social workers can help people to obtain a pension check, a birth certificate, or a social insurance number card.

The local Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau employees train young people to do maintenance and repairs in order to ensure that there are knowledgeable people in the community who can maintain the quality of the housing units.

KNOWLEDGE *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Elders are important people in the community, and people listen to them.
- + The school has a few graduates every year.
- There is some struggle and division in the community about mining development.
- Some youth have a very hard time learning French in school, as it is not regularly spoken in the community. Learning a new language in grade 3 can be very challenging.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- Legal advice, as well as honest and guided discussions about the development of mining activities.
- To be consulted and to be part of the decision-making process for future mining activities.
- Leadership and skills development training to empower people and develop leaders.
- More robust job training, as many new employees have big responsibilities without the necessary experience.
- Budget training.
- More participation from parents at the school.
- More leadership and guidance to get more infrastructure.
- Regular meetings between all organizations to work on community issues.
- New initiatives to facilitate language learning at school.
- Computer training, as everything is computerized now.



ECONOMY

Resources

- > Bank services
- > Community freezer
- > Coop hotel
- > Coop store
- > Gas station
- > Hunter Support Program
- > Landholding Corporation
- > Sewing centre
- > Social services

Community strengths

The hotel and the petrol station are doing well and bring considerable profits into the community. The Coop hotel partners with the Landholding Corporation. When the hotel is full, guests can sleep at the Landholding construction camp. It is beneficial for the whole community.

People harvest eider down and sell it to the Coop, which in turn sells it to the Fédération des coopératives du Nouveau-Québec. It provides an excellent source of income for people and stores, as eider down is a sought-after product. Berries can also be sold.

The Hunter Support Program prioritizes unemployed hunters. They can hunt whenever they want and get paid, while employed hunters are allowed to go only during the weekend. Each hunter is allowed to sell meat and fish up to a certain amount, depending on the allowed budget, to the Hunter Support Program. The requests for country food from other communities also provide a good income to hunters.

Elders get free ammunition and gas to go hunt, and hunters pay half-price. This helps offset the high cost of living up North.

The sewing centre is a useful resource for supporting mothers. It allows them to make clothes for their children, which is cheaper than buying new ones. They can also sew clothes and sell them to the Hunter Support Program, which provides a worthwhile side income.

People are proud when they feel helpful to the community. It is very rewarding to be recognized and to know they are useful to their fellow community members.

ECONOMY *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + Students have access to summer jobs, which they really like.
- + There are enough jobs for everyone in the community.
- The Coop doesn't buy carvings or crafts from artists anymore.
- Some people would like to work, but they need a driver's licence.
- Many people are affected if their vehicle breaks because there is not a lot of mechanical help available.
- Some workers struggle to do their job because of substance use.
- Many people are poor and have debts.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- Various initiatives to enrich the community, such as buying construction equipment to rent out, developing new infrastructure, or getting royalties.
- Expertise to support sustainable community development.
- Better reliability and consistency from employees.
- A service to help people pay their debts, get food, and keep their homes.
- A bigger budget for activities and infrastructure.
- Good wages and working conditions to encourage people to work.



SERVICES

Resources

- > Church
- > CLSC
- > First responders
- > Fitness centre
- > Social services
- > Sukliateet daycare
- > Youth Protection

Community strengths

The community had steady social services for years, which helped inspire people's trust and confidence. Therefore, social services are an anchor for people in crisis. They know they can get help and support. When they have major difficulties, they usually consult them.

The community has had its share of social issues but hasn't had to deal with suicide. Several things help to support people's mental health in the community. For example, youth are highly supported by Elders, who tend to know when they need to be present and when to let things go. The community also has access to basic services.

The daycare has the support of the dental hygienist and a hearing technician. They educate children about good dental hygiene and do prevention around hearing loss.

People feel that the nurses are proactive and very devoted to the patients. They are understanding of northern culture and try to offer the best services.

Many people go to church, and faith is important to most people. Youth, students, and parents frequent the church the most.

SERVICES *(continued)*

WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE?

- + There are devoted and healthy people in the community who are available to help and support families in crisis.
- Conflicts exist between community members that were caused by multigenerational trauma and that have been passed down.
- There are communication issues between non-Inuit health workers and the community.
- People have faith and believe in the values of the church, but they struggle with the history related to the implementation of religion.

PEOPLE WOULD LIKE

- More mental health resources and social programs.
- Initiatives to encourage people to report abuse or neglect.
- More health-related prevention programs.
- More first responders.
- More workshops about trauma and colonization.
- Improved services to help people deal with new realities, such as substance use by young children and cyberbullying.
- A crisis centre.
- Health empowerment.
- Initiatives to stop bootleggers.
- To encourage confident, comfortable, grounded, and healthy people to help others.
- Interpreters who can be available after clinic hours.
- Lower turn-over among health employees.



