



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PUTTAUTIIT CONFERENCE: THIRD REGIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION AND HEALING CONFERENCE IN NUNAVIK

Kuujuuaq, October 17th, 2017 – The Northern Village of Inukjuak is pleased to welcome the 3rd Edition of the Puttautiit Conference, Nunavik’s Suicide Prevention and Healing Conference. The opening ceremony took place on the evening of October 15th. It began with a moment of silence, followed by the lighting of a qulliq, throatsinging, drumming, and welcoming words from NRBHSS Executive Director Minnie Grey. Makivik President Jobie Tukkiapik, Suicide Prevention Liaison Worker, Martha Inukpuk and ITK representative Kathy Kettler were also to there to speak. With 85 delegates registered from across Nunavik, Puttautiit is growing each year, as people join the regional effort to prevent suicide and to help heal those affected by it.

Puttautiit mobilizes communities to address the complex issue of suicide and proudly places Inuit expertise at the center of the planning process and facilitation. A local committee, including representatives of the Northern Village of Inukjuak, Inuulitsivik Health Centre, the Sungirtuivik Family House, KRG, Nunavimmi Pugiunanik, Unaaq Men’s Association, and Makivik have taken leadership in planning the event. The committee chose the theme “Stepping Forward With Courage” to reflect a desire to connect Nunavik history, challenges faced today, and the determination to move forward with a strong Inuit identity.

The workshop topics include Decolonization, Honouring our Grief, Overcoming Trauma, Safe Communities, Art Therapy, SafeTALK (suicide prevention skills), along with a tour of local organizations that promote wellbeing. Participants are offered a chance to unwind and connect during evening activities, which include harpoon-making, story-telling, and art.

The conference provides a safe and inclusive environment, and strives to build participants’ capacity to survive and to prevent suicide. A team of Inuit psychosocial supporters are present in all workshops, and available to provide individual counselling to ensure the safety of participants 24/7

Over 150 people are involved in the 2017 Puttautiit Conference.

The NRBHSS is a public agency created in 1978 under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. It is responsible for nearly the entire Québec 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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