



**Return to Written Question**

**Asked by:** Adam. Arreak Lightstone

**Asked of:** Hon. Patrick Netser, MLA  
Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College

**Number:** 033– 5(2)

**Date:** May 30, 2019

**Subject:** Ensuring Nunavut’s Future Professionals are FASD Informed

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**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My next question is for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College.

As I previously stated, it is clear that FASD is affecting many Nunavummiut and I’m concerned that the Government of Nunavut’s frontline workers may not be properly informed on the impacts of FASD. I would like to enquire whether Nunavut Arctic College is ensuring Nunavut’s future professionals are FASD informed.

My questions are detailed and I request that they be entered into the *Hansard* as read.

I would like to enquire if Nunavut Arctic College has:

1. Had to accommodate for the needs of learners who have confirmed FASD; and

It is important to note that Nunavut Arctic College is a post-secondary education service provider. As such, Nunavut Arctic College staff do not request and do not collect the personal health information of learners attending College programs.

However, what the Nunavut Arctic College does provide is a suite of Learner support services to ensure that Nunavut Arctic College learners have the resources they need to be successful

academically. This includes an Elder-in-Residence pilot program, Counsellors provide support the student in a variety of ways, and academic supports such as tutors.

The aim of these services is not to assess the individual health of each Learner, but rather for each Learner to self-identify what supports they require in order to succeed during their time at the College.

2. If educators have received training on how to accommodate varying learning needs for students with confirmed or suspected FASD

Although Nunavut Arctic College Educators have not received specific training in relation to FASD, there is an understanding at the College that students may require accommodations in pursuit of their education and that these accommodations need to be individualized based on the nature of the Learner's difficulties. It is the responsibility of each course instructor or program chair to determine these accommodations depending on the difficulties that a learner in question may be facing.

The mission of Nunavut Arctic College states that it is committed to "delivering high quality adult education programs developed with input from partners throughout the Arctic and Canada.

3. Has Nunavut Arctic College sought input from partners throughout the Arctic and Canada on the implications of FASD?

A challenge in Nunavut is that many individuals with FASD and other learning disabilities are not diagnosed due to lack of necessary resources. Despite this, Nunavut Arctic College instructors do routinely identify students who require extra help and provide extra help and work to provide accommodations for them.

Nunavut Arctic College has consulted with accommodation services at Dalhousie University, the College's partner for the delivery of the Bachelor of Arctic Nursing program, for advice and resources. Although, as noted earlier, Nunavut Arctic College does not collect the personal health information of learners, this consultation with Dalhousie University has provided College instructors with accommodation strategies that are useful in supporting learner success regardless of a diagnosis.

Furthermore, Nunavut Arctic College has a positive working relationship with the Piruqatigiit Resource Centre with all four programs indicated below having worked with or hosted presentations from Piruqatigiit Resource Centre staff.

Considering many frontline workers may not be properly informed on the impacts of FASD, I would like to know if Nunavut Arctic College is incorporating the implications of FASD into course syllabus of the following programs and, if so, to what extent:

- a. Nunavut Teacher Education Bachelor of Education

As it is critical for prospective teachers to understand the nature of potential difficulties they may face in the classroom, the Nunavut Teacher Education program incorporates information

regarding FASD into the educational psychology courses provided through the NTEP. Some examples of these courses are Child Development or Students with Exceptionalities.

Furthermore, the Nunavut Arctic College's Faculty of Education have reached out to the Piruqatigiit Resource Centre and invited Piruqatigiit representatives to address the topic of FASD in NTEP educational Psychology courses.

#### b. Early Childhood Education Diploma

Like the Nunavut Teacher Education Program, the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Diploma program incorporates information regarding FASD in their Health, Safety, and Nutrition course. For the ECE diploma, the Executive Director from Piruqatigiit Resource centre has been a guest speaker to ECE courses to address the topic of FASD for the last 3 years.

#### c. Arctic Nursing Bachelor of Science

FASD and other learning disabilities are incorporated several places in the Bachelor of Arctic Nursing program delivered in conjunction with Dalhousie University.

In first year, FASD is a component of the Health Assessment Course the need to assessment for development delay is introduced and this would include information of delays that occur with FASD.

In third year, FASD it is a component of Mat-Child, addressing prevention Of FASD and supporting families with children with disabilities – focusing on FASD. Staff of Piruqatigiit do a FASD workshop with the College learners enrolled in the Nursing program on FASD.

In Fourth year, assessment is revisited with introduction of specific development screening tools including FASD and autism. The importance of early referral of development delay and the need for an inter-professional approach are stressed.

As with Autism, FASD has a broad range in severity and the individual's ability regardless of accommodation to be successful. Within Nursing, the degree of disabilities may impact on their ability to meet the required competencies of the profession and patient safety.

#### d. Social Worker Diploma

Nunavut Arctic College learners enrolled in the Social Service Worker Diploma are introduced to FASD in several courses.

In Introduction to Psychology, one unit on brain development and included in this section is the impacts of FASD on the brain and another unit on developmental psychology and FASD is included in this unit in reference to the impacts on child development.

In Developmental Psychology, FASD is introduced in this course and students are informed further about the impact on development as well as proper interventions.

Furthermore, in the Iqaluit delivery this year, the students were provided with a one day training on FASD by representatives from the Piruqatigit Resource Centre. This workshop included introducing learners to FASD across the lifespan. A video on the effects of FASD was shown and discussion of what FASD is and how it impacts the child into adulthood (“When the Children Grow Up”). Piruqatigit Resource Centre representatives also provided best practices when intervening with children who live with FASD.

Currently the Social Services Worker program is working on determining how Piruqatigit Resource Centre staff can provide training and information for all of our program deliveries on this topic.

Finally, one of the Nunavut Arctic College Learners enrolled in the Social Service Worker Program is completing her practicum placement at Piruqatigit. This Learner will be able to share information about her experience and the centre to her classmates.

e. If FASD has not been incorporated into the syllabus, when will this be done?

FASD information is already incorporated into syllabi for all four programs cited.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.