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INTRODUCTION

The *Tobacco Control Act* Annual Report is a requirement of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) as legislated within Nunavut's *Tobacco Control Act (TCA)*. This report presents a summary of the operations taken by the Department of Health (Health) to advocate compliance with and enforcement of the *TCA*. This report is for the period of April 1st, 2017, to March 31st, 2018.

High tobacco use in Nunavut is a pressing concern for Health. For comparison, in 2016 only 16.9% of Canadians aged 12 or older residing in the provinces identified as smokers¹ whereas 74% of Nunavummiut aged 16 or older years reported smoking². High tobacco use in Nunavut is also evident by the quantity of cigarettes sold in the territory in 2017-2018 at 59,115,520, which has increased slightly (0.34%) over the previous fiscal year^{3, 4, 5}. However, while cigarettes sales increased in 2017-2018, sales of non-cigarette smoked tobacco products (like loose tobacco) and non-smoked tobacco products (like chew) decreased by 37.43% and 8.17%, respectively.

Despite decreases in the sale of smoked and non-smoked tobacco, tobacco use-rates in Nunavut remain high, and addressing tobacco use and minimizing its adverse outcomes is still a departmental priority.

BACKGROUND ON THE TOBACCO CONTROL ACT

Health has been responsible for the administration of the *TCA* and its regulations since their enactments in 2004 and 2007, respectively. The principal objectives of the *TCA* are two-fold:

- Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of Nunavummiut by ensuring that public places and workplaces are smoke-free; and
- Reduce access to tobacco products, especially for youth, through restrictions on the display and sale of tobacco products.

The Nunavut Tobacco Reduction Framework for Action is the guiding framework for all tobacco reduction activities in Nunavut. An area for action identified within this framework is enhancement of regulatory enforcement. The Nunavut Tobacco Education and Compliance Program (TECP) was an initiative undertaken by Health with the intent to advance this area for action.

¹ This survey does not include the territories when referring to national averages. As a result, this report relies on data from the Lot Quality Assurance Sampling survey for tobacco-use rates in Nunavut; Statistics Canada, "Health Fact Sheet - Smoking, 2016," Minister of Industry, 2017.

² Department of Health, "Lot Quality Assurance Sampling," Iqaluit, 2016.

³ Nunavut territory-wide reported cigarette sales, by stick, per fiscal year.

⁴ Government of Nunavut, "Tobacco Sales by Community - 2015-2016," Department of Finance, 2016.

⁵ Government of Nunavut, "Tobacco Sales by Community - 2016-2017," Department of Finance, 2017.

2017-18 TCA-RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

NUNAVUT TOBACCO EDUCATION AND COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

The TECP aimed to improve tobacco retailers' compliance with the *TCA* and its regulations. Tobacco inspectors encouraged voluntary compliance through education and outreach activities with tobacco retailers. The three phases of TECP are as follows:

- Phase I (2014-15): Development of Tobacco Education and Outreach Training materials
- Phase II (2015-16): Delivery of Tobacco Education and Outreach Training
- Final Phase (2016-17): Preparation of Tobacco Retailer Inspections

Health data management software was procured in 2016. Inspection forms were uploaded and revised within the software in the following years. The forms were designed to ensure data collection transparency, accuracy, and consistency for all future tobacco inspections.

In 2017-18, tobacco inspectors began conducting formal tobacco inspections. Due partially to frequent tobacco retailer staff turnover, many proprietors had not received education and outreach as anticipated. If additional training was warranted, it was provided during the inspection and recorded in the software.

The TECP protocol manual was further developed in 2017-18. The manual outlines the responsibilities of tobacco inspectors to ensure equitable and consistent *TCA* enforcement. The goal is to develop strong working partnerships between tobacco inspectors, tobacco retailers, and community stakeholders.

SKILL BUILDING

Health also continued to educate and raise awareness on aspects outlined in the *TCA*. During 2017-18, focus was given to building skill and capacity among both health care providers and health and wellness workers to speak to elements of the *TCA* such as buffer zones and legal age of purchase.

CONCLUSION

Effective administration and enforcement of the *TCA* and its regulations remain crucial components in Health's efforts to reduce tobacco harms in Nunavut. In 2017-18, improvements to the operations of the *TCA* were achieved through the following:

- Motivating informed and voluntary compliance among tobacco retailers; and
- Standardizing tobacco inspector enforcement protocols.

The objectives of the *TCA* are to protect the public from environmental tobacco smoke in and around public places and workplaces and dissuade youth from initiating tobacco use. The Government of Nunavut remains fully committed to the advancement of the *TCA*'s objectives, guided by Inuit Societal Values, to reduce tobacco-related health hazards among all Nunavummiut.