


1867-975-5051  
 867-975-5051

The GN strongly supports community-based initiatives. Community-led initiatives can have a large impact on health and wellness, as the priorities and outcomes of the projects are driven by the needs of community members.

At the community level, services such as crisis intervention, mental health assessment, mental health monitoring, and counselling are available through the community health centre. If a community requires additional resources following a traumatic event, Health will arrange for mobile trauma teams to visit the community. I am pleased to hear you have accepted the GN's long-standing offer to allow mobile trauma teams from the Iisaqsivik Society to assist Pangnirtung with culturally sensitive care, treatment, and healing to the community. Mobile trauma teams are comprised of counsellors who are specifically trained to provide treatment and healing to Inuit communities and Inuit language clients across the territory.

The Ikajuqtigiiniq Project is a five-year crime prevention project funded by Public Safety Canada and supports Nunavut's Crime Prevention Strategy. It is a partnership between the Department of Justice and Department of Health to develop crime prevention and wellness initiatives in ten Nunavut communities, including Pangnirtung.

The Department of Justice has also partnered with the Piruvik Centre through the Guns and Gangs Violence Action Fund to deliver the Reclaiming the Whole Man Program.

Pangnirtung is participating in this program until 2023. Reclaiming the Whole Man is an Inuit-led initiative that aims to build healthier, more resilient Inuit men by restoring the bonds between generations. The program is an opportunity for Inuit men to acquire knowledge and skills at the heart of our way of life.

I want to assure you that senior officials from across the GN are working together to ensure that supports and resources are in place to facilitate more positive health outcomes for your community. By working together to identify available resources, we can ensure that the people of Pangnirtung have continued access to mental health and addictions supports.

Again, thank you for your letter and I look forward to continuing the dialogue to support healing and well-being within the community of Pangnirtung. We are here to help and remain hopeful as we continue to work towards positive change.

Sincerely,



Joe Savikataaq  
Premier of Nunavut

CC: Hon. George Hickes, Minister of Health  
Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Minister of Justice  
Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Minister of Family Services  
Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Minister of Community and Government Services  
Hon. Patterk Netser, Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation  
Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Member of Legislative Assembly, Pangnirtung  
Nancy Anilniliak, Senior Administration Officer, Hamlet of Pangnirtung  
Amanda Jones, Commanding Officer, V-Division, RCMP, Nunavut



Stevie Komoartok, Mayor | P.O. BOX 253  
| PANGNIRTUNG, NU • X0A 0R0  
p. (867) 473-8953 f. (867) 473-8832  
pangmayor@qiniq.com www.pangnirtung.ca

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The Honourable Joe Savikataaq, M.L.A.  
Premier of Nunavut

The Honourable George Hickes, M.L.A.  
Minister of Health and Minister Responsible for Suicide Prevention and the Liquor Commission

The Honourable Elisapee Sheutiapik, M.L.A.  
Minister of Family Services and Minister Responsible for Homelessness and Poverty Reduction

The Honourable Lorne Kusugak, M.L.A.  
Minister Community and Government Services

The Honourable Jeannie Ehloak, M.L.A.  
Minister of Justice

Honourable Patterk Netser, M.L.A.  
Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

P.O. Box 2410 Station 200  
Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

Amanda Jones, Commanding Officer, V-Division, RCMP, Nunavut

26 July 2019

Re: Emergency and Urgency Response Plan for Pangnirtung

Dear Premier, Dear Ministers and Dear Commanding Officer,

I write to you seeking the Government of Nunavut's and the RCMP's further and immediate assistance on a matter of emergent concern to the Council of the Hamlet of Pangnirtung, related to the suicides, alcohol abuse and violence in our community. We have now had seven suicide deaths since January 1, 2018.

On April 9, 2018, we submitted an Urgency Response Request to several Ministers of the Government of Nunavut regarding the alarming number of suicide attempts - including 12 by



*youth in a two week period in February 2018* - in our community. There have been 46 *known* suicide attempts in our community between January 1, 2018 to April 15, 2019.

In response to that request several senior and front-line staff of various Government of Nunavut departments met with our Hamlet Council on 22 May 2019. Assistant Deputy Minister of Justice, Riita Strickland took the lead to work with her department as well as the departments of Health and Family Services with our Hamlet to address the issues of our Urgency Response Request.

In June of 2018 a Pangnirtung Community-Government Services Committee has been established with the task to network all parties playing a role in providing services to our community. The senior staff of the Department of Family Services was working hard at identifying possible options for a building suitable for an emergency shelter, soup kitchen and a space for counselors. Due to high estimated renovation costs of the two buildings suitable for this purpose, unfortunately no solution could be found.

In February 2019, the Federal Government has provided funding for the Pangnirtung Community-Government Services Committee to hire a full-time coordinator, and to reorganize the committee into a coalition. The Secretariat of Quality of Life has then supported our community for providing funding to hold a two-week grieving workshop in May of this year, and they have funded the visit of counselors from Ilisaksavik to come to Pangnirtung on several occasions to provide support to grieving families. On May 28, 2019 senior staff of the Department of Family Services met with our Hamlet Council. On July 16, 2019, the Deputy Minister of Health, Ruby Brown, and the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Secretariat of Quality of Life, Kimberly Masson and other senior management staff of the Department of Health met with Council and offered to work with us in partnership to address our urgent concerns, as well as providing funding to assist in the operation of our coalition. Also, the RCMP had provided a fourth member to work in our community for the summer of 2019.

While we have made good progress in establishing the communications infrastructure for things to happen, and we appreciate the time and effort made by the staff of the Government of Nunavut to help us with our many challenges, we still need to see actions that bring concrete and tangible improvements of services or infrastructure necessary to address our needs. We are looking forward to work closely with the staff of the GN to develop a plan for action to address our community's urgency needs

In fact, since our request of April 2018, the incidents of suicides and alcohol related deaths and violence are increasing. Two weeks ago, Pangnirtung had three deaths related to alcohol abuse (two suicides and one motor vehicle accident).

Our request for infrastructure and improvement of services has now become of an emergent nature. Since the resources necessary to address our issues probably exceed the resources available through the Government of Nunavut alone, we are simultaneously seeking support from the Federal Government.

Attached, please find our Request for the Immediate Implementation of the Pangnirtung Emergency and Urgency Intervention Plan.

I ask you as our Premier, all your Ministers addressed in this letter and the Commanding Officer of the RCMP to designate senior-level staff to join our Hamlet Council in a conference call on July 30 or 31, to prepare plans for addressing this issue.

I would appreciate it if you could ask each Department to inform Nancy Anilniliak, the Hamlet's Senior Administration Officer, who will attend this conference call. We will then determine the time of the call and provide an agenda, conference call and background information to all participants of this meeting. Nancy Anilniliak can be contacted at [pang\\_sao@qiniq.com](mailto:pang_sao@qiniq.com) or at 867-473-8953 Ext 257.

*Qujanamiik,*

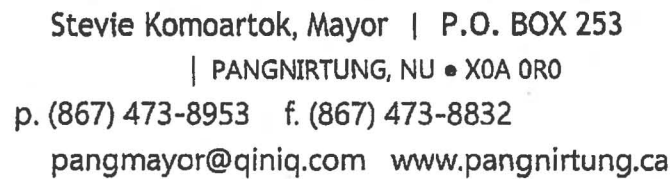
Yours truly,



Stevie Komoartok  
Mayor, Hamlet of Pangnirtung

Enclosure: Request for the Immediate Implementation of the Pangnirtung Emergency and Urgency Intervention Plan

Cc: Margaret Nakashuk, Member Legislative Assembly, Pangnirtung

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## **Request for Emergency and Urgency Support Services for the People of Pangnirtung**

### **The problem:**

- Pangnirtung has a long history of frequent, critical and increasingly more life-threatening violent situations. Violent events in Pang have now become a daily occurrence.
- Please see statistics of the RCMP from 2015-2019 in Appendix A and the Action of Information Request Excerpt in Appendix B
- Current services provided by the Departments of Health, Family Services, Justice and RCMP are over-capacity and ill-equipped to adequately address the urgent needs of an increasing number of Pangnirtung residents.
- Delays in RCMP emergency response times are too frequent.
- Children often witness family violence and have no alternative safe place to stay.
- Child protective services are placing children into foster homes that are often not equipped to deal with the complex needs of these traumatized children.
- Pangnirtung has no shelter for victims of domestic violence. In emergency situations, victims seek refuge at the homes of relatives, neighbourhoods or break into shacks where they hide from their assailants.
- Pangnirtung has no local on-call outreach victim support services and crisis support services offered by the mental health nurse, social workers and RCMP are fragmented and in most cases not effective.
- The lack of safe places, effective counseling, and immediate referrals to services outside of the community result in repeated and often escalating traumas and life-threatening events.
- The main underlying causes for urgency and emergency situations are related to alcohol and drug abuse, and unresolved anger issues. Although Pangnirtung has been declared a 'dry community', in reality boot-legging is rampant and uncontrolled. Binge-drinking of alcohol is frequently implicated in episodes of violence. The use of illegal drugs which may contain crystal meth, cocaine or other substances, frequently cause severe paranoia and exacerbate aggression.
- If adequate emergency and urgency response services are not provided immediately, more and more people in Pangnirtung will be physically injured, emotionally traumatized and more lives will be lost due to violence or suicide.



### **Recommended Solutions:**

1. The Hamlet of Pangnirtung is provided with adequate financial support to create and maintain and operate the emergency shelter. This shelter would provide safe housing and food for individuals of any age who are in vulnerable or life-threatening situations at home. Our estimate of required capacity would be provision of shelter for a maximum of 6 people at any given time. Average expected length of stay would be 14 days. Funds will be needed to renovate a vacant building owned by the Hamlet of Pangnirtung. Funds are also required to operate and maintain the emergency shelter. One option for the Government of Nunavut is to immediately release the Old Pangnirtung Health Centre to the Hamlet of Pangnirtung, which could be renovated to accommodate a shelter and support services for vulnerable community members.
2. Adequate financial support to staff of the emergency shelter.
3. Financial support to provide ongoing basic crisis counseling and victim support services in Pangnirtung for children, young adults, adults and elders, available 24/7. The counseling services would focus on addiction and mental health issues, including anger management to complement the currently provided services by the mental health nurses focusing on clients with psychiatric conditions.
4. More rapid access to advanced mental health and addiction services outside of the community, such as referral services for victims of violence and individuals that need detoxification and addiction treatment
5. An increase the capacity of the front-line workers of Social Services, Mental Health, By-Law Enforcement and local RCMP in Pangnirtung. Response times by the RCMP must be reduced immediately by having a local dispatcher rather than dispatch services from Iqaluit.
6. The screening at the airports in Ottawa and Iqaluit for alcohol and drugs of Pangnirtung-bound passengers and checked baggage.

### **Summary:**

**We, the Council of Pangnirtung, call upon the Government of Nunavut to recognize the critical needs of the People of Pangnirtung. Urgent financial support is now required to fund a shelter and additional services in Pangnirtung. This is a preventive measure, which will result in the reduction of social, health, law-enforcement and legal costs currently shouldered by the Government of Nunavut to deal with the consequences of substance abuse and family violence.**

This document has been reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Council of the Hamlet of Pangnirtung on July 12, 2019 and will be recommended for the approval by the Council of the Hamlet of Pangnirtung on August 19, 2019.



Stevie Komoartok, Mayor, Hamlet of Pangnirtung

July 25, 2019

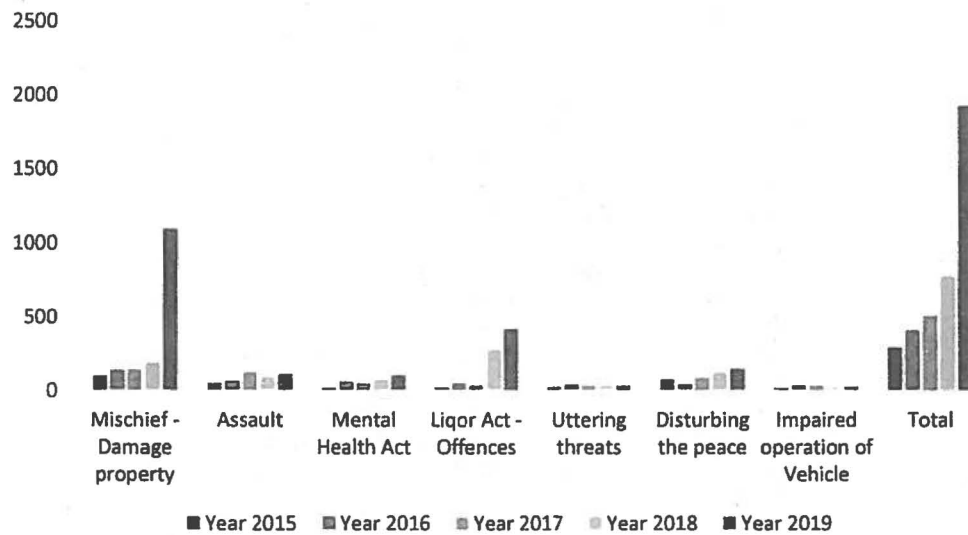
## Appendix A:

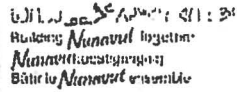
### Excerpts from Pangnirtung RCMP Statistics 2015-2019

#### Pangnirtung RCMP Statistics

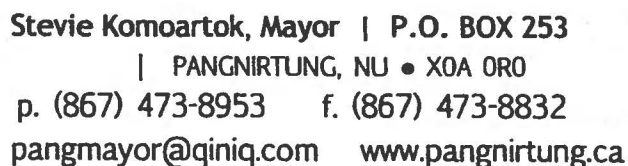
Notes:

- Some approximations
- 2019 Statistics Prorated to December 31, 2019





**Please find enclosed our responses to your questions and the enclosed records.**



Page 1 of 4

Yet our year-long requests to the Territorial Government of Nunavut for coordinated action<sup>4</sup> and to the federal government for support to implement community-based solutions to deal with this long-standing epidemic of suicides in our community have met with little success. Like most other Nunavut communities, *Pangnirtung still does not have any local crisis support services, addiction treatment program, or emergency shelter.*

The time to act is now; no more commissions, inquiries or consultants' studies. Last November, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities unanimously adopted Pangnirtung Council's resolution calling on all levels of government to immediately form a joint working group to develop and implement solutions to the suicide crisis in Canada's Arctic.<sup>5</sup>

So I am calling upon you, Prime Minister, to bring a **'whole-of-governments'** response to this continuing crisis. And yes, *governments* – plural - because we need representatives of all three levels – federal, territorial and municipal – to meet together immediately to adopt and implement practical measures to reduce the number of suicide deaths and attempts in our community. I reiterate that the first immediate priority must be the deployment of a trained mental health or addiction counsellor to every Inuit community.

Prime Minister, when you called for a new "Nation to Nation relationship" with Indigenous peoples in your Mandate Letter to the minister of the newly-established Department of Indigenous Services Canada, you also directed the Minister to:

*"Identify ways to improve delivery that are holistic, community-based, and put the needs of the person first. . . I would ask that you take an approach to service delivery that is patient-centred, focused on community wellness, links effectively to provincial and territorial health care systems, and that considers the connection between health care and the social determinants of health."*<sup>6</sup>

Yet this is exactly what the non-profit *Pujualussait* Society of Pangnirtung has sought to establish when it submitted a proposal over a year ago seeking federal funding for an Inuit Psychosocial Trauma Healing Centre in Pangnirtung. This centre would provide counselling and treatment to victims of trauma, mental health and addictions, as well as provide adverse childhood experience prevention programs and an educational program for Inuit counselors that would be a model for the entire Arctic.<sup>7</sup>

As Her Excellency Governor General Julie Payette stated:

*"Together, as the adage says, we can move mountains, can't we? ... it's our duty to ... help improve the lives of people in our community; to diminish the gap in the inequities here and elsewhere. ... We can always do better together than on our own."*<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Hamlet of Pangnirtung, *Request to the Premier of Nunavut and the Ministers of Family Services, Health, Justice and the Minister Responsible for Housing To provide support for the Pangnirtung Emergency Intervention Plan*, July 10, 2019

<sup>5</sup> Hamlet of Pangnirtung, *News Release*, "Hamlet of Pangnirtung calls for urgent mental health and addictions treatment resources to Indigenous communities to prevent Inuit suicides," 23 October 2018

<sup>6</sup> Canada. PMO, *op. cit.* [Emphasis added]

<sup>7</sup> Pujualussait Healing Centre, *Pujualussait Healing Centre Concept Outline*, Proposal to Department of Indigenous Services Canada, Pangnirtung, NU: June 29, 2018 [summary attached]

<sup>8</sup> Governor General Julie Payette, *Installation Speech*, Ottawa: The Senate of Canada, October 2, 2017

During the Governor General's visit to 'Pang' last August, I remarked that *"It is time that the federal government take our call for help seriously and support us adequately, so we can enjoy the same standards of living as our fellow Canadians living in Southern Canada."*<sup>9</sup>

Our Council eagerly looks forward to meeting your representatives as soon as possible and to work closely with the federal government together with the Territorial government of Nunavut to implement meaningful solutions to the urgent suicide crisis in our community which is symptomatic of the many social, health, environmental and economic issues Pangnirtung and all Arctic communities face. We would especially welcome the opportunity to have an introductory conference call with your representatives as soon as possible.

We welcome your support, thank you and your cabinet colleagues for their urgent consideration of our request for immediate assistance, and for your demonstrated concern for our well-being.

Finally, Prime Minister, on behalf of the Council and residents of Pangnirtung, I would like to extend an invitation to you to return for a visit to our Hamlet. Like you and your government, I and our Council will also seek a renewed mandate from our electorate this October. It would be wonderful if together we could announce a tangible, concrete step to deal with the long-standing suicide crisis in our community and to provide permanent local support to our many long-suffering residents.

On a personal note, Prime Minister, I recall your father's visit to Clearwater Fjord west of 'Pang' during his 100<sup>th</sup> day in office as Prime Minister on July 28, 1968. He left an enduring legacy as a man who cared about our community and the North. While much has changed since, including influences on our culture, we hope you will strengthen your Dad's legacy and contribute further to improve the health and wellbeing of Canada's Arctic people.<sup>10</sup>



Qujanamiik

Yours truly,

Stevie Komoartok  
Mayor, Hamlet of Pangnirtung

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<sup>9</sup> Stevie Komoartok, Mayor, Hamlet of Pangnirtung, "Remarks Welcoming the Visit of Her Excellency, The Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada," Pangnirtung, NU: August 30, 2018

<sup>10</sup> Photo: *The Canadian Press*, in: *The Globe & Mail*, Nov. 4, 2015

**Encls. (4):    Hamlet Press Release 2018-10-22  
                  Gov't of Nunavut ATIPP Excerpts – 2019-06-24  
                  Pujualussait Healing Centre Proposal – 2018-06-29  
                  Pangnirtung Emergency Intervention Request – 2018-07-10**

**Cc:    The Honourable Kirsty Duncan, P.C., M.P., Minister of Science and Sport  
         The Honourable Hunter A. Tootoo, P.C., M.P.  
         The Honourable Dennis Patterson, Senator  
         The Honourable Joe Savikataaq, M.L.A., Premier of the Territory of Nunavut  
         Madeleine Redfern, President, Nunavut Association of Municipalities  
         Brian Fleming, Executive Director, Nunavut Association of Municipalities  
         Natan Obed, President, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami**





**Contact: Stevie Komoartok, Mayor**  
**Hamlet of Pangnirtung, Nunavut**  
**Phone: 867-473-8953**  
**E-mail: pangmayor@qiniq.com**

## **Press Release**

**HOLD FOR RELEASE UNTIL ...**

**23 October 2018**

### **Hamlet of Pangnirtung calls for urgent mental health and addictions treatment resources to Indigenous communities to prevent Inuit suicides**

*Pangnirtung Council seeks intergovernmental cooperation to address suicide issues*

*"...How many ears must one man have  
Before he can hear people cry?  
Yes n' how many deaths will it take 'til he knows  
That too many people have died?  
The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind.  
The answer is blowin' in the wind..." - Bob Dylan*

Pangnirtung, NUNAVUT – The Council of the Hamlet of Pangnirtung has made an urgent request to the governments of Canada and the territory of Nunavut to provide resources to all Arctic communities to improve mental health and addiction services to prevent suicides in Inuit communities.

The request from Pangnirtung council led by Mayor Stevie Komoartok responds to the recent wave of suicides among Inuit in the Nunavik region of Quebec.

Nunavik, which has a population of 12,000, has had 13 suicides since in 2018 of which 11 – all under 30 years old – have occurred in the single village of Puvirnituq in Nunavik.

"Suicide is a crisis among all our Inuit communities and we are in urgent need of promised resources that are long overdue," Mayor Komoartok said.

Pangnirtung has also experienced high rates of suicide, particularly among its youth, and presented the *Pangnirtung Urgency Intervention Plan* to the Nunavut government in April 2018.

...2/

Mayor Komoartok emphasizes that the first immediate priority of the federal and territorial governments must be the deployment of a trained mental health or addiction counsellor to every Inuit community. "Many written promises have been made – they are nice and appreciated. But now is the time for concrete action."

Following the visit of the Governor General of Canada to Pangnirtung at the end of August, Her Excellency Julie Payette stated in a letter to Mayor Komoartok that: "The reality of life in Canada's North is far more complex than people realize, and we must continue to work together, at all levels, so that challenges can be overcome."

Mayor Komoartok and the Pangnirtung Council are calling on all levels of government to immediately form a joint working group to develop and implement solutions to the suicide crisis in Canada's Arctic. Such a body is urgently needed to bring together representatives of the federal, territorial, provincial and local governments – ideally supported by the Nunavut Association of Mayors – to meet to craft suicide prevention solutions.

Mayor Komoartok plans to solicit the support of the Nunavut Association of Mayors (NAM) at its upcoming annual conference in November to make suicide prevention an urgent priority for all of Nunavut's communities.

"I will propose a resolution at the NAM conference to throw its collective weight behind the initiative to bring all our governments together to develop solutions to the issue of suicides."

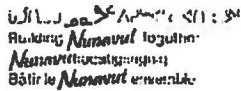
The Hamlet of Pangnirtung Council also recognizes the need to deal with the underlying causes of youth suicides.

"We support the proposal of the Pujualussait Society to establish an innovative Inuit addictions and trauma healing centre with a training program for Inuit counsellors in Pangnirtung," says Mayor Komoartok.

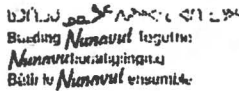
The Pujualussait Society is a non-profit community-based and Inuit-led society in Pangnirtung with the mission to address suicide, trauma and addictions. The Society submitted a funding proposal to the federal Department of Indigenous Services for an innovative treatment and training centre in late June yet has not received any official response.

Mayor Komoartok said the Society's proposal for a "holistic" and "community-based" approach to Indigenous peoples' health issues is a concrete example of the kind of solution that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called for in his October 4, 2017 Mandate Letter to Indigenous Services Minister Dr. Jane Philpott.

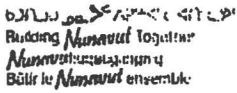
"We need resources to tackle the epidemic of suicides now," Mayor Komoartok said. "Not next year. Or in five years. Too many of our people and our youth are dying today."



**Please find enclosed our responses to your questions and the enclosed records.**



Office of the Deputy Minister, Department of Health, Government of Nunavut  
P.O. Box 1000, Stn. 1000  
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0  
Ph: 867-975-5702 Fax: 867-975-5705



Department of Health  
Munaghilghyikut  
Ministère de la Santé

**23. (1) The head of a public body shall refuse to disclose an information to an applicant where the disclosure would be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy.**

23. (2)(a) A disclosure of personal information is presumed to be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy where the personal information relates to a medical, psychiatric or psychological history, diagnosis, condition, treatment or evaluation.

Responses to questions that received from the Council of the Hamlet of Pangnirtung about statistics on suicides, attempted suicides and services provided by the Government of Nunavut, Department of Health to deal with and address the issue of suicide in Pangnirtung between 1 January 2018 and 15 April 2019 are as follows:

**1.) Number, age and gender of individuals who end their lives by suicides.**

Number of individuals who end their lives by suicides from January 1, 2018 to April 15, 2019 in Pangnirtung is six. Please refer page 1 from the enclosed correspondence.

**2.) Number of individuals who had previous suicide attempts that the Department of Health was aware of.**

It is not possible to have a data on the number of people with serious suicide attempts for the following reasons:

1. Definitions - There is not a definitive definition of 'suicide attempt'. Assessing behaviour to determine whether or not it is a suicide attempt is not easily standardized. There are many factors that affect a person's behaviour, therefore it may be a suicide attempt, a mistaken suicide attempt, a way of gaining needed attention or something else. The same can be said for 'serious' suicide attempt. There is not definition on the term suicide; it would denote judgement. Such a judgement would be problematic in collecting statistics as well as treatment.
2. Disclosure - When individuals visit the health centre they may not admit a suicide attempt. They may admit it on one visit, but deny it the next. This is common as mental health issues are sometimes very difficult for people to discuss.
3. Documentation - It would be very difficult to count how many times a clinician assesses a person and finds a positive history of suicide attempts because the information is recorded in the body of a lengthy note. All documentation for every client seen at the health centre would have to be read to determine if a past suicide was admitted by the client. This type of review is not currently possible.

**3.) Number of Suicide attempts seen by the Pangnirtung Health Centre Staff.**

The answer is similar to the answer for #2. All the documentation in every case file would need to be manually read. Even with a review, it would be difficult to say if the number is correct for the reasons (e.g., client disclosure) listed in the answer for #2.

**4.) Number of medevacs of people who attempted suicides.**

The number of medevacs of people who attempted suicides from January 1, 2018 to April 15, 2019 in Pangnirtung is forty six. Please refer page 2 from the enclosed correspondence.

**5.) The cost of medevacs related to suicide attempts.**

The cost of medevacs related to suicide attempts from January 1, 2018 to April 15, 2019 in Pangnirtung is \$140,571.59. Please refer page 2 from the enclosed correspondence.

**6.) Number of follow-up services to individuals and families after a suicide attempt.**

Visits are tracked by specific categories. Mental health visits are tracked, however, it is not linked specifically to services provided to individuals and families after a suicide attempt.

The number of mental health re-visits that occurred from January 1, 2018 to April 15, 2019 for the Pangnirtung Health Centre was 397 visits and 118 distinct clients.

**7.) Number of full individual and family assessments following a suicide attempt.**

The answer is similar to the answer for #6. Health can provide the number of mental health visits that occurred; it is not feasible to track the specifics of each visit.

**8.) Number of individuals who were provided with a full support on the services they needed to address their underlying causes of attempting suicide.**

When an individual presents for medical care they are provided the full breadth of required care required as available.

**9.) How are services assessed and evaluated to determine success of suicide prevention programs and services offered to individuals at risk of committing suicide?**



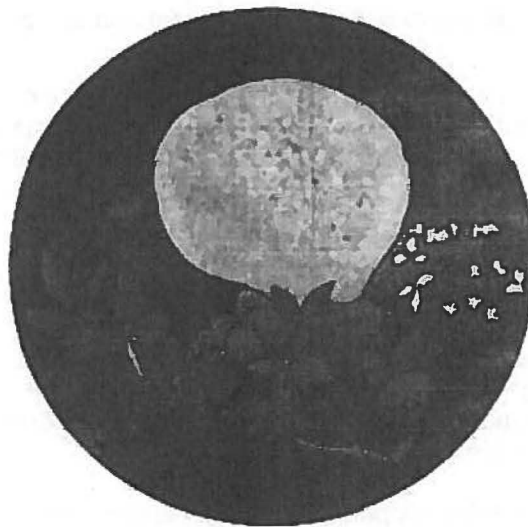
The Department of Health monitors its services. The Department provides medical care, community programming, and funding for programming and treatment.

10) How do we know that suicide prevention programs are serving people at risk?

Please refer pages 3 - 30 from the enclosed correspondence.

# **Pujualussait Healing Centre**

## **Proposal Summary**



**Submitted to the Honourable Jane Philpott  
Minister of Indigenous Services  
Government of Canada**

**Prepared by Markus Wilcke  
Secretary, Pujualussait Society**

**Pangnirtung, Nunavut  
28 June 2018**

## **PART 1 - PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The Pujualussait Society, a non-profit community-based and Inuit-led Society in Pangnirtung, Nunavut, will address the healing needs of Inuit affected by psychological trauma, adverse childhood experiences and addictions in Pangnirtung and other communities in Nunavut.

The project is planned in three phases over a five-year period and includes the following components:

1. Identify and obtain the funding and resources needed to effectively address the healing needs of Inuit affected by psychological trauma, adverse childhood experiences and addictions.
2. Deliver healing programs for Inuit affected by psychological trauma, adverse childhood experiences and addictions.
3. Develop infrastructure suitable to deliver the treatment and educational programs of this project.
4. Develop and teach 1 and 2-year educational programs for Inuit counsellors to strengthen their skills to deal with psychological trauma, adverse childhood experiences and addictions. The proposal seeks support from the Federal Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, the Minister of Health of the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Qikiqtani Inuit Association and the Hamlet of Pangnirtung.

The Pujualussait Society requests support from the above organizations, since all hold a mandate to support initiatives that improve the well-being of Inuit in Nunavut and our Community. The costs of the project are substantial, and contributions from more than one sponsor will make this project affordable for the various sponsors. As this project is designed to be a pilot and model, it may also establish a way on how these organizations can coordinate their efforts and resources in partnership for such an initiative.

Specifically, we seek the following supports from the prospective sponsors:

1. **Minister of Indigenous Services of the Government of Canada:** Financial support for the development of programs and infrastructure, as well as sponsorship of the educational and staff development programs in Four and Five of this project.
2. **Minister of the Department of Health of the Government of Nunavut:** Financial and administrative support for the development of the infrastructure, and a commitment to purchase the services for participants of our healing programs.
3. **Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated:** Financial support and guidance to create a program that makes our programs culturally appropriate for Inuit, and to support the development of program materials and educational materials in the *Inuktitut* language.
4. **Qikiqtani Inuit Association:** Financial support and guidance to create and implement Inuit cultural activities to be integrated into the treatment programs, skills development programs for Inuit counsellors and staff and to assist with financial support for infrastructure development.
5. **The Hamlet of Pangnirtung:** To assist us to acquire and develop a property lot required for the infrastructure.
6. **Pujualussait Society:** To lead the project, to ensure the ongoing operation of the programs and to obtain the requisite supports.

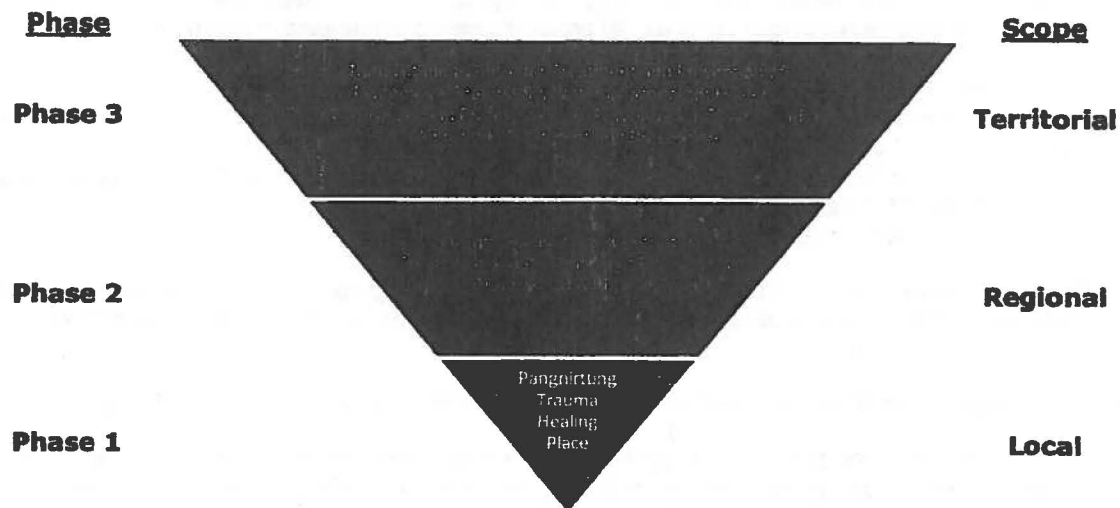
## **GOALS OF PROJECT**

1. To offer a counseling treatment program for psychological trauma, addictions and adverse childhood experiences for Inuit residing in Nunavut. All programs have the following characteristics and are:
  - Sensitive to the Inuit culture
  - Offer treatment in the community where program participants live (i.e. Pangnirtung), or are 'close to home' for participants of other Nunavut communities.
  - Designed to be holistic (bio-psycho-social-spiritual) and person-centred (i.e. tailored to the needs of the participants)
  - Provide support for participants *as well as* their families
2. To develop capacity by developing and delivering an education program for Inuit counselors specializing in the areas of treatment of psychological trauma and addictions, and prevention of adverse early childhood experiences.
3. To develop the infrastructure required to deliver the services to meet the goals of this project.
4. To pilot a model for the treatment of psychological trauma, addictions and the prevention of early adverse childhood experiences, which can be expanded and/or applied to other communities in Nunavut and across the Canadian Arctic.

## **ANTICIPATED MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OF PROJECT**

1. At least 160 individuals and their families will have participated in our programs between Years Two and Five of the project.
2. A model for the treatment of psychological trauma, addictions and the prevention of adverse childhood events in Nunavut will have been created.
3. A template will be created for partnerships between various federal, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous non-profit stakeholders in the areas of psychological trauma and addictions treatment, and the prevention of adverse childhood experiences.
4. The number of trauma and addictions-related incidents of violence, child apprehensions, mental health problems, suicide attempts and suicides will be reduced significantly for program participants and their families over a five-year period following treatment.
5. By the end of Year 5 of this project, up to 12 Inuit will have earned Certificates or Diplomas as counselors specializing in the treatment of psychological trauma, addictions and the prevention of adverse childhood experiences.
6. Statistics will be acquired throughout the project on the impacts of the treatment in psychological trauma and addictions, and the prevention of adverse childhood experiences. These statistics can be used for quantitative measurement of program outcomes, to improve delivered services and to identify and support areas for further research in this area. The statistics will be made available to interested stakeholders.

## PROJECT Overview



## IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT

This project mirrors the principles and expectations articulated by the Prime Minister of Canada in his Mandate Letter to the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada and embraces the priorities of DISC<sup>1</sup> in:

- **Healthcare services delivery:** Development of a model approach to psychological trauma and addictions treatment delivery to an Inuit community that is patient-centred, community-based, holistic, focused on community wellness, links effectively to territorial health care systems, is culturally relevant (embracing Inuit practices and engaging Elders) and is predicated upon the connection between health care and the social determinants of health of members of the Indigenous Inuit community served.
- **Education, training & employment:** Development of a vocational program for Inuit counselors ultimate leading to community college preparation and providing employment opportunities to Inuit counselors through Inuit treatment centres eventually located throughout Nunavut.
- **Replication:** This phased project aims to be replicable throughout the Territory of Nunavut with partner support and based on ongoing empirical measurement of program goals and results. Rigorous-measurement methods should also inform future research on Indigenous Inuit healthcare programs and delivery.
- **Data collection to measure project goals and service delivery:** The collection of robust data on treatment outcomes and healthcare system indicators is an essential component to measure and ensure the goals of this project are being met. Ongoing collection of empirical data on delivery of this program's treatment services are also important to measure and identify areas for quality improvement. Finally, this data can also be used to inform future research.

**PROPOSED BUDGET SUMMARY**

Year 1	5,016,100
Year 2	62,725
Year 3	146,725
Year 4	226,725
Year 5	226,725
<b>Total Cost of the 5-Year Project including an estimated revenue from treatment fees of \$ 4,704,000</b>	<b>5,679,000</b>

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Canada. Office of the Prime Minister (PMO) (2017). *Minister of Indigenous Services Mandate Letter*, Ottawa: October 4; and: Canada. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. *News Release*. "Government of Canada makes progress on support for Indigenous Communities." Ottawa: January 23, 2018.



**The Honourable George Hickes**  
**Minister of Health and Minister Responsible for Suicide Prevention and the Liquor Commission**

**The Honourable Elisapee Sheutiapik**  
**Minister of Family Services and Minister Responsible for Homelessness and**  
**Poverty Reduction**

**The Honourable Lorne Kusugak**  
**Minister Community and Government Services**

**The Honourable Jeannie Ehloak,  
Minister of Justice, and the**

**Honourable Patterk Netser**  
Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

***Submitted by the Mayor and Council of the Hamlet of Pangnirtung***

**Pangnirtung, Nunavut**

**July 12, 2019**

## **Request for Emergency and Urgency Support Services for the People of Pangnirtung**

### **The problem:**

- Pangnirtung has a long history of frequent, critical and increasingly more life-threatening violent situations. Violent events in Pang have now become a daily occurrence.
- Please see statistics of the RCMP from 2015-2019 in Appendix A and the Action of Information Request Excerpt in Appendix B
- Current services provided by the Departments of Health, Family Services, Justice and RCMP are over-capacity and ill-equipped to adequately address the urgent needs of an increasing number of Pangnirtung residents.
- Delays in RCMP emergency response times are too frequent.
- Children often witness family violence and have no alternative safe place to stay.
- Child protective services are placing children into foster homes that are often not equipped to deal with the complex needs of these traumatized children.
- Pangnirtung has no shelter for victims of domestic violence. In emergency situations, victims seek refuge at the homes of relatives, neighbourhoods or break into shacks where they hide from their assailants.
- Pangnirtung has no local on-call outreach victim support services and crisis support services offered by the mental health nurse, social workers and RCMP are fragmented and in most cases not effective.
- The lack of safe places, effective counseling, and immediate referrals to services outside of the community result in repeated and often escalating traumas and life-threatening events.
- The main underlying causes for urgency and emergency situations are related to alcohol and drug abuse, and unresolved anger issues. Although Pangnirtung has been declared a 'dry community', in reality boot-legging is rampant and uncontrolled. Binge-drinking of alcohol is frequently implicated in episodes of violence. The use of illegal drugs which may contain crystal meth, cocaine or other substances, frequently cause severe paranoia and exacerbate aggression.
- If adequate emergency and urgency response services are not provided immediately, more and more people in Pangnirtung will be physically injured, emotionally traumatized and more lives will be lost due to violence or suicide.



### **Recommended Solutions:**

1. The Hamlet of Pangnirtung is provided with adequate financial support to acquire, maintain and operate an emergency shelter. This shelter would provide safe housing and food for individuals of any age who are in vulnerable or life-threatening situations at home. Our estimate of required capacity would be provision of shelter for a maximum of 6 people at any given time. Average expected length of stay would be 14 days.
2. Financial support to provide ongoing basic crisis counseling and victim support services in Pangnirtung for children, young adults, adults and elders, available 24/7. The counseling services would focus on addiction and mental health issues, including anger management to complement the currently provided services by the mental health nurses focusing on clients with psychiatric conditions.
3. More rapid access to advanced mental health and addiction services outside of the community, such as referral services for victims of violence and individuals that need detoxification and addictions treatment
4. An increase the capacity of the front-line workers of Social Services, Mental Health, By-Law Enforcement and local RCMP in Pangnirtung. Response times by the RCMP must be reduced immediately by having a local dispatcher rather than dispatch services from Iqaluit.
5. Financial support to provide addictions and trauma treatment services in our community.
6. The screening at the airports in Ottawa and Iqaluit for alcohol and drugs of Pangnirtung-bound passengers and checked baggage.

### **Summary:**

**We, the Council of Pangnirtung, call upon the Government of Nunavut to recognize the critical needs of the People of Pangnirtung. Urgent financial support is now required to fund a shelter and additional services in Pangnirtung. This is a preventive measure, which will result in the reduction of social, health, law-enforcement and legal costs currently shouldered by the Government of Nunavut to deal with the consequences of substance abuse and family violence.**

This document has been reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Council of the Hamlet of Pangnirtung on July 12, 2019 and will be recommended for the approval by the Council of the Hamlet of Pangnirtung on July 22, 2019.



Stevie Komoartok, Mayor, Hamlet of Pangnirtung

July 12, 2019



*youth in a two week period in February 2018* - in our community. There have been 46 *known* suicide attempts in our community between January 1, 2018 to April 15, 2019.

In response to that request several senior and front-line staff of various Government of Nunavut departments met with our Hamlet Council on 22 May 2019. Assistant Deputy Minister of Justice, Riita Strickland took the lead to work with her department as well as the departments of Health and Family Services with our Hamlet to address the issues of our Urgency Response Request.

In June of 2018 a Pangnirtung Community-Government Services Committee has been established with the task to network all parties playing a role in providing services to our community. The senior staff of the Department of Family Services was working hard at identifying possible options for a building suitable for an emergency shelter, soup kitchen and a space for counselors. Due to high estimated renovation costs of the two buildings suitable for this purpose, unfortunately no solution could be found.

In February 2019, the Federal Government has provided funding for the Pangnirtung Community-Government Services Committee to hire a full-time coordinator, and to reorganize the committee into a coalition. The Secretariat of Quality of Life has then supported our community for providing funding to hold a two-week grieving workshop in May of this year, and they have funded the visit of counselors from Ilisaksavik to come to Pangnirtung on several occasions to provide support to grieving families. On May 28, 2019 senior staff of the Department of Family Services met with our Hamlet Council. On July 16, 2019, the Deputy Minister of Health, Ruby Brown, and the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Secretariat of Quality of Life, Kimberly Masson and other senior management staff of the Department of Health met with Council and offered to work with us in partnership to address our urgent concerns, as well as providing funding to assist in the operation of our coalition. Also, the RCMP had provided a fourth member to work in our community for the summer of 2019.

While we have made good progress in establishing the communications infrastructure for things to happen, and we appreciate the time and effort made by the staff of the Government of Nunavut to help us with our many challenges, we still need to see actions that bring concrete and tangible improvements of services or infrastructure necessary to address our needs. We are looking forward to work closely with the staff of the GN to develop a plan for action to address our community's urgency needs

In fact, since our request of April 2018, the incidents of suicides and alcohol related deaths and violence are increasing. Two weeks ago, Pangnirtung had three deaths related to alcohol abuse (two suicides and one motor vehicle accident).

Our request for infrastructure and improvement of services has now become of an emergent nature. Since the resources necessary to address our issues probably exceed the resources available through the Government of Nunavut alone, we are simultaneously seeking support from the Federal Government.

Attached, please find our Request for the Immediate Implementation of the Pangnirtung Emergency and Urgency Intervention Plan.

I ask you as our Premier, all your Ministers addressed in this letter and the Commanding Officer of the RCMP to designate senior-level staff to join our Hamlet Council in a conference call on July 30 or 31, to prepare plans for addressing this issue.

I would appreciate it if you could ask each Department to inform Nancy Anilniliak, the Hamlet's Senior Administration Officer, who will attend this conference call. We will then determine the time of the call and provide an agenda, conference call and background information to all participants of this meeting. Nancy Anilniliak can be contacted at [pang\\_sao@qiniq.com](mailto:pang_sao@qiniq.com) or at 867-473-8953 Ext 257.

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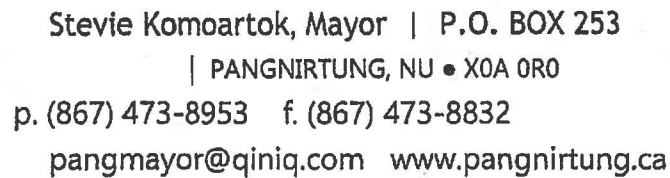
Yours truly,



Stevie Komoartok  
Mayor, Hamlet of Pangnirtung

Enclosure: Request for the Immediate Implementation of the Pangnirtung Emergency and Urgency Intervention Plan

Cc: Margaret Nakashuk, Member Legislative Assembly, Pangnirtung

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