



Nunavut Suicide Prevention Partners

**Inuusivut Anninaqtuq
Action Plan 2017-2022**

Final Report

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united for life



Inuusivut Anninaqtuq
unis pour la vie

This final report is dedicated to the memory of those who have taken their own lives. We acknowledge the struggle and hopelessness they experienced.

And for those who have attempted to take their own life, we acknowledge your struggle, your courage, and your strength in trying to give new meaning to life.

To the families, friends, and communities affected by suicide, we acknowledge the pain felt for the loss of loved ones.

Table of Contents

A message from the Partners	4
Summary.....	5
Acronyms.....	6
Commitment 1 We will take a focused and active approach.....	7
Commitment 2 We will strengthen mental health services.....	9
Commitment 3 We will support youth resilience.....	11
Commitment 4 We will deliver intervention training	13
Commitment 5 We will support research, monitoring and evaluation	15
Commitment 6 We will communicate openly with Nunavummiut about prevention and our progress	17
Commitment 7 We will support early childhood development.....	19
Commitment 8 We will support community-led action.....	21
What we've learned	23
The future.....	24

A message from the Partners

Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Action Plan 2017-2022, Nunavut's five-year suicide prevention plan, identifies specific targeted action items for the various governmental and non-governmental partners to meet the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy's eight commitments. These eight commitments support families and communities throughout Nunavut with a focus on building healthier communities.

The action plan outlines our collective vision to better respond and proactively support the prevention of suicide which remains a core priority in Nunavut. Prevention is multi-faceted and includes working towards reducing deaths by suicide, increasing awareness, eliminating stigma, and helping people to know what to do when someone experiences thoughts or behaviours associated with suicide.

Over the past five years, we have worked together on suicide prevention to strengthen the well-being of Nunavummiut throughout the territory. We coordinated a systems-based approach involving numerous organizations and methods delivered throughout Nunavut to support the eight commitments for the greatest positive impact. Suicidal behaviour is usually the result of a complex range of factors interacting together from an accumulation of risk factors. As the factors contributing to suicide are wide ranging, the prevention of suicide involves multiple approaches and Partners to reduce the risk factors associated with suicidal behaviour.

We are pleased to present this final report which further highlights our collective efforts and builds on the midterm progress report. Since February 2020, it has proven to be challenging for everyone as we continued to face unprecedented challenges with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet among these challenges we are privileged to have dedicated staff committed to this action plan and the promotion of suicide prevention.

Through the tireless work of staff we are proud of the good progress and our collective efforts; however, there is more work to do. This report highlights the results of our continued collaborative work and demonstrates our commitment to continue supporting suicide prevention. The Partners will leverage the work and results of this action plan to collaboratively build the next Action Plan for 2023-2028.

We look forward to continuing to implement our vision for Nunavut and will build on the work, momentum, and learnings undertaken during this action plan to further strengthen and support our children, families, and communities for tomorrow. Everyone has a role to play in suicide prevention, and the NSPS Partners encourage stakeholders and Nunavummiut to join us in our efforts to improve Nunavummiut's quality of life.

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Summary

Inuusivut Anninaqtuq (United for Life), Nunavut's third suicide prevention action plan, is based on the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy. The action plan aligns and builds on previous efforts and centers on a system-wide territorial approach based on collaboration and cooperation among various government and organizational Partners over the period of 2017 to 2022.

There are eight targeted commitments in Inuusivut Anninaqtuq supported by a number of evidence-based activities. The activities vary to ensure the service or communication reaches many different groups of people. Through internal and external implementation, the cooperative work of the Partners is supporting system-wide transformation.

The eight commitments are:

1. We will take a focused and active approach.
2. We will strengthen mental health services.
3. We will support youth resilience.
4. We will deliver intervention training.
5. We will support research, monitoring and evaluation.
6. We will communicate openly with Nunavummiut about prevention and our progress.
7. We will support early childhood development.
8. We will support community-led action.

This final report focuses on the collective work and the numerous achievements and progress made by the collective Partners from January 2020 through to March 2022. A Midterm Progress report was released in 2021 for the first two years of the Action Plan. Commitment 5-3 - *ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy* is an activity listed in the action plan. The publication of this final report represents an important activity completed by the Partners.

This final report is organized in a format much like the Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Midterm Progress Report (available at <https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/reports-and-documents>). The progress report serves as a companion document to this final report and collectively, these documents cover the important work completed over the full five-year period. Each of the eight shared commitments presented in Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Action Plan 2017-2022 represents an individual section in this final report with milestones describing completed action items and an *Our work* section highlighting notable projects.

Suicide prevention remains a priority to all the Partners. As a testament to our ongoing commitment, we are including sections in the report titled *What we've learned* and *The future*. These sections outline some important lessons learned and our approach to planning which is influenced by our collective experiences over the past five years. The planning process is currently underway for the fourth action plan for 2023-2028.



Acronyms

ASIST	Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
CGS	Community and Government Services, Government of Nunavut
CHR	Community Health Representative (Government of Nunavut positions)
DOJ	Department of Justice, Government of Nunavut
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EIA	Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Government of Nunavut
FASD	Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder
GN	Government of Nunavut
HR	Department of Human Resources, Government of Nunavut
IIKELC	Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council
IISP	Interagency Information Sharing Protocol
IMHA	Inuusivut, Mental Health and Addictions, Department of Health, Government of Nunavut
IQ	Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit
ISV	Inuit Social Values
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
IUT	Inuit Uqausinginnik Taigusiliuqtiit
KitIA	Kitikmeot Inuit Association
KivIA	Kivalliq Inuit Association
MHA	Mental Health and Addictions, Department of Health, Government of Nunavut
MHSS	Mental Health Surveillance System
NAC	Nunavut Arctic College
NISPS	National Inuit Suicide Prevention Strategy
NSPS	Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy
NTI	Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
QHRC	Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre
QIA	Qikiqtani Inuit Association
QoL	Quality of Life Secretariat. ¹
RIAs	Regional Inuit Associations
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police

¹ QoL underwent an organization structural change in 2020 and was renamed Inuusivut.

Commitment 1

We will take a focused and active approach

Actions summary

- 1-1. Strengthened GN leadership, coordination and commitment to suicide prevention
- 1-2. Strengthened NTI staff capacity and collaboration on suicide prevention
- 1-3. Continued and strengthened collaboration between the NSPS Partners
- 1-4. Ensure involvement of RIAs in territorial suicide prevention planning and efforts
- 1-5. Strengthened collaboration between the Partners and Nunavummiut working at the community level
- 1.6. Enhanced application of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit in planning and delivering suicide prevention and wellness initiatives

Milestones

The Partners have a strong commitment to the Strategy by building capacity and actively participating in committees and events that focus on community-led suicide prevention. The pandemic introduced new restrictions and challenges related to travel and gatherings impacting planned events. These milestones represent examples of some of the work completed by the Partners since January 2020.

- The NSPS Partners met monthly to ensure continued focus on the plan.
- The GN Inuusiq Committee - which coordinates the GN's implementation of the NSPS and associated Action Plan - was incorporated into the NSPS Partners monthly meetings to streamline communication and manage resource disruption caused by the pandemic.
- Bi-annual summits, hosted in various regions, were successful and well attended in 2016 and 2018; however, the 2020 and 2021 summits were cancelled due to pandemic restrictions with plans to host this event in Fall 2022.
- Successful suicide prevention youth events were held before the bi-annual territorial summits in 2016 and 2018 to engage youth and gather shared perspectives about prevention and wellness to inform decision-makers and key suicide prevention Partner representatives; however, the 2020 and 2021 summits were cancelled due to pandemic restrictions with plans to host this event in Fall 2022.
- The Department of Culture and Heritage implemented and continues to support knowledge transfer and the application of IQ from Elders to youth through the Elders and Youth Division.
- The Department of Health's Inuusivut division created targeted positions to support suicide prevention and programming.

Our Work

Restorative Justice Pilot

Led by the Department of Justice, a pilot program was conducted based on restorative justice. The project has been running since 2018 in Cambridge Bay and Arviat.

The objectives of the pilot were to provide clinical and cultural programming to reduce re-entering incarceration for Nunavummiut in the justice system and to support Nunavummiut at risk. The approach is described as a 'wrap around' service that provides mental health and addiction counselling or treatment and other supports to help individuals heal and lead healthier lives.

The activities focused on addressing the underlying causes of criminal behaviour to reduce reoffending by integrating clinical and cultural programming. IMHA provided clinical supervision directly with the mental health counsellor through bi-weekly case review and by assisting the DOJ with the clinical component of the program.

New Wellness Project Specialist

Inuusivut, Mental Health and Addictions recognized the need to provide focused, practical support to local suicide prevention initiatives in the hamlets. The team worked with HR and created a new position specifically designed to support local suicide engagement and planning.

In 2020 the Wellness Project Specialist position was filled and work began immediately to help all Nunavut communities focused on suicide prevention.

The support model is both virtual and in person. This specialist is available by phone and also travels throughout Nunavut to various communities to meet with key community members and to help the community develop, prepare, and submit suicide prevention proposals to access program and special event funding.

Commitment 2

We will strengthen mental health services

Actions Summary

- 2-1. Strengthened information sharing and referrals to better support individuals at risk
- 2-2. Increased and enhanced mental health services
- 2-3. Strengthened mental health professional capacity, with a focus on Inuit employment in mental health work
- 2-4. Increased access to community-based, Inuit healing and wellness programs
- 2-5. Increased access to culturally and age-appropriate grief support for all Nunavummiut who would benefit from healing and support groups
- 2-6. Enhanced access to crisis line support
- 2-7. Enhanced preparedness to respond to crises, such as a cluster of suicides or high risk in a community
- 2-8. Reduced access to common means of suicide (Enhanced protocol and supports for means restriction)
- 2-9. Enhanced follow-up protocol and practices after an attempt or other signs of acute risk

Milestones

Recognizing that many Nunavummiut do not have adequate access to mental health services, action items related to Commitment 2 focus on improving the continuum of care. These milestones are examples of the collective work of the Partners and their teams.

- The new Nunavut *Mental Health Act* received Assent in 2021. It includes provisions on wellness programming and a commitment to develop a new Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. IMHA is currently working on the regulations and implementation plan. The new *Mental Health Act* also includes provisions on suicide prevention and postvention.
- IIKELC developed Healing Support Group Facilitator Training support training and a facilitator guide that focuses on healing, grief, and loss; and piloted grief support groups in Sanikiluaq, Gjoa Haven, Kugluktuk, Baker Lake, and Iqaluit.
- IMHA completed a thorough transitional care home review and opened a care home in Cambridge Bay for mental health clients that is operational with plans to expand the model to other communities.
- The Department of Health, NTI, and NAC worked together to offer a social degree program that allows any NAC candidate with the Mental Health Wellness credential to qualify and enroll directly in the social degree program.
- The paraprofessional positions in IMHA were segmented into four levels in response to the need to further support and encourage Inuit employment.
- NTI, GN departments, and various advisors finalized the workplan for the Nunavut Addictions and Trauma Treatment Recovery Centre, confirmed tentative location and construction plans, and conducted research for culturally appropriate substance abuse programming to inform the development of the model of care.
- Pulaarvik and the GN, in collaboration with Bell Canada and Kids Helpline, established helpline services to support Nunavummiut throughout the territory including Inuktitut-speaking support staff and helpline for children in crisis.
- The RCMP and DOJ secured funding and established a trigger lock and lock box program in the communities through Community Justice Outreach Workers who coordinate and distribute the equipment.

Our Work

Inuktitut-speaking Crisis Counsellors

Ilisaqsivik focused on expanding the services of Inuktitut-speaking counsellors who provide crisis support services rooted in Inuit culture.

Ilisaqsivik has a roster of 20 trained and qualified counsellors to draw from in the event of a crisis. The counsellors travel to the community for an average of eight days to help Nunavummiut cope with the impact of suicide or other crises. When pandemic restricted travel, counselling services were offered remotely to avoid significant disruption to support services.

The organization, currently focused on the Baffin region, transitioned from contracted counsellors to full-time permanent counsellors to expand services and provide increased preventative support.

The current counsellor training program is comprised of five two-week modules that take one year, on average, to complete. Graduates of the counselling program have the option of enhancing their certification by applying to the Indigenous Certification Board of Canada, which has accredited the program, and undergo a basic evaluation or an enhanced evaluation that includes a clinical practicum.

Men's Wellness

IMHA worked with the Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre to improve community-based support for men's wellness. This work started with gathering the perspectives of young men in Kivalliq to inform the development of programming that is community-driven and relevant.

Inuusivut's Senior Advisor Atii Angutiit was able to visit three communities in Kivalliq before travel plan changed because of weather and the pandemic. An impressive number of enthusiastic young men attended the gatherings and shared their ideas which ranged from traditional on-the-land activities to public speaking to photography. Community visits and program launch are planned to continue in the Kivalliq and the two other regions (with other sponsoring agencies) in 2022/23.

This initiative is based on a framework that identifies the steps the Department of Health is taking to provide sustained ongoing support for Nunavummiut men. Once this research is complete, a report and analysis of the findings will initiate program development. Implementation in the 25 communities is planned through pre-approved funding. Programs will be different in each community and will be led by local men hosts.

Commitment 3

We will support youth resilience

Actions Summary

- 3-1. Increased violence prevention skills and knowledge among youth (and adults who support youth)
- 3-2. Strengthen leadership skills and involvement in planning wellness-related initiatives for youth
- 3-3. Increased access to strength-based programs for youth that support the development and delivery of Inuit skills, knowledge and practices
- 3-4. Increased access by children and youth of social emotional learning content and substance abuse prevention programs
- 3-5. Enhanced infrastructure and access to healthy recreational opportunities, including sports and the arts
- 3-6. Increased participation and success in school among children and youth
- 3-7. Strengthened knowledge of promising practices in youth wellness programming

Milestones

Our strong commitment to supporting Nunavummiut youth remains a priority for the NSPS Partners. This commitment is evidenced by the significant work completed and reported in the midterm progress report published in 2020. Fostering emotional coping skills rooted in Inuit culture to improve youth resilience is the motivation behind these sample milestones completed since January 2020.

→ IIKELC worked collaboratively with Arctic Children and Youth to develop a Peer Leader Mental Health Training module and facilitator guide to promote positive and supportive mental health in youth.

→ IIsaqsivik and IMHA produced two videos in collaboration with numerous partners, the Makimautiqsat videos which highlight community-led youth wellness initiatives.

→ IMHA produced various video resources to support suicide prevention and IISP training.

→ The following helpline supports are currently available:

- Kids Help Phone – 1-800-668-6868, kidshelpphone.ca for live chat, or text 686868
- Youthspace.ca – 1-833-456-4566 (call), 1-778-783-0177 (text), or www.youthspace.ca
- Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line – 1-867-979-3333 or toll free at 1-800-265-3333
- Crisis Services Canada – 1-833-456-4566 or www.crisisservicescanada.ca
- Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Kataujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council – 1-866-804-2782
- Healing by Talking – Virtual counselling services for Inuit across the territory for up to 22 sessions annually

→ The helpline support and other crisis services information was promoted and published through various channels throughout Nunavut with flyers, posters, and targeted advertising.

→ The Kitikmeot Inuit Association held a youth conference in Cambridge Bay to focus on language, mental health, and career opportunities. This special event was attended by 20 youth from various Kitikmeot communities.

Our Work

Community Land-based Training for Youth

The Department of Health collaborated with QHRC to develop a training program for communities to lead the delivery of land-based training for youth.

The training and funding are provided by the department to improve capacity to deliver training at the community level.

The training videos, which took two years to produce, focus on land-based programming for Inuit youth and were completed in late 2021. The department is currently developing a distribution plan to all Nunavut communities with instructions for implementation of the training. Once completed, each community will have the tools to take over programming and delivery.

Kitikmeot Focuses on Language Promotion and Youth

Until February 2020, KitIA launched an initiative through their social and culture department that focused on working with committee members, Elders, and youth to work with language instructors and promoters. The goal was to gather information from participants to identify their preference in programming. The type of cultural events for consideration for programming included activities like tool making, sewing, arts and crafts, and language workshops.

Commitment 4

We will deliver intervention training

Actions Summary

- 4-1. Increased access to applied suicide intervention training by frontline workers and all interested community members
- 4-2. Increased access to trauma-informed practices training
- 4-3. Increased access to cultural competency training by staff teams of service delivery organizations
- 4-4. Increased access by community groups to various intervention skills development programs

Milestones

Suicide intervention training is essential in ensuring that knowledge and skills are transferred to learners. As reported in the midterm progress report in 2020, training was a high priority activity with significant work completed by IIKELC, NAC, Family Services, Health, Culture and Heritage, NTI, the RCMP, and various key partner organizations in 2017 through 2019.

With the challenges presented by the pandemic, the NSPS Partners and dedicated staff continued to work on training related activities, explored opportunities to support learning remotely, moved forward with in-person training when possible, and planned future sessions in anticipation of the easing of public health restrictions.

The following examples represent work completed since January 2020 related to intervention training during the pandemic.

- The GN Departments of Health and HR and various federal and private organizations funded ASIST, Mental Health First Aid, SafeTALK!, cultural competency, and trauma-informed practices training (delivered by the Radius Training Institute). The training was offered through multiple GN departments and organizations.
- The NSPS Partners decided to outsource specialized trauma training after collectively determining that the internal development of a trauma-informed practices training module would delay the delivery of much needed training. 100 participants from communities throughout Nunavut attended the Radius Training Institute's trauma-informed practice training in November 2021. Another training is planned for Fall 2022.
- NAC worked with external ASIST trainers to offer Inuit-specific training to increase suicide awareness, intervention, and prevention.
- IIKELC launched the Reach OUT workshop in 2021.

Our Work

Nunavut Arctic College Expands Suicide Prevention Training

In addition to offering ongoing training to increase suicide awareness, intervention, and prevention at NAC, the college worked on targeted programming to increase the knowledge and skills of students in the service sector.

All students in the Social Service Worker program now receive training in ASIST, Mental Health First Aid for Inuit, and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention prior to graduation. First year Social Services Worker Program students participated in ASIST and safeTALK! Training in 2018 and 2019 and with plans to resume this training as pandemic restrictions ease.

Students in NAC's Arctic Nursing program receive tailored suicide intervention and prevention information within the core curriculum as part of the expanded scope of practice for nurses in Nunavut.

The college also includes ASIST training for all security guards and, since 2019, continued to support suicide prevention by offering ASIST training to all Iqaluit NAC staff and students.

Specialized Trauma-informed Practice Training

The decision to outsource trauma-informed practice training to an experienced group of trauma-informed practitioners enabled the GN to expedite this much needed training. The Radius Training Institute developed tailored trauma-informed practice training sessions for the GN.

The NSPS Partners coordinated the sessions in November 2021 and 100 participants from communities throughout Nunavut attended the Radius Training Institute's trauma-informed practice training.

The Radius Training Institute, through its Child and Youth Services, offers trauma-informed practices training. Leveraging their multi-disciplinary team of experienced clinicians, Nunavut had access to their skilled team who are committed to delivering high quality training for professionals working in children's mental health and beyond. They specialize in training related to the assessment and treatment of children and youth who have experienced trauma, abuse, neglect, or witnessed intimate partner violence; and with children and youth who have engaged in sexually harming behaviours.

Commitment 5

We will support research, monitoring and evaluation

Actions Summary

- 5-1. Strengthened understanding of Inuit-specific promising practices in suicide prevention
- 5-2. Improved data collection and data sharing by RCMP, GN, NTI and Nunavut Coroner
- 5-3. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the NSPS

Milestones

Understanding the effective principles and practices to support Inuit helps us improve the supports and programming related to suicide prevention and building resilience in Nunavummiut. Evidence through research has confirmed that our collective approach must be diverse and consistent to be far reaching. We remain committed to collecting and consolidating data to gain the knowledge to ensure informed decision-making and course correction when needed. In addition to the extensive work completed by NTI, IMHA, ITK, and IIKELC reported in the midterm progress report, these examples represent some of the work completed to measure our progress.

- Inuusivut funded approximately \$3 million each year to support Inuit-specific suicide prevention programming in Nunavut communities. A component of funding is the requirement for participating communities to submit programming reports to support evaluation.
- Inuusivut established a dedicated Community Wellness position to support the requests for funding and to evaluate Upigivatsi, the suicide prevention initiatives funding. The pandemic has impacted the submission and analysis of reporting since January 2020.
- The Department of Health developed a data collection instrument and distributed the document to the NSPS Partners to collect the status on each of the action items from the action plan.
- IMHA implemented a pilot of a Nunavut Mental Health Surveillance System in partnership with Kugluktuk to improve data collection and follow-up rates with mental health services amongst individuals experiencing self-harm and suicide attempt.

Our Work

Nunavut Mental Health Surveillance System

The NSPS Partners have coordinated efforts towards de-normalizing suicide and reducing suicide rates, and identified the need for a surveillance system to provide a proactive approach to support.

In recognition of commitments in Inuusivut Anninaqtuq, the Department of Health mobilized resources to develop a Mental Health Surveillance System (MHSS) in Nunavut.

The MHSS was designed to improve the quality and reach of mental health prevention, intervention, and postvention programs provided to Nunavummiut to reduce incidences of suicide attempt and death.

The MHSS is an integrated surveillance system which facilitates a timely and meaningful way to link program development efforts at the community level to territorial goals and policies and allow monitoring, evaluation, and gap identification. It is based on the same principles used in standard public health surveillance and incorporates coroner's data, RCMP records, and information from the community health centre.

The department is working with partners in Kugluktuk to pilot MHSS through a community-based intervention system to support Nunavummiut at risk of self-harm. The pilot is supported by the community with oversight provided by a mental health epidemiologist.

The primary objective of the pilot is to:

- Test the system
- Adjust the approach based on findings
- Enhance mental health and wellness

The pilot and subsequent adjustments to the system are ultimately focused on decreasing suicide risk factors and preventing suicide and suicide attempts.

The first phase of the pilot launched in January 2022 and is monitored on a monthly basis. A final evaluation is scheduled in early 2023 with a second phase in planning.

Commitment 6

We will communicate openly with Nunavummiut about prevention and our progress

Actions Summary

- 6-1. Increased access to information on implementation activities and progress
- 6-2. Increased awareness about suicide prevention, including how to support mental wellness and what services are available
- 6-3. Safer communications about suicide prevention in the media and in public discourse
- 6-4. Increased use of consistent, accurate Inuktitut terms related to suicide prevention

Milestones

Sharing information and openly communicating with Nunavummiut about mental health, best practices in suicide prevention, and the status of work on the action items of Inuusivut Anninaqtuq is a core activity among the NSPS Partners. The publication of this final report and the midterm progress report in 2021 represent our collective ongoing commitment to transparency. Course correction was necessary in 2020 to adjust to the challenges presented by the pandemic and the added pressure placed on resources and reporting. The NSPS Partners continue to work collaboratively and remain collectively committed to engaging individuals, groups, and the public in our suicide prevention efforts and activities. These milestones represent some of our collective work focused on open communication and progress.

- IIKELC launched *inuusiq.com* in November 2021 to serve as a single centralized online location for all suicide prevention materials and resources.
- The NSPS Partners prioritized the identification and promotion of standardized Inuktitut terms related to mental health and suicide. Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit (IUT), IMHA, and Culture and Heritage worked towards establishing consensus on terminology among mental health service providers, interpreters, translators, and the media. This action item continues to be a priority and the Department of Health is working collaboratively with IUT to continue to provide guidance and confirmation of the appropriate terminology to support meaningful translation of mental health and addiction terms.
- The United for Life survey was updated and distributed virtually through IIKELC's new *inuusiq.com* website.
- The volume of action items, number of stakeholders and reporters, staff turnover, and resource limitations proved that annual reporting presented challenges. The approach to reporting was amended to a midterm progress report, published in 2021, and this final report.
- The Department of Health and the NSPS Partners are committed to the action items in the Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Action Plan 2017-2022. To ensure status reporting was not disrupted during the pandemic and to alleviate any resource vulnerability, the development of the midterm progress report was outsourced. The development of this final report, including the data tool development and data collection, were outsourced as well to ensure timely delivery.

Our Work

Suicide Prevention Resources for Educators and Students

The Department of Education developed a number of resources and corresponding training to support suicide prevention.

Resources were available in various formats to support access and meet the needs of different learning styles. The formats included:

- Digitized pre-recorded materials to support remote and virtual learning
- PowerPoint presentations to guide learners
- In-person training

The resource topics focused on important information to support suicide prevention and to promote wellness. The specific resources included:

- Psychological First Aid – PowerPoint, training, and pocketbooks
- Finding Hope Through Caring Workbook – implementation guides
- 21 Days of Hope Activity Guide
- Education Support Services Mental Health Flow Chart
- Mind Masters - mental health promotion resources for K-2
- Angirrami Ilinniarniq (angirrami.com) - a learn-at-home resource that includes literacy resources and provides families with support for remote learning and stress management

Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council Launches inuusiq.com

In November 2021 IIKELC launched a dedicated website to support suicide prevention and expand communication and access to resources online and in digital formats.

The site acts as a single source for all resources and materials available through IIKELC. Information about training, resources, community contacts, and how to access help are clearly posted on the website.

A few examples of the type of resources available on the site include:

- Youth Online Safety Booklets
- A Strong Foundation for a Healthy Partnership Pamphlet
- Preventing Suicide, It Is Possible Pamphlet
- Children's Activity and Colouring Book
- Community Resource Cards
- Helpful Information for Families After a Suicide Booklet

The site also features information about 10 targeted training workshops that address suicide, self-injury, mental health and wellness, healing, firearms safety, and sexual abuse.

Commitment 7

We will support early childhood development

Actions Summary

- 7-1. Increased access to early intervention supports for parents, including skills development programs rooted in Inuit culture
- 7-2. Increased availability of a range of supports for early childhood education, rooted in Inuit culture
- 7-3. Strengthened school-based support for social emotional learning
- 7-4. Strengthened human resources capacity in early childhood learning and development fields
- 7-5. Enhanced healthy development of babies
- 7-6. Strengthened policies, programs and resources to protect young children from abuse

Milestones

The future of Nunavut is dependant on healthy children. Their future is strengthened by providing programs rooted in Inuit culture and ensuring protective factors are available for children like access to quality healthcare, daycare, nutrition, and safety. The NSPS Partners previously completed and reported a significant number of initiatives in 2018 and 2019 to support early childhood development. The following milestone examples represent samples of our early childhood development work since January 2020.

- The Department of Education, QIA, and external partners developed, produced, and distributed learning resources to licensed early learning and childcare centres. The books and digital resources, distributed in all four official languages, focus on Nunavut's language and culture.
- Public Health expanded delivery and strengthened learning resources for the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program by adding a coordinator position and operating programs throughout Nunavut communities. The pandemic restrictions forced program adjustments which included providing meal bags and other non-contact support.
- The Department of Education provided start-up funding and ongoing financial opportunities for home daycare centres that requested licensing. The department provides ongoing support and training to facilities and communities to meet the significant demand for preschool and daycare centres in Nunavut.
- The Department of Family Services conducted mandatory learning to support the *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act*.
- The Department of Family Services worked with IIKELC and ASIST trainers to conduct regularly scheduled Step-Wise and ASIST training to strengthen child sexual abuse prevention. The training transitioned to an online version during the pandemic with plans to resume in-person training when restrictions ease.
- The Department of Family Services worked with an ISV advisor, and Health to hire an external partner to work with outreach workers in a pilot project to support youth across the territory.

Our Work

Public Health Promotes FASD Prevention

Public Health worked collaboratively with the Piruqatigiit Resource Centre and IMHA to develop and produce several resources in 2021 focused on supporting expectant women and FASD prevention.

The resources developed include:

- Substance Use and Pregnancies – a PowerPoint presentation, lesson plan, and instructional aid for CHRs to promote community education and engagement
- September Substance Use Awareness Calendar – highlighting Substance Use Awareness Day on September 9th
- Learning Together and Let's Talk About FASD Book Series – with 'What to Expect During an FASD Assessment' handout
- Let's All Support Substance Free Pregnancies – poster
- Substance Free for My Baby and Me - pamphlet
- A Minister's statement and public announcement supporting FASD prevention

Family Services Implements *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act* Learning

The Department of Family Services and a multi-disciplinary NSPS Partner team worked together to enhance the response to incidents of child abuse by introducing standardized and enhanced *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act* (CANRA) information and guidelines.

In early 2022 the department held a mandatory Lunch and Learn session for all Family Services staff. The learning session received positive feedback and participants reported that the information supported an improved approach to inclusivity and was more culturally relevant.

The learning session information is also presented during CORE training and StepWise (a semi-structured investigative interviewing model used during child abuse investigations).

CANRA was incorporated into new staff orientation with plans to transition the CANRA learning session to an online training platform to ensure staff refresh their CANRA knowledge and skills annually.

Commitment 8

We will support community-led action

Actions Summary

- 8-1. Increased and improved financial support for community-led initiatives in suicide prevention
- 8-2. Enhanced practical support for community-led suicide prevention
- 8-3. Increased access to training and knowledge sharing opportunities by community members
- 8-4. Increased local conversations and action planning about suicide prevention, violence prevention and wellness promotion

Milestones

Communities play the primary role in ensuring individuals and families throughout Nunavut live healthy lives. Community-led initiatives and support for suicide prevention activities remain priorities for the NSPS Partners. The NSPS focuses on practical support to strengthen collective resilience. In addition to the numerous milestones reported in the midterm progress report, including establishing an annual community funding stream to facilitate various suicide prevention and wellness workshops like ASIST and safeTALK, the following milestones represent some of the work our teams completed since January 2020 to support community-led action.

- KitIA collaborated and worked with the GN and mining companies to host intergenerational gatherings and special events for youth to focus on healing, wellness, and language facilitators to promote the Inuit culture in the Kitikmeot region – events were suspended following a gathering in February 2020 due to pandemic restrictions.
- IIKELC, through flexible annual funding provided by the GN, provided suicide intervention skills development training for communities upon request – training programs include ASIST, Mental First Aid, safeTALK!, child sexual abuse prevention, and trauma-informed practice.
- IMHA issued year four and five of five-year special fund community-led programming and supported community applicants submitting proposals.
- IIKELC established offices and hired regional representatives in Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay to support the various programs and campaigns.
- Inuusivut paused work on modifying the approach to funding due to resource challenges caused by the pandemic; however, funding community-led programming remained a priority and the Department of Health worked with various stakeholders and departments to ensure programming remained available.

Our Work

Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council 2-day Workshop

The delivery of the Red Cross Ten Steps Program was identified as an action plan activity to support suicide prevention at the community level. IIKELC introduced the programming to Nunavut communities to support the NSPS action plan and solicited feedback to ensure the participants were responsive to the content.

A thorough review of the program content resulted in two important decisions:

1. Discontinuation of the Ten Steps Program
2. The development of a replacement program

The IIKELC recognized the need to change the approach to the program to ensure it was relevant and aligned with the core objectives.

IIKELC successfully developed a proprietary 2-day workshop with a clearer focus on suicide. The content is designed to reduce the suicide rate in communities and is more culturally relevant for participants.

Delivery of the program began in Kinngait in 2020 but pandemic restrictions impacted further roll-out of the workshops. IIKELC plans to resume delivery of the program as restrictions ease throughout Nunavut.

Helpful Information for Families After a Suicide Handbook



In July 2021 IIKELC distributed a specialized toolkit through the health centres throughout Nunavut. The Helpful Information for Families After a Suicide handbook supports adults and children in families that experience suicide. It includes a grief journey model and contains helpful information like a list of books, websites, and support groups.

Grief associated with a death by suicide can be complicated, and also very different from what people experience following death by other causes. Immediately after a suicide death, people are often in shock and unable to describe or explain their feelings or make meaning of what has happened. This handbook helps families begin the healing process.

What we've learned

COVID-19

As we continue to learn how to work and live in these unprecedented times, and with over two years of experience with the COVID-19 pandemic, NSPS Partners continue to explore opportunities to forge forward and support our communities in suicide prevention. We are grateful and appreciate the significant efforts being made by Public Health, frontline healthcare staff, and the various NSPS Partner staff to curb the spread of COVID-19 in Nunavut.

Throughout our journey with the activities outlined in Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Action Plan 2017-2022 we have collectively gained knowledge which will influence and improve our decisions in the future. Some key learnings from the past five years are listed to provide context to the work completed.

Key learnings

1. Many of the Partners have limited resources which resulted in unintended consequences to the action plan.
2. Some staff in the Partner organizations were redeployed to pandemic efforts and some were more impacted by the pandemic than others. We respect the efforts of all the NSPS Partners who are committed to the eight commitments of the action plan.
3. To make the next action plan more flexible, the Partners will consider reducing the volume of action items and having more high-level activities assigned to action items. Also, when considering online options for communication and information, Partners will consider technology access limitations in the communities.
4. Modifying the approach to reporting and the assessment of action items may be necessary to ensure monitoring occurs as planned.
5. Cooperating and communicating collectively is essential to successfully complete activities. Although we are working in separate organizations, departments, and divisions, we must work together as one unified group focused on shared goals and objectives.
6. The development of programs and practices should include a thorough evaluation of the responsibilities of all parties involved, the reporting structure, and the approach to decision-making to ensure the assignment is aligned with the objectives. This approach will increase accountability and decrease delays or roadblocks.
7. Partners, key stakeholders, and project managers should plan well in advance and proactively manage timelines to expedite the development of materials and implementation. Key stakeholders must build in support for implementation and communications at the development stage to ensure success.
8. Continue to support community engagement and ensure processes and programs reflect their needs and realities. Prior to identifying a specific action item, ensure adaptability for Nunavut is evident or feasible and prioritize made-in-Nunavut programs or those with input from Nunavummiut in the development stage.

The future

The collective NSPS Partners completed a significant number of activities outlined in the Inuusivut Anninaqtuq Action Plan 2017-2022. We are proud of the work completed but recognize that more work lies ahead in Nunavut in suicide prevention and life promotion.

We continue to work on the outstanding activities currently in progress and commit to carrying these action items forward into the new plan.

As we work toward building a new action plan, we commit to working cooperatively and collaboratively to complete or expand current projects and to identifying new opportunities to support suicide prevention. Working together for a common cause is the main principle that guides the NSPS partners' approach to suicide prevention, and we invite all Departments, organizations, and stakeholders to make this a priority as suicide prevention is a cross departmental and organizational effort.

Our initiatives will continue to be founded on evidence-based principles that are responsive to changing needs and include a broad variety of approaches that are far-reaching and inclusive. We will incorporate the lessons we have learned, as well as the feedback received from Nunavummiut, communities and stakeholders, to ensure we improve our approach and ultimately positively impact the outcomes.

We recognize the importance of the social determinants of health and how the five priority areas of the 6th Legislative Assembly mandate, *Katujjiluta*, addresses important aspects of long-term wellness and healthy living in Nunavut. The NSPS Partners are committed to aligning and supporting the priorities, particularly the focus on *enabling health and healing*, in the development of the fourth Action Plan (2023-2028).