



Updates from Rebecca

The past few months have been very busy for myself and Pauktuutit! I have had many meetings with government and stakeholders in Canada and internationally.

Internationally, I travelled to the United Nations in New York as part of Canada's delegation to the Commission on the Status of Women, which included a discussion on the empowerment of Indigenous women. The priority theme of this Session was "challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls." In this platform, I represented Inuit women's priorities and views in a preparatory session for the next Canada-US-Mexico Summit in Mexico this coming November. In the absence of Alaskan Inuit, I also expressed a need for their representation.

I was also part of the Canadian Delegation to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Along with other Indigenous leaders and governments, I participated in a negotiation on the Permanent Forum's priority areas. In closing, the Forum adopted recommendations including collective rights to lands, territories, and resources.

In Canada, I continued my involvement with the UN by meeting in Iqaluit with UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Ms. Dubravka Šimonović, and spoke to her about violence against Inuit women, their safety, and the dire need for shelters in every Inuit community. My work continued as I met with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Inuit land-claim organizations, and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami to discuss the Inuit Crown Partnership Agreement. At this meeting I spoke about the need for community-based treatment and addiction centres across Inuit Nunangat. Additionally, I joined Minister of Status of Women, The Honourable Maryam Monsef, along with other Indigenous leaders at the first meeting of the Indigenous Advisory Circle in Ottawa.

In April, our Board of Directors had a meeting in Ottawa. During our meeting, our board Executive and Youth Representative met with Minister of Indigenous Services, The Honourable Jane Philpott, to discuss how we can work together to address critical issues impacting Inuit women and children. Afterwards, our entire Board of Directors attended Question Period in the House of Commons.

Most recently, I spoke as a panelist at the Shelters of the Future conference in Ottawa about the need for Inuit women to have access to safe shelters across Inuit Nunangat. It's been a busy few months!



Health Department Project Updates

This last quarter our Health department has focused our work on our sexual health and cancer projects.

On sexual health, we've partnered with Dr. Alexandra King at the University of Saskatchewan to scale up and enhance Nunavik's CheckUp Project. The CheckUp Project is a campaign launched by the Nunavik Board of Health and Social Services that uses social marketing and social media to influence the social norms around screening and the normalization of testing for STBIs.

The National Inuit Sexual Health Network has recently finalized Ikajurniq: An Inuit Cascade of Care Framework for Sexually Transmitted Infections and Blood Borne Infections. "Ikajurniq" means "the act of helping," and we hope that we can continue to help foster Inuit sexual health through this framework. The framework will be disseminated and implemented by health professionals who work with Inuit. Ikajurniq can be found on our website under the Health tab.

Our Naturally Curious Project has also launched! This project aims to increase communication between Inuit adults and youth about healthy sexual behavior. In the final phase of the project we developed and disseminated resources to eight communities across Inuit Nunangat. We also presented this project at the Indigenous Health Conference in Toronto in May. Like our Facebook Page, @NaturallyCuriousProject for more information, photos and memes!



The Inuit Cancer Project Advisory Committee at their face-to-face meeting in Iqaluit



Health Department Project Updates

Our work on cancer continues to grow and so does the development of our resources. In April we had a meeting with the Inuit Cancer Project Advisory Committee in Iqaluit to discuss the future of the project and regional launches of the "My Journey" cancer resources (all available on our website). We then presented this project at the Indigenous Health Conference in Toronto in May. This project is funded by Jaguar Land Rover Canada through our partnership with the Canadian Cancer Society.

We are also beginning to learn more about cervical cancer. We have partnered with Dalhousie University on a Catalyst Grant on cervical cancer and held a workshop in Iqaluit in April. In this meeting we discussed culturally competent/safe cervical cancer prevention, and treatment through the usage of IQ. This project will also look at unresolved sexual abuse and trauma as a potential barrier for Inuit women who are seeking reproductive healthcare.

In other news, we have partnered with the University of Ottawa on a research study to enhance culturally relevant supports for Inuit cancer survivors. Lastly, we are members of the National Inuit Health Survey working group, and as part of this met with Honourable Minister Jane Philpott in April. Additionally, we have met with Paul Maddison, High Commissioner of Canada to Australia and Dr. Tom Wong, Chief Medical Officer of Public Health & Executive Director of the First Nation and Inuit Health Branch (FHINB) to discuss our recent inclusion in the Canada-Australia Indigenous Health Working Group.

On the Horizon

In July our Health department will be travelling to Amsterdam, Netherlands to attend the AIDS 2018 conference and the International Indigenous Pre-Conference on HIV & AIDS.

In August we will be presenting the My Journey cancer project, the Naturally Curious Project and Ikajurniq at the 17th International Congress on Circumpolar Health in Copenhagen, Denmark. We will then be presenting the "My Journey" cancer project again at the Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology conference in October in Charlottetown, PEI.



Thank you to all of the men who joined our Abuse Prevention Department in Pond Inlet for a two-day discussion as part of Pilimmaksarniq: Engaging Men and Boys in Ending Violence Against Women and Girls!

Abuse Prevention Department Project Updates

As part of our Believe-Ask-Connect project, our Abuse Prevention Department travelled to Iqaluit to film public service announcements (PSAs). The videos, available in both English and Inuktitut, raised awareness of the harmful effects of children witnessing domestic violence. One PSA is currently being shown on television on the CBC North and Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN).

We have also been working on our Pilimmaksarniq: Engaging Men and Boys in Reducing Violence Against Women and Girls project. We have been engaging with women and men across Inuit Nunangat to listen to community members and work with them in train-the-trainer sessions. In May, we also launched an online community of practice (CoP) in which stakeholders, partners and other related professionals can communicate and offer collaboration and peer support around the aims of Pilimmaksarniq.



Our research on shelters has taken us all over Inuit Nunangat. Here is a beautiful photo from the bay of Iqaluit!

Abuse Prevention Department Project Updates

We are also in the process of completing a study on gendered violence and shelter needs across Inuit Nunangat. This research examines current factors affecting violence against Inuit women, identifies reasons for accessing shelters, and is mapping the related financial costs of violence against women (e.g. flying women out of the communities if there is no safe shelter). This study will demonstrate how historical, socio-political, economic and cultural realities, along with conditions of daily life create unique barriers to addressing gendered violence. It will also offer recommendations rooted in current Inuit-specific violence prevention, healing and community engagement initiatives.

As part of this project we have held several women's focus groups across Inuit Nunangat open to all Inuit women. As well, we've conducted face-to-face and telephone interviews with relevant service providers and shelters in Ottawa, Montreal, Kuujuaq and Iqaluit. These interviews have been with people who have lived experience or are subject matter experts. We are now planning to continue this work by travelling to additional communities in Nunavut.

Social and Economic Development Department Project Updates

In the last quarter, much of the work of the Socio-Economic Development Department has been focused on the Inuit Women in Business Network (IWBN). We travelled to several communities across Inuit Nunangat to introduce and launch the IWBN. In March, we travelled to Nain, Nunatsiavut to introduce the network to established and aspiring Inuit businesswomen in the community. In May, we then went to Tasiujaq, Nunavik to deliver a business development training workshop in partnership with the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) for Inuit businesswomen in the Ungava region.

We are also in the process of finalizing new resources for the IWBN, which focus on online selling and marketing. Written and video tutorials on the use of Facebook and Etsy will be available shortly on the IWBN webpage to walk Inuit businesswomen through the process of setting up pages and selling their goods online. We are also finalizing a promotional video on the IWBN, available resources, along with interviews from Inuit businesswomen in urban areas. We have testimonial videos of current IWBN members on our website too! Check out our website for a full list of resources and more information: www.iwbn.ca.



Here's a photo from our business development training workshop for Inuit businesswomen in Tasiujaq, Nunavik. Thank you to everyone who attended!



Social and Economic Development Department Project Updates

We also delivered a presentation to a group of decision-makers who are a part of the Indigenous Economic Opportunities Network (IEON). This network has members from 16 federal departments. Our presentation highlighted the work of Pauktuutit and more specifically our department's work on Inuit women's economic development.

The Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Framework and our research report titled Understanding the Needs of Urban Inuit Women have both been completed.

The final reports and resources are available on the Pauktuutit website.

Our Mentorship for Inuit Women project is also nearly completed, with the final model and train-the-trainer content to be available on the IWBN and Pauktuutit webpages very soon.

On the Horizon

We intend to continue our successful IWBN project for the upcoming year and are in the process of submitting a proposal for renewed funding. We have also submitted a proposal to Status of Women Canada to address sexual harassment and violence encountered by Inuit women in the resource extraction industry. This proposal has received very positive feedback and is awaiting approval.



A photo from our March visit to Nain, Nunatsiavut to introduce the Inuit Women in Business Network