



Department of Health & Social Services  
Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux  
Anniaktoliginikot, Inulikiyiitlu Havakviat  
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## News Release

### Government of Nunavut Strengthens Mental Health Services

**IQALUIT, Nunavut (April 5, 2004)** – The Department of Health and Social Services is working with the Pairijait Tigumivik Society (elders' society) on a transfer of services that will result in a stronger mental health system.

The announcement was made today by Health and Social Services Minister Levinia Brown.

The Pairijait Tigumivik Society has decided to transfer the responsibility for the operations of the Akausisarvik facility in Iqaluit to the department. The current needs of the client group require mental health support and services that are more readily available through a government department. The goal is to have the Akausisarvik facility administered through the Baffin Regional Hospital.

“We are committed to delivering care closer to home,” said Brown. “Akausisarvik provides an opportunity to strengthen mental health service delivery at the community level.”

A work plan has been established to ensure a smooth transition for residents and staff of the facility. The transition period is expected to take approximately three months. Staff will continue to work at the facility during and after this transition period.

The Department of Health and Social Services is discussing with Pairijait Tigumivik the future role of the society regarding the operation of a second-phase of housing for persons who are able to live more independently through assisted living.

“The elders' society identified and responded to a community need,” Brown said. “They have laid the groundwork for community based mental health services and I thank them for their generous contribution to our communities.”

Akausisarvik is the first facility in Nunavut to assist individuals living with mental health issues. The facility opened in December 2002 and can accommodate up to 12 persons, including those who require respite from other living arrangements.

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#### **For more information, contact:**

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