

News Release

For Immediate Release

Tobacco Use Lower in Nunavut

IQALUIT, Nunavut (March 21, 2013) – Tobacco use dropped 2.9 per cent in the nine months between March and November 2012 in Nunavut. In January 2012 the GN began its five-year Tobacco Has No Place Here campaign and in October there was a \$1 per pack tax increase on cigarettes.

This decline represents more than 600,000 cigarettes – over 24,000 packs. Nunavummiut also cut down on chewing tobacco by almost 800,000 grams. In all, Nunavummiut saved over \$750,000!

"I'm pleased with the preliminary data we're seeing. I congratulate the people of Nunavut for choosing a healthier lifestyle," said Minister Keith Peterson, of the Department of Health and Social Services. "People are cutting back and quitting, which indicates that our tobacco reduction plan is having an impact."

The Government of Nunavut is allocating \$2.5 million per year starting in 2013-14 to the Department of Health and Social Services to support its *Tobacco Reduction Framework*.

In this second year of the Tobacco Has No Place Here campaign, Nunavummiut were invited to participate in the campaign's *Steps for Change* challenge earlier this year. Participants signed commitment cards to indicate a change they would make in their lives this year related to tobacco use. The commitment cards were entered in community draws and in a grand prize territorial draw.

Diana Okalik of Whale Cove is the winner of an Apple MacBook Pro laptop computer. Jennifer Nowdlak of Iqaluit is the winner of a canvas wall tent. The winners were chosen in a draw held March 8, at the Department of Health and Social Services offices in Iqaluit. There were more than 2,600 entries in the youth and adult categories.

For more information on Tobacco Has No Place Here, please go to www.nuquits.gov.nu.ca.

###

Media Contact:

Ron Wassink
Acting Manager, Communications
Department of Health and Social Services
867-975-5710
rwassink@gov.nu.ca