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News Release

For Immediate Release

Confirmed case of COVID-19 in Nunavut

IQALUIT, Nunavut (April 30, 2020) – Dr. Michael Patterson, Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer, has confirmed the first case of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in Pond Inlet, Nunavut.

"We did anticipate that it was only a matter of time before our territory had a confirmed case, and unfortunately today is that day," said Patterson. "We have initiated contact tracing in the community and our rapid response team is on its way to Pond Inlet, to provide care and ensure the community has all necessary supports to help manage the situation."

The individual is in isolation and is doing well. All travel to and from Pond Inlet is restricted, with the exception of cargo and emergency travel. This includes travel by land.

Anyone who has reason to believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 is advised to call the COVID-hotline at 1-888-975-8601 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., or notify their community health centre right away, and immediately isolate at home for 14 days. Please do not go to the health centre in person.

"There is no need to panic. Nunavut has had time to prepare, and we are in a solid position to manage this. We ask people not to place any blame, not to shame and to support communities and each other as we overcome COVID-19 in Nunavut," said Premier Joe Savikataaq.

Symptoms of COVID-19 include a fever, cough or difficulty breathing. The best protection from spreading or catching the disease is physical distancing, handwashing for at least 20 seconds, coughing and sneezing into an elbow and staying home as much as possible.

An update will be provided via press conference later today.

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