



News Release

For Immediate Release

Interim agreement reached for Non-Insured Health Benefits Program and \$190 million in additional medical travel funding

Iqaluit, Nunavut (May 23, 2024) – In support of healthcare access for Inuit in Nunavut, the Government of Nunavut's (GN) Department of Health and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) are pleased to announce the signing of a new \$190 million agreement which includes additional funding to support the increasing cost of medical travel. This agreement ensures Inuit in Nunavut continue to have seamless access to health care services, without having to pay out of pocket.

This interim two-year agreement, retroactive to April 1, 2023, includes additional contribution funding to help to offset the increasing costs of essential medical travel and the associated administrative expenses. The existing contribution agreement for the delivery of some Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) will also be renewed.

This agreement is a step in the right direction, but the GN and ISC recognize it is not a comprehensive solution. We must improve access to health services to reduce the need for medical travel outside of the territory and support health equity for Inuit in the territory. The ISC and the GN are committed to working together on a longer-term agreement to create a permanent solution and meet the long-term healthcare needs of Nunavummiut.

"Signing this agreement ensures our ability to cover the needed comprehensive healthcare coverage but also reinforces the importance of strengthening partnerships under the *Katujjiluta* mandate. This represents one significant piece of the puzzle in our ongoing negotiations and efforts to ensure that all Nunavummiut have access to the healthcare they need."

— *Government of Nunavut, Minister of Health, John Main*

“People in Nunavut deserve a fair and equitable access to healthcare. For many Inuit, medical travel is crucial to that access. Today’s agreement formalizes our commitment we made to Inuit in Nunavut and will help them get the care they need. This is getting us closer to a Canada where everyone, regardless of where they live, has the services they need and a fair chance to succeed.”

— *The Honourable Patty Hajdu Minister of Indigenous Services*

The new interim agreement addresses the current financial challenges being managed within the GN and paves the way for both organizations to continue collaborating with Inuit in Nunavut on an agreement that meets the long-term needs of Nunavut Inuit. This agreement is a testament to the department's unwavering commitment to enhancing health care services across Nunavut, ensuring a brighter, healthier future for all its residents.

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