

# The Qanuikkat Siqinirmiut Project

A partnership with the  
Inuit Siqirnirmiut Quebec Illaujuit /  
Southern Quebec Inuit Association (SQIA)

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Presentation to the Commission d'enquête sur les relations entre les Autochtones  
et certains services publics au Québec : écoute, réconciliation et progrès

21 March 2018

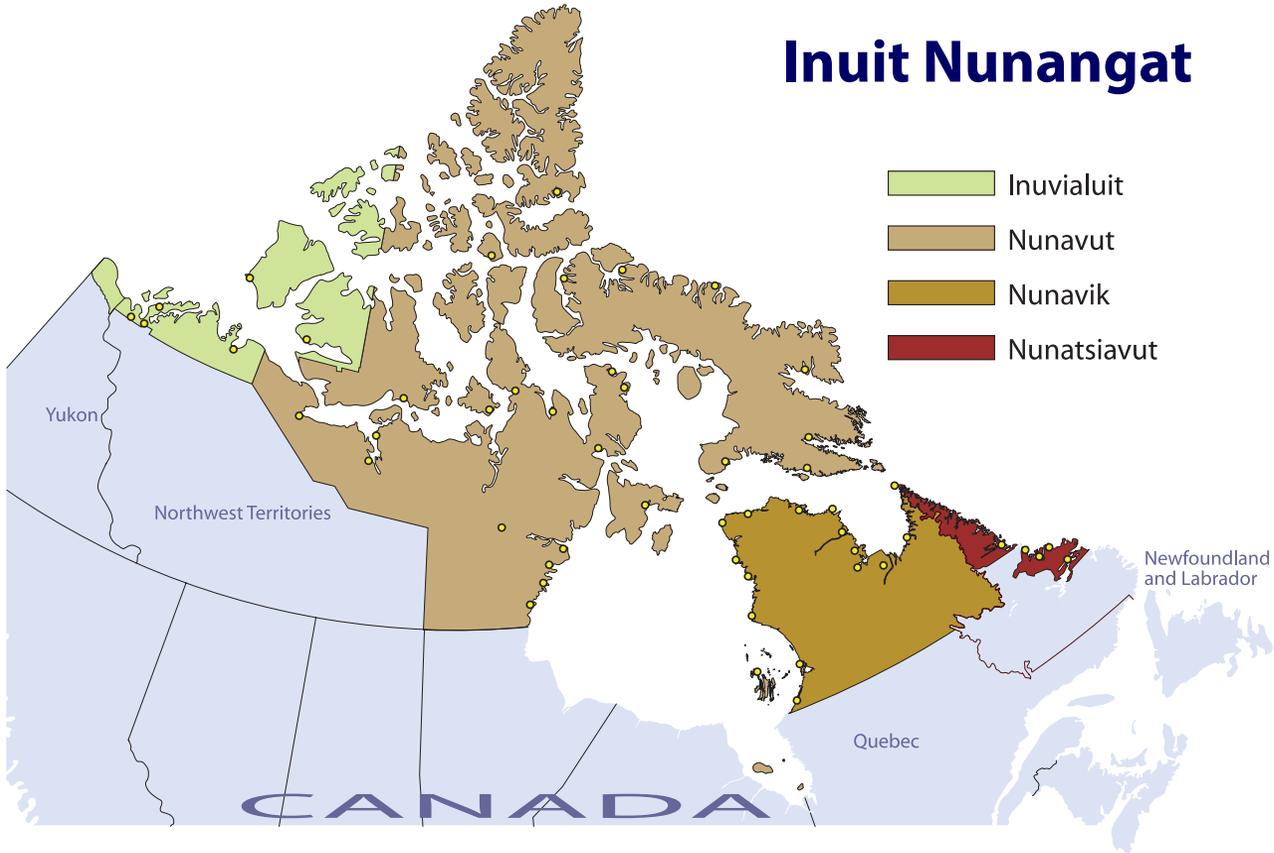
# QS project overarching goal to understand and describe the health of Inuit in southern Quebec

- Community-based and Inuit-controlled participatory study will provide the **evidence needed to build services and programs** to address the specific health conditions and needs of the community
- The SQIA is an Inuit-run registered nonprofit organization mandated by Inuit organizations to represent and bring together the southern Quebec Inuit community. The first registered representative organization for Inuit in southern Quebec, the SQIA is supported by Makivik Corporation; Tungasuvvingat Inuit; and the provincial Secretariat des affaires autochtones.
- Project partners include: Saturviit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik, Ivirtivik Employment Centre, Makivik, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, and Nipivut Radio.

# Nunavik

## Inuit Nunangat

- Inuvialuit
- Nunavut
- Nunavik
- Nunatsiavut



Increasingly there are important communities of Inuit in the cities of southern Canada.

In southern Québec there is a large Inuit community in Montreal and smaller numbers of people in Quebec City, Val d'Or, Sherbrooke and other towns.

The **Siqinirmiut** are those who live in the south

# Siqinirmiut

- Inuit have been coming to southern Québec since at least the late 19<sup>th</sup> century
- The first 'community' of Inuit in the south was composed of hospital patients evacuated for treatment for TB beginning in the 1940s and ending in the 1970s

# Evalcuation by ship for treatment in Southern Canada 1940s to 1970s



Mount Hermon Cemetary, Sillery, Québec







IN LOVING MEMORY  
MEETOOK E6-69  
DIED MARCH 18, 1954  
MOTHER OF MOSESEE LEWIS



# Cimetière Mount Hermon

# Mount Hermon Cemetery

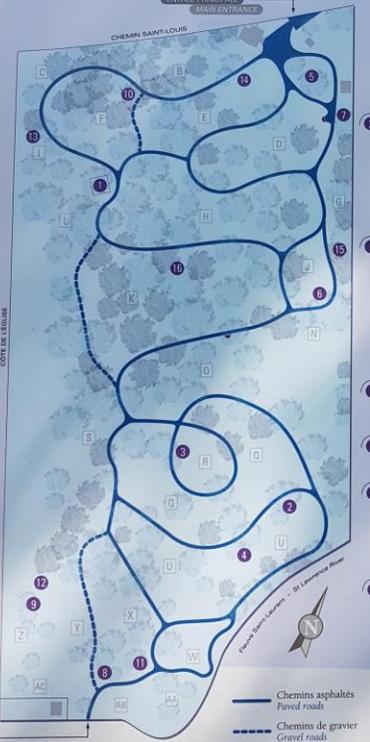
Inauguré en 1848       Inaugurated in 1848

ENTREE PRINCIPALE  
(MAIN ENTRANCE)

CHEMIN SAINT-LOUIS

COUPE DE SECTION

THREE PIETONNIERS  
(PEDESTRIANS)



**1** **George O'Kill Stuart**  
1807-1884  
1<sup>er</sup> président du conseil d'administration en 1848. Avocat, politicien et maire de Québec de 1846 à 1850.

**2** **Joseph Knight Boswell**  
1811-1860  
2<sup>e</sup> maire de Sillery (Bergerville) de 1860 à 1866 et fondateur de la brasserie Boswell.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Mayor of Sillery (Bergerville), 1860-1866 and founder of Boswell's Brewery.

**3** **James Douglas, M.D.**  
1800-1886  
Calculateur de l'acte de Beausport (hôpital Robert-Giffard) en 1845. Membre du premier conseil d'administration du cimetière en 1848.  
Calculator of Beausport Act (Robert-Giffard Hospital) in 1845. Member of 1<sup>st</sup> Cemetery Board of Directors in 1848.

**4** **Henri-Gustave Joly de Lotbinière**  
1823-1908  
4<sup>e</sup> premier ministre du Québec de 1878 à 1879. Seigneur de Lotbinière de 1860 à 1908.  
4<sup>th</sup> Quebec Prime Minister from 1878-1879. Seigneur de Lotbinière from 1860-1908.

**5** **Société Saint Andrew's de Québec**  
Fondée en 1830, cette société paroissiale procurait du secours aux immigrants écossais pauvres.  
Saint Andrew's Society of Québec.  
Founded in 1830 this parishes society provided aid to impoverished Scottish immigrants.

**6** **Société Saint George's**  
Constituée en corporation le 12 octobre 1835 dans la ville de Québec, cette société avait pour but de fournir de l'aide pecuniaire, médicale et autre aux immigrants anglais, gallois et des îles Anglo-Normandes et à leurs descendants.  
Saint George's Society  
Incorporated on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1835 in Québec City to provide pecuniary, medical and other relief to immigrants and their descendants from England, Wales and the Channel Islands.

**7** **Monument commémoratif du naufrage du 29 mai 1914 de l'Empress of Ireland**  
The Empress of Ireland Memorial  
A marine disaster of May 29<sup>th</sup> 1914.

**8** **Section de la communauté grecque orthodoxe**  
Greek Orthodox Section

**9** **Ordre indépendant des Odd Fellows**  
Cet organisme fraternel anglais du 17<sup>e</sup> siècle fut fondé pour prêter assistance à ceux dans le besoin.  
L'emblème aux trois chaînes signifie: Commanderie, Amour et Vérité.  
Independent Order of Odd Fellows  
A 17<sup>th</sup> century English fraternal organization set up to assist those in need. The three-link emblem stands for Friendship, Love and Truth.

**10** **A la mémoire des naufrages du Montréal**  
Plus de 253 personnes perirent noyées dans cette tragédie survenue le 28 juin 1857 sur le Bateau Saint Laurent à la hauteur de Cap-Rouge.  
Montreal Steamship Disaster  
On June 28<sup>th</sup> 1857, over 253 people drowned in this tragedy on the St. Lawrence River near Cap-Rouge, Québec.

**11** **Société Saint Andrew's de Québec**  
Fondée en 1830, cette société paroissiale procurait du secours aux immigrants écossais pauvres.  
Saint Andrew's Society of Québec.  
Founded in 1830 this parishes society provided aid to impoverished Scottish immigrants.

**12** **Monument commémoratif Inuit**  
Ce tombeau fut érigé à la mémoire des Inuits inhumés dans le cimetière entre 1914 et 1980.  
Inuit Memorial  
Inhabited in memory of Inuits buried in the cemetery between 1914-80.

**13** **Section de la communauté chinoise**  
Chinese Section

**14** **Lots des cambodgiens**  
Cambodian Lots

**15** **Section des Forces armées canadiennes et monument commémoratif de trois aviateurs américains décédés en 1942.**  
The Canadian Armed Forces Section and the Memorial to three United States Army Airmen who died in 1942.

Plus de 16 000 personnes sont inhumées au cimetière Mount Hermon.  
Over 16,000 persons are buried in Mount Hermon Cemetery.

— Chemins asphaltés  
Paved roads

--- Chemins de gravier  
Gravel roads

X Sections  
Sections

■ Bâtimens  
Buildings

⤴ Caveaux  
Sépulchraux vaults

- The population in southern Quebec has really been growing since the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement in 1975
  - Several organizations created subsequently with offices in Montreal: Makivik Corporation, Kativik School Board, Module du Nord, Avataq Cultural Institute, Fédération des coopératives du Nouveau Québec.
- Population in southern Québec according to statistics Canada is just under 1000. We estimate that it is closer to 2000.
  - Montreal is thus the third or fourth largest Inuit community in Québec
  - Majority from Nunavik but also Nunavut, Nunatsiavut, NWT and Greenland

- Between 2006 and 2011, the Inuit population of southern Canada increased by 18% while the *urban* Inuit population grew 76.4%
- While we believe that most people in this growing community are living healthy and productive lives, a significant number of people in the south suffer from addictions, mental health problems, trauma, homelessness and hopelessness
- The extent of these problems is known in only the most general way and only for those in most difficulty

In 2012 N. Kishigami undertook a survey of homeless and low-income Inuit in Montreal and drew the following general conclusions:

- The number of homeless, addicted, and mentally ill Inuit on the streets in Montreal is rising.
- Many people migrate to Montreal to escape problems in their home communities.
- Women and men have different paths to economic vulnerability and homelessness.
- Despite considerable hardship in the south, many homeless Inuit do not want to return north.
- Social service organizations play an important, positive role in the lives of urban Inuit.
- Critical housing shortages in Nunavik communities are encouraging out-of-region migration.<sup>29</sup>
- The health of the large proportion of the Inuit population that is not homeless or impoverished is unknown.

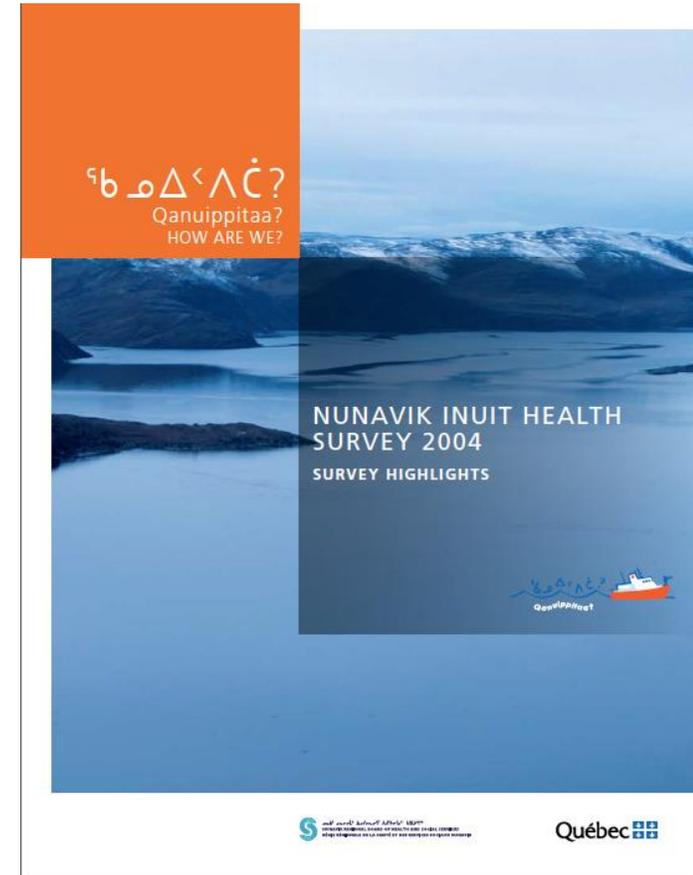
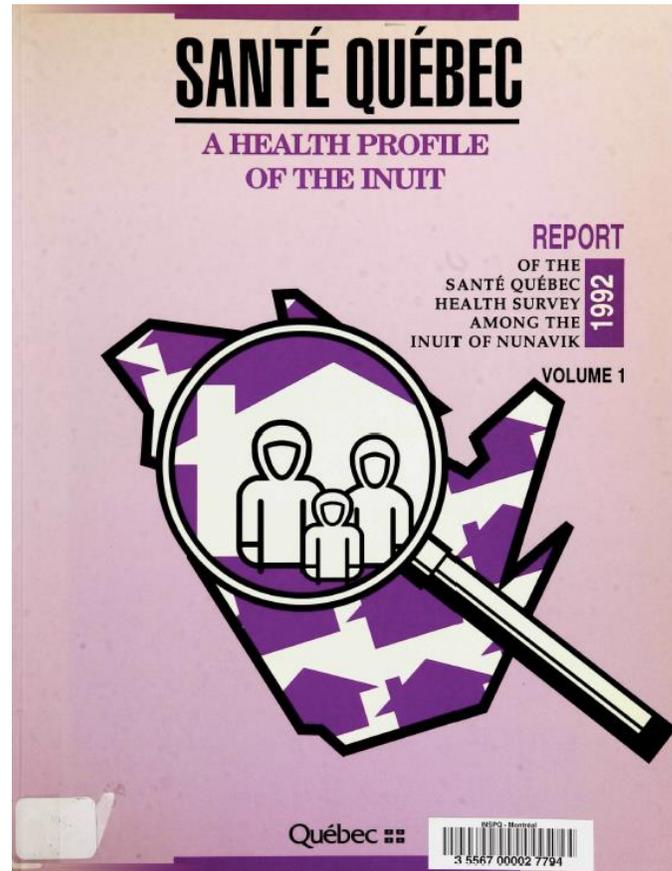
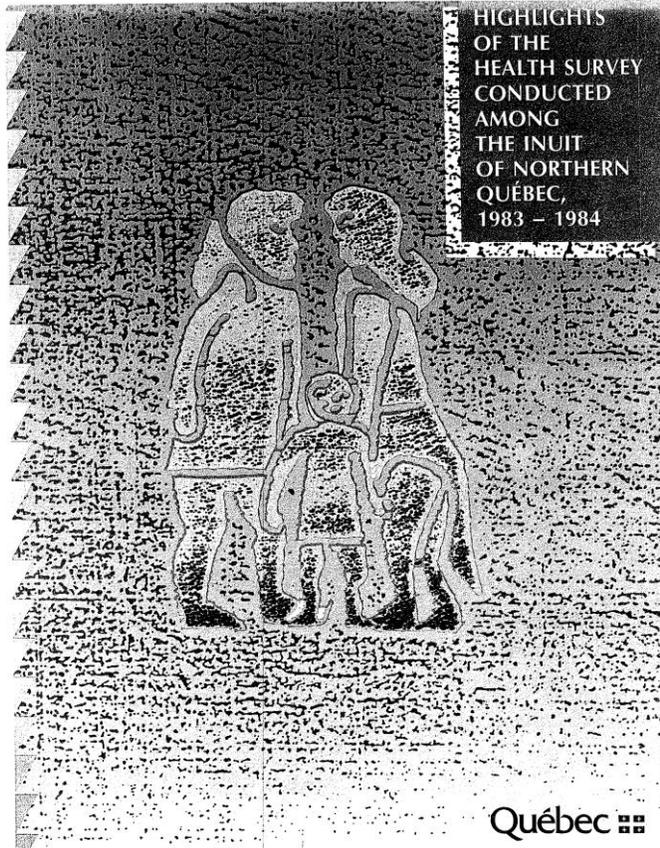
# Our Health Counts – Ottawa Adult Inuit report (2017)

- The Ottawa Inuit population is 4 times larger than estimated by Statistics Canada 2011 census data.
- 24% of adults speak Inuktitut only.
- 69% reported income of less than \$20,000/year.
- 29% reported periods of food insecurity in the previous year.
- 59% had not finished secondary education.
- Cross-cultural and language barriers were common impediments to accessing health services.
- There are high rates of depression and anxiety in the community.
- People reported very high rates of traumatic experiences including forced relocation, residential school, and violence
- 77% reported a close friend or family member had committed suicide.<sup>35</sup>

# The Siqinirmiut: A Multiply Marginalized Population

- Siqinirmiut may feel discriminated against in the city.
  - Treated as visitors
  - Face systematic prejudice
  - Subject to unflattering stereotypes
  - Overly romanticised
  - Difficulty finding housing, work, services
- They may also feel excluded by those who live in Nunavik
  - Programs and benefits for Nunavimmiut only
  - Seen as choosing to leave Inuit region and thus outside of scope of Inuit organizations
  - Northern programs rarely extend to the southern population
    - Makivik has supported services for homeless in Montreal and offers support for those in the justice system.
    - Ivirtivik employment centre works with Inuit in the city

# Health surveys in Nunavik since 1980s



# A community-based research partnership

- The creation of the SQIA in November 2017 opened the possibility of working together to better understand the situation in the south
- The SQIA has partnered with a group of researchers lead by Christopher Fletcher (U Laval) and Mylène Riva (McGill U) to develop a health survey of siqinirmiut
- The model of community-based participatory research (CBPR) model has been around for a number of years
- Principles of CBPR include
  - Action oriented
  - Acknowledgement of power dynamics within research relationship
  - Full engagement of community in all phases of the work
  - Balance of perspectives and needs
  - Attention to communication
  - Ethical conduct

**The objective of the Qanuikkat Siqinirmiut project is to develop a scientifically rigorous description of the health of Inuit in southern Quebec grounded in social determinants of health perspective that will serve the interests of the Inuit community by identifying and describing health disparities ultimately addressing health needs in a culturally relevant way.**

# Methods

Mixed qualitative and quantitative methods that are grounded in an Inuit philosophical concept; *ippigijaqatsianiq* “to be engaged with people and places you treasure”

Three stages:

- 1) Interviews, focus-groups, photovoice, digital storytelling and arts-based methods.
  - Identify specific health determinants, issues and resources
- 2) Survey questionnaire with questions developed from the stage 1 and adapted from other surveys.
- 3) Interpretation and recommendations with the community

# Progress to date

- Defined and recruited a Community Advisory Committee
- Developed a statement of principles for the project
- Drafted project governance model and research agreement framework
- Described and validated the cultural model of health
- Started a census of Siqinirmiut for SQIA and QS project purposes
- Written a proposal to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research to support the project for 4 years
- Begun to develop an integrated knowledge translation process
- Solidified our partnership

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- The relationship we have developed over the past few months shows clearly that there is a great deal of potential for Indigenous community organizations to work with allies and take on responsibility for helping the community at large. Policy and resources that support this form of relationship are needed.
- Given the movement toward Indigenous community control over health information and service development, we recommend that the community sector be given particular attention so that their efforts are supported and recognized.
- Support the movement from knowledge creation to action
  - Often a point of inertia in research
- Find ways to include Siqinirmiut in Health and Social Services program development and delivery in Nunavik