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News Release

For Immediate Release

Premier Quassa, Health Minister tour mobile TB screening clinic, attend community feast in Qikiqtarjuaq

Qikiqtarjuaq, Nunavut (Friday, February 9, 2018) – A mobile TB Screening Clinic became operational in Qikiqtarjuaq earlier this week, and today, Premier Paul Quassa toured the clinic with Minister of Health Pat Angnakak as the Government of Nunavut takes bold action to reduce the number of TB infections.

The Premier and Minister were joined on the tour by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami President Natan Obed, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. President Aluki Kotierk, Qikiqtani Inuit Association President PJ Akeeagok, and Qikiqtarjuaq Mayor Mary Killiktee.

The special TB clinic opened February 5 in response to a high number of active TB cases in the community and the territory. Approximately 10 per cent of the community in Qikiqtarjuaq is infected with either active or latent TB. In its first week, the clinic screened over 80 individuals, including those with active symptoms and household with young children.

“This clinic is historic on many fronts. The clinic has been set up in the community to ensure that every resident can be screened, treated and monitored for tuberculosis using the best medical expertise and technology available in the country,” said Premier Quassa. “Providing this care within the community also reduces the stigma and historical trauma around tuberculosis treatment that Inuit experienced in sanatoriums during the 1950s and 1960s. The collaboration between our territorial, federal, Inuit and local partners has been exemplary and demonstrates our capacity for reconciliation in healthcare."

The Department of Health has received resources and assistance from the Public Health Agency of Canada, Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario, St. Joseph’s Hospital, and other clinical staff to fill vital roles such as X-ray technicians and respiratory therapists.

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The clinic is expected to be operational for the next seven to 10 weeks. Treatment continues to be delivered by the Qikiqtarjuaq Health Centre.

“While setting up the mobile clinic was a massive undertaking, we are committed to reducing the burden of TB disease on Inuit in Nunavut,” said Minister of Health Pat Angnakak. “We are also committed to doing better than in the past and listening to the community. With this clinic, we are practicing inuuqatigitsiarniq, respect for others, relationships and caring for people.”

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