

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Suicide Prevention Partners Extend Action Plan

*(March 20, 2014 – Iqaluit, Nunavut)* The Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy partners today announced a one-year extension to the first phase of the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan. Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., the Government of Nunavut, the RCMP and the Embrace Life Council formed the partnership in 2008. The strategy was released in 2010 and the accompanying action plan in 2011.

NTI President Cathy Towtongie said the extension will allow the partners to fully evaluate the action plan's implementation to date, while finalizing the critical work that is well underway to addressing the suicide crisis Nunavut is facing.

"There is no easy fix to this terrible crisis, but NTI and our partners in this strategy know that we need additional time to evaluate the action plan, to learn from what was accomplished and to incorporate these important lessons into our work as we move on to full implementation of the strategy. This partnership is essential. It will continue until we find meaningful solutions that reduce suicide in Nunavut," said Towtongie.

"It is a priority of the Government of Nunavut and our partners to continue to work together to address suicide," said Health Minister Monica Ell. "It is critical that Nunavummiut struggling with depression and addiction also have the support and understanding of their families, friends and community leaders."

"We are committed to working with the partners and Nunavummiut in implementing the strategy and achieving our vision of a Nunavut in which the rate of suicide is the same or lower than the rate for Canada as a whole," said Embrace Life Council President Sandra Kownak.

"The RCMP is committed to working closely with our partners and with all communities. The high rates of suicide in Nunavut continue and only by determining and implementing a meaningful and sustainable collective approach and solution, we will be able to help those in need," said Commanding Officer, C/Supt. Lindsey Brine.

Since beginning work on the action plan, the partners have addressed knowledge and service gaps in mental health and suicide prevention in Nunavut. In addition, considerable progress has been made on all eight commitments outlined in the action plan.

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