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# Taking Steps to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harm in Nunavut

Government of Nunavut

October 2016



# Taking Steps to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harm in Nunavut

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*The Government of Nunavut is committed to help reduce and limit the harms related to alcohol in Nunavut.*

## Overview and Summary

This action plan sets out steps the Government of Nunavut will take to help reduce the harm that alcohol causes Nunavummiut and our communities.

The Government's main goal is to help and encourage Nunavummiut to make healthy and informed choices about alcohol. In this way, we can help move Nunavut towards the vision Nunavummiut have described: healthier and safer communities where alcohol-related harm is significantly reduced.

Nunavut's characteristics – geographic, cultural, historical, and otherwise - influence the type of government actions and policies that will work. To be successful, approaches need to consider these factors and focus resources on what will most effectively serve Nunavummiut over time.

The government looks to the ideas that Nunavummiut have shared to help guide our actions, and in particular to the findings and recommendations of the Nunavut Liquor Act Review Task Force. The Task Force conducted extensive, territory-wide consultations with Nunavummiut, Inuit organizations, municipalities and other territorial stakeholders between 2010 and 2012.

Government efforts are most effective when departments work together to develop and deliver a range of actions that help address different aspects of alcohol-related harm. Recognizing this, departments within the Government of Nunavut have collaborated to develop an overarching plan that sets out achievable actions across four areas of focus: Prevention and Education; Harm Reduction; Treatment and Enforcement.

The actions in this plan build on some of the substantial work already underway, and are not the only steps Government will take. Instead, they represent a useful list of priority commitments and initiatives the Government will begin to implement to promote healthy and informed choices and to reduce the harms associated with alcohol.

Understanding the long-term and ongoing nature of reducing alcohol-related harm in Nunavut, it will be important to continue to work with, listen to, and learn from Nunavummiut, Inuit organizations, municipalities, and other community partners.

Even with these actions, continued consultations, and an overarching approach, alcohol-related harms in Nunavut will not be solved quickly, easily or completely. The Government will continue to take action, and may shift approaches over time, to promote healthy and informed choices related to alcohol and to help bring about the safer and healthier communities Nunavummiut have described.

## The Government's Approach to Harm Reduction

Alcohol and the issues surrounding it create a difficult web of challenges. As a controlled but legal substance, many Nunavummiut consume and enjoy alcohol safely. At the same time, alcohol is a potentially dangerous and addictive drug that causes real harm to individuals, their friends and families, and to communities at large.

In Nunavut, the harms and risks associated with alcohol are made worse by other difficult social factors, such as crowded houses, low incomes, low education, and intergenerational trauma.

Statistics show the negative impacts alcohol has had in the territory. According to the Chief Coroner of Nunavut, 23% of all premature deaths in Nunavut between 1999 and 2007 involved excessive drinking, and 30% of all homicides were linked to drugs and/or alcohol. Reports from the Baffin Regional Correction Center state that 95% of inmates identify as having alcohol- and drug-related problems. According to the 2007-2008 Inuit Health Survey, 16% of respondents admitted to losing a close personal relationship to drinking, which is comparable to the wider experience, where about 17% of Canadians experienced alcohol-related interpersonal problems in 2006. Beyond these statistics, many families, elders, youth, and others in Nunavut have experienced alcohol-related harm, or know others who have.

These issues are not new. While many Inuit do not drink – 41% of Inuit Health Survey respondents reported that they had not consumed alcohol in the previous year, compared to 23% of Canadians aged 15 or older – alcohol has been linked to social issues in the territory for a long time, and for years the territory and our communities have struggled to find an effective approach. Importantly, Nunavummiut are not alone in experiencing harms linked to alcohol: organizations and jurisdictions across Canada and around the world have recognized and taken steps to reduce alcohol-related harms in their communities.

In 2010, the Government of Nunavut launched a review of its *Liquor Act*. As part of this review, the Government assembled a Task Force of nine members appointed from a cross section of Nunavut agencies. These individuals, with administrative support from the Department of Finance, consulted extensively on alcohol-related issues with Nunavummiut across the territory, visiting all 25 communities in Nunavut between October 2010 and March 2012.

The Task Force published two reports – “What We Heard” and “Halting the Harm” – which communicated what Nunavummiut had told them about alcohol and also made a number of specific recommendations about actions the Government could take to reduce the harm associated with alcohol.

The government is committed to reducing alcohol-related harm in Nunavut, and will move ahead with initiatives and services to achieve this goal. It is in this context that the government, and in particular the four departments with clear mandates related to alcohol and reducing alcohol-related harm (Finance, Health, Family Services and Justice), have collaborated to develop this overarching plan to promote healthy and informed choices and to reduce alcohol-related harm within the territory.

## Vision

In consultation with the public, the Nunavut Liquor Act Review Task Force outlined what Nunavummiut described as the “ideal situation.” While specific suggestions differed, Nunavummiut are clear they want their communities to be healthier and safer places. Many described a healthier community as one where the drinking culture has changed and alcohol-related harm has been significantly reduced because:

- Bootleggers have been shut down;
- Communities have meaningful input and effective control over local alcohol-related decisions;
- Well-resourced Alcohol Education Committees in every community are providing effective leadership support on alcohol-related matters;
- There is an effective and efficient alcohol control and distribution system in place;
- Penalties and deterrents are working; and,
- Appropriate and resourced education and treatment programs are readily available in Nunavut.

**The Government will work to achieve the healthier and safer communities that Nunavummiut described.**

## Principles

The following principles will guide the Government of Nunavut in its work to help promote healthy and informed choices and reduce alcohol-related harm in Nunavut:

**Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtigiinniq:** *“Working together for a common cause.”*

Alcohol is a complex subject, and there are many legitimate – and sometimes conflicting - views about how Government should approach alcohol-related issues. Different people bring different ideas and perspectives to the discussions. To promote effective and productive discussion, it is important to create a welcoming, collaborative environment where all input is given fair consideration before moving forward.

**While recognizing different approaches and legitimate views, the Government is committed to a common cause: reducing the harms associated with alcohol.**

**Pijitsirniq:** *“Serving and providing for family and/or community.”*

Healthy citizens and strong communities are the foundation of a healthy Nunavut. Government’s efforts, actions and goals remain focused on serving our communities. In part, this means providing the tools, training and resources for communities to promote healthy and informed choices and reduce the harms of alcohol.

**The Government will focus on approaches that best serve families and communities over time, while balancing other operational realities.**

In the final report, *“A New Approach: Halting the Harm”*, the Nunavut Liquor Act Review Task Force put forward a set of principles based on what Nunavummiut shared during the consultations. The principles reflect the Task Force’s consolidation and interpretation of the range of views they heard and collected from Nunavummiut across the territory. They provide valuable guidance to current and ongoing efforts:

- Reducing alcohol-related harm is critical to the health and well-being of all Nunavummiut;
- The harmful use of alcohol can be modified by changing certain aspects of the law;
- Responsible consumption of alcohol can be part of a healthy community as long as it is respectful of the rights of others;
- Community residents are in the best position to determine how to achieve a healthy community;
- Harm reduction requires support from tough rules, rigorous enforcement, and enhanced sentencing provisions;
- Reorientation of the market place will contribute to achieving responsible alcohol consumption, and aid in preventing bootlegging;
- Education will provide the tools for Nunavummiut (young and old) to enable them to make healthy choices for themselves and their communities; and,
- There are significant opportunities to improve efficiencies, effectiveness, and accountability of the current alcohol supply, control, and distribution systems while improving their responsiveness to community aspirations, and contributing to community social and economic well-being.

**The Government will look to the vision and ideas that Nunavummiut have shared to help guide our work to reduce the harms associated with alcohol.**

## **Types of Harm**

Alcohol-related harm means different things to different people, and expresses itself in different ways. Government actions and policies should recognize and address the range of issues that fall within the concept, and often benefit from having clear goals, targets, and audiences. This action plan identifies and targets three types of harms related to alcohol:

### **Direct harm to individuals**

Alcohol can harm the consumer directly by causing health issues, by making existing health issues worse, the management of these issues more difficult and by increasing the risk of accidents and dangerous behaviour (e.g. drunk driving). Direct harm to individuals can happen quickly, or can build up over time.

### **Indirect harm to others**

Alcohol can harm people other than the person consuming it. In particular, close family members and friends can be most impacted, including through alcohol-related assaults, other forms of interpersonal violence, and intergenerational trauma. Existing social realities, like over-crowded housing, can intensify the indirect harm.

### **General harms to society**

Alcohol can have negative impacts on communities, governments, the economy, and other elements of society. Examples include strained personal and family relationships which are crucial in small, remote, and tight-knit communities; significant pressure on our already under-resourced health, justice, and social services systems; and lowered economic productivity.

**The Government will develop and deliver a range of actions that work together to help address these different types of harms.**

### **Approach**

Nunavut's unique and specific set of circumstances – cultural, geographical, historical, and otherwise – influence the type of actions and policies that will work in the territory.

Although the delivery and implementation of programs and policies will need to be Nunavut-specific, reducing alcohol-related harm is a global challenge. A number of respected organizations and jurisdictions in Canada and around the world have recognized the harms associated with alcohol, and have taken steps to reduce these harms in their communities.

Given the amount of work that has taken place, it is important for the Government to consider these external sources and the approaches they recommend as a way to complement and support the findings of the Task Force and the views of Nunavummiut.

This action plan draws on the “four-pillar” approach that many respected organizations, including the World Health Organization, use to guide their efforts across four areas of focus: Prevention and Education; Harm Reduction; Treatment and Enforcement.

Initially developed in the 1980s to address illegal substance use, this approach has since been adapted and applied to legal substances such as alcohol and tobacco in a number of jurisdictions across Canada.<sup>1</sup>

**The Government will benefit from the research, thinking, and strategies that others have put in place to reduce alcohol-related harm in their communities.**

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<sup>1</sup> Substance Abuse Issues and Public Policy in Canada: Canada's Federal Drug Strategy, 2006

# Actions to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harm in Nunavut

The Government of Nunavut will undertake 15 initiatives to help reduce alcohol-related harm in Nunavut. These initiatives span four areas of focus:

## **Prevention and Education**

- ✓ Promoting Healthy and Informed Choices
- ✓ Supporting our Helping Professions
- ✓ Encouraging Communication

## **Harm Reduction**

- ✓ Opening a Pilot Beer and Wine Store in Iqaluit
- ✓ Increasing Support to Community Health and Wellness Committees
- ✓ Empowering and Supporting Alcohol Education Committees
- ✓ Strengthening the Referral Process

## **Treatment**

- ✓ Providing Culturally-Relevant Training and Support
- ✓ Working with Communities to Strengthen Care

## **Enforcement**

- ✓ Improving the Permitting Process
- ✓ Exploring Ways to Support the RCMP
- ✓ Supporting Court-ordered Restrictions on Alcohol
- ✓ Disrupting illegal activities through the Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act
- ✓ Reviewing Nunavut's Pricing, Markup and Taxation Controls
- ✓ Amending the Motor Vehicles Act to Combat Impaired Driving

## **Prevention and Education**

Prevention and education initiatives help Nunavummiut understand, avoid, and manage the harms associated with alcohol. A key goal of public education is to provide the tools for Nunavummiut (young and old) to support healthy and informed choices for individuals and their communities.

### **Promoting Healthy and Informed Choices**

During their consultations with Nunavummiut, the Task Force heard that consumption of alcohol can be part of a healthy community, as long as it is managed appropriately.

Many Nunavummiut enjoy alcohol in a socially responsible way – that is, in a way that does not bring harm or risk to themselves, their friends or families, or to others. Government can help minimize the harms associated with alcohol by encouraging healthy and informed choices and behaviours such as not drinking at all, drinking in moderation, not drinking and driving/boating/snowmachining, etc.



The government will launch and deliver a multi-year campaign to promote healthy and informed choices related to alcohol, including by:

- ✓ Providing Nunavummiut with access to age, culturally and regionally relevant educational materials explaining and encouraging responsible choices around the use of alcohol;
- ✓ Targeting youth and young adults with material and events aimed at creating awareness, including about the r of alcohol and alleviating risky drinking behaviour;
- ✓ Developing multi-media advertising products to promote healthy and informed choices related to alcohol consumption; and
- ✓ Producing resource materials and training for Alcohol Education Committees around healthy and informed choices for the use of alcohol.

### **Supporting our Helping Professions**

The “helping professions” play critical roles in reducing the harms related to alcohol. These professions—including, but not limited, to community social service workers, community health representatives, educators and guidance counsellors, health centre staff, and others—support Nunavummiut before, during and after alcohol-related incidents.

These individuals—working on the ground in our communities—are often best placed to help educate and otherwise support Nunavummiut with respect to alcohol.

Government can help Nunavut’s frontline staff encourage healthy and informed choices around alcohol consumption by ensuring they have relevant, culturally-appropriate, accessible and user-friendly tools and resources on hand. It is also important that frontline staff can easily access the resources and training they need to support Nunavummiut impacted by alcohol-related harm. It will be important to work with stakeholders to ensure these resources are appropriate, relevant, reflective of the northern experience and respectful of Inuit culture.

The government will help employees provide alcohol-related support to Nunavummiut by:

- ✓ Developing educational resources for front-line workers that raise awareness about the harms associated with alcohol use, reduce stigma associated with treatment, and help change social norms around alcohol use;
- ✓ Developing tools to promote and facilitate discussion around healthy alcohol use within communities, and within schools;
- ✓ Encouraging frontline workers to undertake public outreach with individuals and families that encourage healthy and informed choices related to alcohol consumption;
- ✓ Using and promoting the Aulajaaqtut (health, wellness, citizenship) curriculum to encourage sound decision-making, asking for help and resisting peer pressure on the part of high school students;

- ✓ Working with school, community and health officials both nationally and territorially to assist in recognizing and addressing the needs of students facing, or at risk of facing, alcohol related issues; and,
- ✓ Continuing to support people facing alcohol-related issues through programs and support services such as school community counselling, access to educational resources, referrals to mental health and other supports.

## **Encouraging Communication**

Discussions about alcohol can be difficult in any language. An important part of the Government's work is to make sure the information and materials we prepare – and the conversations we have – are open and accessible to many audiences. This means using terms, words, and ideas that resonate and make sense in Nunavut and to Nunavummiut. Being able to communicate clearly across all of Nunavut's official languages, while using modern and informed terminology, is important. Agreeing to common terminology across all languages will help these efforts.

The government will encourage and facilitate discussions surrounding alcohol and alcohol-related harms in Nunavut, including by:

- ✓ Working with professionals, frontline staff, community members and others to identify and develop a set of terms in all official languages that relate to, and can help support, alcohol-related harm reduction initiatives;
- ✓ Working with language organizations in Nunavut to translate these terms to all official languages; and,
- ✓ Making this glossary of terms and similar tools available to the public, and updating it from time to time.

## **Harm Reduction**

Harm reduction initiatives focus on the impacts of alcohol at the individual and society level. These actions are intended to improve and/or prevent harmful impacts of alcohol to physical health, mental health, and overall wellbeing, and to reduce the impacts to socio-economic quality of life. Harm reduction considers and addresses the direct and indirect harms.

## **Strengthening the Referral Process**

The Government provides a wide range of support services for children, adults, and families who may require alcohol-related protection or other specialized support through a number of different departments and agencies. In particular, the Department of Family Services assists individuals, families, and communities in developing the skills and utilizing both personal and community resources to enhance their wellbeing through Community Social Service Workers (CSSWs). CSSWs collaborate with other community professionals and agencies in providing support and access to programs and services for alcohol-related issues. CSSWs support a broader coordinated and collaborative response to individuals and families struggling with

alcohol-related risks and harm. These services have an important front-line role in harm reduction.

The government will ensure individuals and families are appropriately referred and receive adequate services to address alcohol-related problems by:

- ✓ Ensuring frontline workers collaborate with other community professionals and agencies in cases where individuals and families require additional and coordinated support as a result of alcohol-related problems; and
- ✓ Monitoring changes in the total number of client referrals to mental health and/or addictions services.

### **Empowering and Supporting Alcohol Education Committees**

Community residents are often in the best position to determine how to achieve a healthy community. Alcohol Education Committees (AECs) play an important role in supporting community well-being, but they need more support and resources.

Nunavummiut shared with the Task Force that well-resourced Alcohol Education Committees, when providing effective leadership support on alcohol-related matters, were important to alcohol harm reduction efforts. Across the territory, AEC members themselves have almost unanimously expressed a need for more clarity around their roles, more training and more support in delivering on their responsibilities.

A review of the mandate and responsibilities of both AECs and their members will help strengthen the AEC role in communities. Government can also support AECs through developing resource and training materials, and providing enhanced training to AEC members.

The government will empower and support community Alcohol Education Committees by:

- ✓ Informing and educating AEC members about their roles and responsibilities under the *Liquor Act*, and better recognizing their contributions to communities;
- ✓ Equipping AECs with the training and resources to educate community members about making healthy and informed choices around alcohol use; and,
- ✓ Investigating legislative and/or regulatory changes to provide the ability to better support AECs.

### **Increasing Support to Community Health and Wellness Committees**

Community Health and Wellness Committees (“CHWCs”) play a lead role in meeting the wellness needs of the community. CHWCs are well positioned to support local harm reduction initiatives, particularly in communities without an Alcohol Education Committee.

The government will engage municipalities to encourage public education about making healthy and informed choices related to alcohol. This should include building local capacity of each health and wellness committee to provide culturally appropriate resources and supports

to individuals who seek information on sobriety. With more training, local health and wellness committee members will be able to share healthy living messages around alcohol use.

The government will increase support to Community Health and Wellness Committees by:

- ✓ Engaging municipal authorities to solicit their active participation in alcohol harm reduction;
- ✓ Providing training to local health and wellness committees to increase their capacities for alcohol harm reduction projects in their community; and,
- ✓ Disseminating alcohol harm reduction resources to the general public through the local community health and wellness committees.

### **Opening a Pilot Beer and Wine Store in Iqaluit**

The Task Force recommended liberalizing access to beer and wine as a way to reduce the harm caused by binge drinking hard liquor. They also recommended that Government, where approved by the community, open a government-run beer and wine outlet to disrupt bootlegging. Piloting a beer and wine store in Iqaluit would provide the Government of an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of these recommendations.

In preparation for this potential project, there was substantial consultation with organizations and residents of Iqaluit specifically on the topic of a beer and wine store, including a public meeting, a survey, and a plebiscite. Although there are strongly held opinions for and against opening a store, in the community referendum of April 2015, 78% of Iqaluit voters chose in favour of opening a beer and wine store.

A closely-monitored pilot beer and wine store in Iqaluit will enable government to determine impacts on the community (positive and negative) of providing liberalized access to lower alcohol content liquor, and encourage sound decision-making about the effectiveness of this approach in reducing the harms related to alcohol use for Nunavummiut.

The government will explore the effectiveness of liberalized access to lower alcohol content liquor in reducing the harms of alcohol by:

- ✓ Opening a pilot beer and wine store in Iqaluit;
- ✓ Helping Nunavummiut make healthier choices related to alcohol by making available lower alcohol content liquor;
- ✓ Meeting with organizations in Iqaluit to understand how the store impacts various aspects of community life, and working with them to develop and implement strategies to further reduce harm; and
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot project.

## Treatment

Treatment initiatives relate to the screening, treatment, and referral services for individuals who may be at risk of developing, or may have developed, alcohol-related problems.

Treatment programs could include short-term interventions, longer-term programming and counseling, and other services meant to help individuals change and manage their behaviours related to alcohol. Treatment services usually focus on individuals affected by unhealthy alcohol use.

The government is committed to providing culturally-appropriate treatment services to Nunavummiut who are experiencing alcohol-related harm.

### Working with Communities to Strengthen Care

Addictions and mental illness can lead to, and can worsen, a number of poor outcomes in areas of health and chronic disease, family violence, education, crime and employment.

The government recently took an important step to improve the mental health and addictions services available to Nunavummiut by funding 56 new mental health and addictions positions across the territory. The Government is also funding 10 additional Nurse Practitioners, recognizing the important role they have to improve public health access and outcomes in our communities. The Government will work to phase all positions in over three years. While these positions will not be limited to dealing with alcohol or alcohol-related issues, this significant investment in front-line personnel will help reduce alcohol-related harm in Nunavut.

The Department of Health will continue its work to better support Nunavummiut affected by unhealthy alcohol use by providing culturally-appropriate mental health and addictions services. In the realm of alcohol harm reduction, these services are intended to: help with recovery; reduce the likelihood and severity of relapse; and, facilitate reintegration of individuals into a supportive community.

When necessary, the government looks to specialized services available outside of Nunavut to meet an individual's specific needs. Examples include telehealth consultations, residential treatment programming, and other inpatient services.

Where possible and practical, the government offers services in communities where natural supports exist. Examples include: "readiness for treatment" programming, individual counselling, on-the-land programming, family healing and day treatments. Productive collaboration with communities, and a good understanding of what is needed to effectively deliver treatment programs within our communities, is an important part of harm-reduction.

The government will improve its delivery of mental health and addictions services in our communities, including by:

- ✓ Collaborating with communities to identify their mental health and addiction needs;
- ✓ Providing community clinicians with professional development aimed at streamlining services for the Nunavut context and building an understanding of culturally appropriate care; and,

- ✓ Liaising with community organizations and service providers to help improve delivery of culturally-appropriate services, both in- and out-of- territory.

## **Providing Culturally-Relevant Training and Support**

Nunavummiut experience a greater quality of care when front-line employees and volunteers have the appropriate knowledge, skills, and tools to address mental health and addictions.

In Nunavut, it is important for front-line staff to have a strong understanding of the Inuit culture as well as understanding different models of mental health and addictions treatment. The Government can help encourage these understandings by providing training and other supports to mental health and addictions workers that promote, incorporate and learn from Inuit knowledge and other approaches. It is also important to support the training and involvement of Inuit front-line employees and volunteers.

The government will enhance opportunities for culturally-relevant training, including by:

- ✓ Training child and youth outreach workers and other community-based paraprofessionals in Inuit counselling and mentorship;
- ✓ Providing training in Inuktitut and using models that combines Inuit counselling practices with a focus on addressing substance use; and,
- ✓ Supporting community-level Inuit counsellors' training and mentorship programs for paraprofessionals working and/or volunteering in mental health and addictions roles.

## **Enforcement**

During their consultations, the Task Force heard from Nunavummiut that harm reduction requires support from appropriate legislation, rigorous enforcement, and solid sentencing provisions.

Enforcement activities help control and influence the availability and distribution of alcohol in the territory through laws, regulations, and other tools. By imposing penalties against individuals or businesses that sell to minors, for example, the Government can help protect our youth from the harms of alcohol consumption. Other enforcement activities include regulating retailers and alcohol advertising, and imposing taxes on alcohol and alcoholic products.

## **Improving the Permitting Process**

Through its *Liquor Act*, the Government requires individuals who wish to import alcohol into the territory, beyond a small personal allowance, to purchase a permit from the government.

The permit, which has a small cost to the consumer, helps the government keep track in general terms (beer, wine and spirits) the alcohol Nunavummiut legally bring into the territory.

Many out-of-territory alcohol retailers, shipping firms and airlines already understand the need for these permits, and require them before selling or shipping alcohol to Nunavut. As a result, the permitting process also helps support community decisions with respect to whether and how much alcohol its residents may bring in to the community.

For the process to work well, permits must be issued by the Government so they accurately reflect the alcohol coming into Nunavut. Fraudulent activities, such as reusing a permit at multiple locations, duplicating a permit for use at multiple locations, or forging (counterfeiting) a permit entirely, reduce the effectiveness of the system, and are against the law.

The government will strengthen the permitting process by:

- ✓ Taking steps to monitor, reduce and penalize permit-related fraud in the territory;
- ✓ Exploring ways to improve our permit-related services to Nunavummiut; and,
- ✓ Better communicating with retailers and shippers working with Nunavummiut about the need and use of permits in Nunavut.

### **Exploring Ways to Support the RCMP**

The RCMP are important partners with respect to reducing alcohol-related harm in Nunavut. The RCMP are best able to perform their work when they have timely and accurate information, particularly related to bootlegging or unusual activity relating to alcohol.

The government will explore ways to better support the RCMPs efforts in reducing the harms of alcohol by:

- ✓ Improving information sharing and communication between government and the RCMP; and,
- ✓ Alerting the RCMP to unusual activities related to alcohol use and sales in the territory in a timely manner.

### **Supporting Court-ordered Restrictions on Alcohol**

Sometimes the courts, justices of the peace, RCMP or other mechanism of Nunavut's justice system limit, restrict or prohibit an individual from accessing alcohol. These restrictions are often put in place after the individual, under the influence of alcohol, has caused themselves or others significant harm.

It is the individual's responsibility to abide by any restrictions the court imposes. However, to better reinforce these restrictions and limit future alcohol-related harm to the individual or others, the Government could potentially support such court-ordered restrictions by *not* issuing an alcohol import permit to the individual. For this to work, the permitting system would need to be aware of the alcohol-related restrictions in place.

The government will explore how to support court-ordered restrictions on alcohol by:

- ✓ Considering whether the permitting system could help reduce alcohol-related harm by supporting court-ordered restrictions on alcohol; and,
- ✓ Exploring ways to increase communication between the courts and the permit system with respect to alcohol-related limitations, restrictions, and prohibitions for individuals in the territory, while respecting these individual's rights.

## **Disrupting illegal activities through the *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act***

The “ideal vision” that Nunavummiut described during the Task Force consultations included safer communities where bootleggers have been shut down. Nunavummiut also described a territory where penalties and deterrents worked.

One way to disrupt the illegal trade of alcohol is to increase the costs and impacts of unlawful activities. For instance, forfeiture laws allow governments to legally seize property proven to be associated with certain activities. Civil forfeiture laws can be particularly effective. Under civil forfeiture, to seize property the Government needs to prove that it is more likely than not that the property was obtained through unlawful means or used to commit an unlawful act.

In June 2016 the Government of Nunavut introduced *Bill 19 the Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act* as a way to target unlawful activities like bootlegging. The Act will also allow the Government to use funds obtained under this new process to support victims and community wellness projects.

The government will work to disrupt the proceeds from unlawful activities such as bootlegging by:

- ✓ Enacting the *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act*; and,
- ✓ Using the civil forfeiture tools available in the *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act* to target the proceeds of crime resulting from bootlegging.

## **Reviewing Nunavut’s Pricing, Markup and Taxation Controls**

Research in other jurisdictions suggest that pricing can be an effective way to influence alcohol consumption, and that raising prices can help reduce alcohol-related harms. While this link is perhaps less established in Nunavut, where there is an active illegal trade and where many pay significantly more for bootlegged alcohol than standard market prices, it is worthwhile exploring these tools at our disposal. Pricing tools are efficient in that they have low administrative costs and target those who purchase and consume alcohol.

The government will explore using pricing to help reduce the harms of alcohol, including by:

- ✓ Establishing pricing policies, which could include setting prices based on alcohol content and adjusting for inflation; and,
- ✓ Reviewing Nunavut’s current markup regime.

## **Amending the Motor Vehicles Act to Combat Impaired Driving**

Impaired driving is a public safety issue which many jurisdictions are combatting through strict legislation and heavy penalties. Nunavut’s *Motor Vehicles Act* does not currently reflect the progress that other jurisdictions across Canada have made in updating legislation to reduce the occurrence of impaired driving. Strict laws and punishments against drinking and driving are strong policy tools for governments to reduce the harms related to impaired driving.

The government will strengthen Nunavut’s *Motor Vehicles Act* to better combat impaired driving, including by:



- ✓ Lowering allowable blood-alcohol level limits, including by setting a maximum blood-alcohol level of zero for novice drivers under the proposed graduated licensing system;
- ✓ Increasing roadside suspension penalties resulting from impaired driving stops; and,
- ✓ Encouraging Nunavut's law enforcement to use the new legislative changes to combat impaired driving.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The government recognizes the need to monitor, evaluate and report on alcohol-related harm in Nunavut, and on our actions to reduce this harm.

The government, through its different departments, will take steps to monitor, evaluate and track the success of the actions set out in this document, including by:

- ✓ Identifying a short list of measurements that already exist, or that are easily compiled, to begin monitoring alcohol-related harms in general terms;
- ✓ Identifying key goals and deliverables related to each action then monitoring and reporting progress against these deliverables; and
- ✓ Starting discussions about how to improve alcohol-related data collection and data use over the longer-term, including technical (audience-specific) metrics and more general information for the public.

## **Next steps**

This action plan outlines a set of steps the Government of Nunavut will take to help reduce alcohol-related harm in Nunavut.

Implementing these actions will help achieve tangible improvements towards the vision Nunavummiut expressed of safer and healthier communities, where alcohol-related harm is significantly reduced.

These actions represent a set of achievable steps, but they are not the entire inventory of actions that may be required over time. Reducing alcohol-related harm in Nunavut – like in other jurisdictions around the world – is a long-term challenge, and will require many years and evolving approaches to achieve the vision and principles Nunavummiut expressed, which might themselves evolve over time.

As the Government delivers on the actions it will consider – in consultation with Inuit organizations as well as hamlets, community organizations and other important stakeholders – what further steps we can take to best serve Nunavummiut in our work to reduce the harms associated with alcohol.

