

Minister of Health update:

I'd like to invite all Nunavummiut to join me in celebrating World No Tobacco Day, which occurred this past Sunday, May 31. This annual event highlights the health risks associated with tobacco use, and advocates for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption.

Right now, we are all working hard to commit to our public health measures that protect us from the threat of COVID-19. We are social distancing, staying home as much as possible, and washing our hands as much as we can. These actions are keeping ourselves, our communities, and our territory safe. Quitting tobacco use is one more step we can take to guard ourselves against the impact of this pandemic. We know that COVID-19 is mainly a respiratory virus, and early evidence suggests that smoking can make symptoms worse. Smokers are also likely to be more vulnerable to COVID-19, as smoking increases the likelihood of transmission from one's face and lips. Please remember: do not share cigarettes, joints, or pipes. Do not pick up discarded cigarette or cannabis butts. Wash your hands often, and refrain from touching your face.

The best thing that we can do for our health is to quit smoking. By making the decision to quit smoking, we can help to protect ourselves from COVID-19 today, and dramatically improve our health for the coming weeks, months, and years. Support is available for anyone who wants to explore options to help them quit. Message a counsellor on the Tobacco Has No Place Here Facebook page or call 1-866-368-7848 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The service is private and free. Counsellors can help you in Inuktitut, English, Inuinnaqtun and French.

Nicotine replacement therapy, or NRT, is also available at no cost through the Non-Insured Health Benefits program at your local health centre or pharmacy. Call ahead, and ask your health care provider for information and options for NRT.

Thank you.

Minister of Human Resources update:

Ullaakkut. Under the guidance of Dr. Patterson, the Government of Nunavut has begun re-assessing the measures that were put in place in response to COVID-19. "**Nunavut's Path: moving forward during COVID-19**" which was released last week and lays out the government's approach to easing restrictions, based on reducing risks related to the virus while minimizing the impacts on Nunavummiut. Based on the current evidence on risk and impacts of measures, re-opening workplaces is considered a low-risk measure.

For the latest COVID-19 information and GN Departments updates in all languages:

<https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>; <https://www.gov.nu.ca>



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Today, I am announcing the end of the Government of Nunavut's work from home program for Government of Nunavut employees. Starting Monday, June 8, 2020, GN employees who are currently "working from home" will be returning to their regular workplaces.

This decision was made in consultation with the Public Health Team and the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC). We recognize that a healthy workplace is essential to the health and well-being of all our employees, enabling them to bring their essential talents, skills and energy as they deliver services to all Nunavummiut.

In support of a safe and healthy workplace, the GN is following WSCC guidelines on risk assessment and worksite precautions and will continue to follow all orders and restrictions set in place by the Chief Public Health Officer in response to COVID-19. GN employees will also continue to receive health and safety information and guidelines on an ongoing basis. The GN's Employee and Family Assistance Program is also available to support the overall well-being of GN employees and their families.

Representatives from each department are working this week to ensure that workplaces are prepared for the return of GN employees and that social distancing continues to be maintained. Some flexibility may be required as employees transition from homes back to offices.

We realize that with school closures and the uncertainty of summer day camps programs at this time that parents will need time to work out childcare options and therefore we encourage them to contact their immediate supervisors to discuss their options.

At this time, there will also be limited public access to GN offices in order to support social distancing and for the health and safety of all Nunavummiut.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all GN employees for your hard work and continuing commitment during these times. Your well-being is our top priority.

I would also like to thank Nunavummiut for your ongoing patience and understanding as we continue to provide necessary programs and services.

Thank you.

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Chief Public Health Officer update

Good morning. Today marks the start of Nunavut's Path forward. Day cares, territorial parks, and playgrounds are permitted to re-open, and the size limit for outdoor gatherings has been increased to 25. Today will also be the first of our bi-weekly assessments concerning the modification of public health measures.

As we look at altering public health measures, I want to take a moment and emphasize to all Nunavummiut the continued importance of social distancing. While we are in a position today to alter measures, we are not in a position to take social distancing for granted.

We've noticed through the contact tracing of persons under investigation that people's contact bubbles are becoming noticeably larger. Larger contact bubbles will make it significantly more challenging to identify and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

COVID-19 continues to pose a risk to Nunavummiut, and we are not immune to this pandemic. We've made it this far thanks to our collective efforts, but those efforts absolutely have to continue.

With that said, I'm pleased to announce the following modifications to public health measures that will be occurring over the next two weeks.

Effective immediately, in-territory travel advisories are lifted. Travel outside of Nunavut is still not recommended. Individuals who are travelling outside of the territory need to be aware not only of the isolation procedures to return, but also of the measures that other jurisdictions may have in place to limit or discourage travel.

On June 8, workplaces and retail outlets are permitted to re-open, provided that they have safety measures in place. Galleries, museums, and libraries may also be opened for individual viewing and browsing, though group sessions are still prohibited. There will also be an increased availability of in-person health assessments at health centres across the territory.

On June 15, dental clinics, physiotherapy clinics, massage therapy, and chiropractic treatments are permitted to resume. Gyms and pools will also be permitted to re-open for solo workouts and lap swimming only.

Please note, that all these measures are subject to alteration should conditions change.

Thank you.

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As part of the Government of Nunavut's (GN) effort to protect Nunavummiut against the risk of COVID-19, GN Departments are implementing the following:

Department of Health Services

COVID Hotline and Self-Assessment Tool

Anyone who has reason to believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 is advised to call the COVID hotline at 1-888-975-8601 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., or notify their community health centre right away, and immediately isolate at home for 14 days.

Anyone with access to internet can also take the online self-assessment tool nu.thrive.health

Volumes

Total (All Isolation Locations)	
Traveler Type	Guests in Isolation as of May 29
Medical Travel	158
Public	116
Students	0
Total	274

Traveller repatriation summary:

Departure Date	# of Travellers from Isolation Sites
May 30	0
May 31	9
June 1	35
June 2	6
June 3	16

Critical Worker Requests

As of May 31, there are 1,291 requests, 987 of which are critical worker requests.

Request Status	#	%
Approved (includes critical and non-critical)	1100	85.7%
Denied	146	11.4%
Pending	45	3.0%
Total	1291	100%

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Ongoing services:

Access to health care services will remain available in all communities seven days a week. All non-urgent requests will be triaged daily. Immediate access to urgent and emergent health care services are and will continue to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All clients are asked to call before presenting at a health facility.

- In Iqaluit, public health, the emergency room and inpatient unit will remain open.
- Well baby clinics, prenatal visits and immunizations are continuing across Nunavut.
- Physicians will continue community visits. If this is not possible, the visits will be conducted by telehealth or by phone.

Adjusted services:

Appointments at health facilities are being triaged, this means the appointment may be over the phone or in person.

Medical travel services have been reduced to urgent medical travel only. Clients will be advised of these changes and involved in discussions.

In Iqaluit, outpatient clinics and rehab are triaging all appointments and conducting appointments. Lab and Diagnostic Imaging services at QGH are on reduced services. All upcoming appointments are being triaged.

MHA has moved to telephone check in and support for some clients. Scheduled appointments for medication pick up and administration remain the same. If you are in crisis, present to the health centre. Home visits to administer medications will be treated on a case by case basis.

Closed /Cancelled/Suspended services:

Only emergency dental services will be provided until further notice.

Specialty clinics have been cancelled. Work is underway to determine which clients can be seen by phone/virtual care.

All non-essential travel for mental health clients and families are cancelled. All non-essential travel for families visiting clients in care is cancelled.

No visitors will be allowed at long term care facilities in Nunavut – Continuing Care Centres (CCCs) and Elders' Homes.

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Department of Human Resources Services

All GN employees will return to GN workplaces beginning June 8, 2020. This decision was made by the GN in consultation with the Chief Public Health Officer and the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC).

The GN is following WSCC guidelines on risk assessment and worksite precautions to ensure safe workplaces and will continue to follow all orders and restrictions set in place by the Chief Public Health Officer in response to COVID-19. Social distancing will continue to be maintained in GN offices, and GN employees will continue to receive health and safety information and reminders on an ongoing basis. The GN's Employee and Family Assistance Program is also available to support the overall well-being of GN employees and their families.

At this time, there will be limited public access to GN offices in order to support social distancing and for the health and safety of all Nunavummiut. Members of the public can contact GN employees as needed by phone and email. If in-person meetings are required, members of the public may be asked to follow social distancing or other health and safety practices.

GN Departments will continue to provide regular public updates on any adjustments to their programs and services now that the work from home program is ending.

Nunavummiut's health is our shared responsibility! Remember: wash your hands and surfaces, practice social distancing, listen to the advice of health officials, and stay home if you're sick.

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