

# NunaFam

## Discipline of Family Medicine



# Background

**NunaFam** is a collaboration between the Government of Nunavut, Dept. of Health, and Memorial University of Newfoundland

Established to work towards a model of sustainable medical practice of improved access to primary care, and overall health outcomes for the population of Nunavut

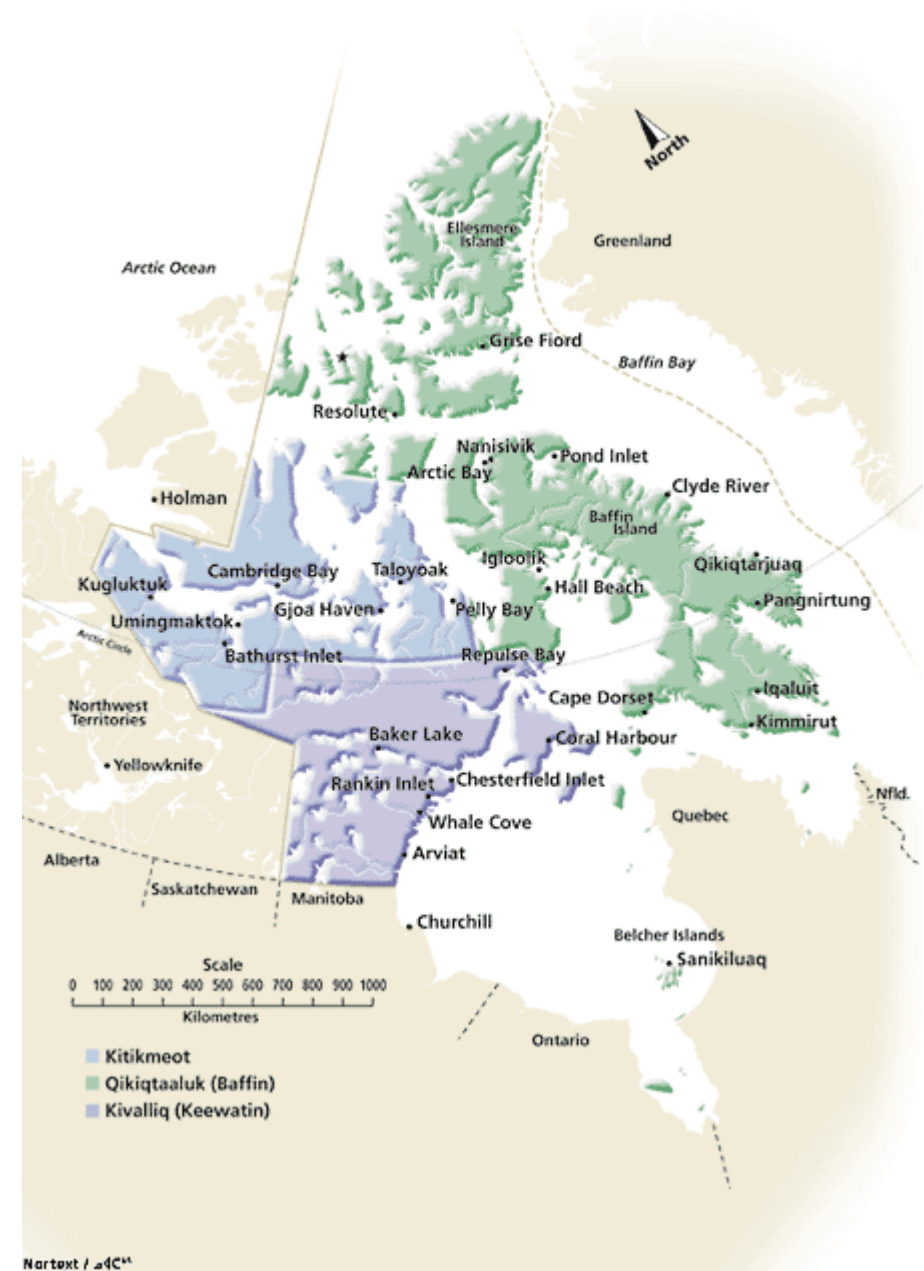
- Health Canada funded-\$4.9 million for five year pilot project (2011-2016)
- 4 second year family medicine residents train in Nunavut for six months each academic year



Inuit people in socio-economic transition from a traditional hunter-gatherer way of life to wage based economy in settled communities

Inuit thrived in one of the harshest climates in the world  
Until 1950's lived hunter-gatherer lifestyle

Social upheaval produces poor health



# Modeled on the NorFam program in Labrador

The Northern Family Medicine Education Program (NorFam), one of the country's first rural, remote teaching programs, was established in 1991 following consultations with Labrador communities, Melville Hospital Board of Management and the Indigenous organizations of the Innu Nation and the Labrador Inuit Health Commission, and the Department of Health

NorFam was developed to respond to the health needs of the Indigenous communities in Labrador



# Objectives

- Increase the number of appropriately trained long term family physicians in Nunavut
- Enhanced training for family medicine residents
- Establish a family practice teaching centre in Iqaluit
- More extensive collaboration with Memorial to improve access to both undergraduate and postgraduate medical training for Indigenous students



# Tools for success

- experience
- building solid relationships
- support
- communication
- continuity



# Initial Success

## Recruitment & Retention:

- Graduates have signed long-term contracts to practice in Nunavut
- All graduates spent time practising in rural & remote locations
- The training model results in a significant increase in medical service to the territory



“we now have graduates who are top-level people being recruited...they’re training as doctors for rural/remote medicine & are signing contracts with Nunavut. It has stabilized medical practice there”

Dr. Sandy MacDonald

“When I tell people how much I love Nunavut, the next question is invariably “why?”. It is an important question but one that I didn’t immediately have an answer for. There are no great attractions, dining options are limited and the weather is particular. However, I soon realized that I had never met a more gentle and engaging group of people than the Inuit. My delight with Nunavut started with the people and continued eating raw whale skin in the ER, fishing for arctic char, hiking 100 km through the Arctic circle and snowmobiling between clinic days in fly-in communities. Mix in a collegial working environment with medicine that is unlike anywhere else and I can’t imagine not working in Nunavut. There are few certainties regarding my future practice but returning to Nunavut is one of them.”

Dr. Brett McCarthy



“Having grown up in the urban South with limited exposure to Indigenous communities, living and working in Iqaluit provided me with the opportunity to immerse myself in the culture of the North and learn alongside and from Inuit colleagues and patients. We are all aware of the health inequities affecting Indigenous groups, which are a direct result of colonization. As a white settler and a physician with a passion for global health and health equity, working in this context help me to develop cultural humility and a profound sense of the immense need for action on the social determinants of health. Having this exposure as a resident has influenced my practice in many ways. I apply the skills I learned related to trauma informed care and anti-oppressive care in my daily patient interactions. My future career plans and where I intend to work have also been shaped by this experience. Despite being from the South, exposure to the life, beauty, and mystery of the North has inspired me to continue to work in the Arctic; at present I am engaged in patient oriented research in Labrador and will be locuming and hopefully in the future working full time in a Northern community.”

Dr. Melanie van Soeren



“Six months up North is worth as much as two years in a lot of places south”

“Medicine like no other...unique”

“Love the people, their honesty and humour”

“It’s not a simple history or present being Inuit in Canada. Whether laughing with elders through a translator, or formal courses through the GN, learning about it and being immersed in it brings a richness of life that cannot be bought.”

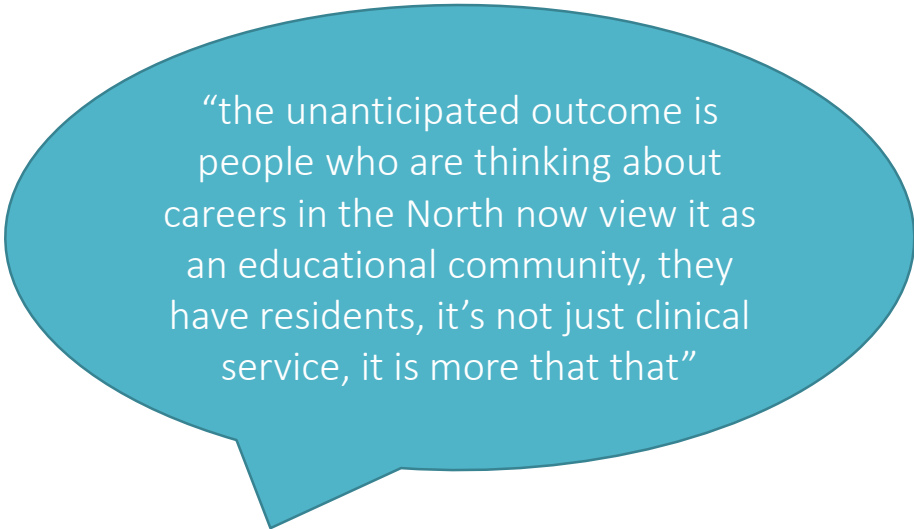




Pond Inlet & Pangnirtung  
Community clinics

## Nunavut is now a centre of medical education excellence

- Well-established educational community; research and teaching opportunities
- Three Nunavut physicians have participated in the 6 for 6 rural research program (with a focus on indigenous health)
- CPD & research supports
- Locally developed 60 priority topics for teaching – site driven, local expertise, indigenous focus.
- Dedicated medical education leadership



“the unanticipated outcome is people who are thinking about careers in the North now view it as an educational community, they have residents, it’s not just clinical service, it is more that that”

## Transformation in practice

- Stabilized workforce - allows for local control of physician requirements and cost savings
- Focus on continuity of care: residents are assigned an outlying community during the rotation and are responsible for patient follow-up
- Wednesday afternoon academic half-days in the Iqaluit practice, for educational sessions and committee work
- Nunavut physicians participate in file review, interviews and ranking of applicants to ensure the best match to the site
- Residents are matched based on their experience and interest in rural/remote practice, indigenous health, health equity

## Further collaboration to promote medical careers to indigenous students

The first Inuk student from Nunavut participated in the Aboriginal Health Initiative's Healers of Tomorrow Gathering in 2017.

"It is no small feat...Happy to hear the partnership will continue so other young Inuit get opportunities in summers to come to experience the health careers camp and have the touch and feel of being within the walls of a medical school."

-Nunavut physician

"...This camp has made me more aware of the paths I can take to succeed in the medical field and has made me much more excited to start my journey."

-Ashley Newman  
Kugluktuk, NU



## Unanticipated Outcomes:

NunaFam has been the inspiration for a ground-breaking pediatrics training program with partners at NOSM and University of Ottawa where residents spend up to six months training to be community generalist pediatricians with a focus on Indigenous child health.

Iqaluit is one of three sites chosen as a model of recruitment and retention of rural family physicians by the National Task Force on Rural Medical Education and Training by the College of Family Physicians of Canada & the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada.

# NunaFam & TRC recommendations for Aboriginal Health

- Residents do local outreach in high schools
- Complete local cultural competency training course (GN)
- Orientation materials pre-departure:

Cultural competency modules (Nunavut program)

Inuit Story Bones – Historical trauma and trauma informed care

Words and Phrases in Inuktitut


Inuktitut for Health Professionals

# MISSION

“Working in the spirit of partnership and respect, the Faculty of Medicine is committed to delivering integrated excellence in education, research, and evidence informed care; meeting the unique health needs of our rural, remote and urban communities; and advocating for health, equity, Indigenous health and healthy populations.”

# VISION

“Through excellence, we will integrate education, research and social accountability to advance the health of the people and communities we serve.”

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Thus, achieving our VISION and MISSION.               | MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND FACULTY OF MEDICINE STRATEGY MAP<br>DESTINATION EXCELLENCE 2018-2023   |   |  |
|   | OUR MISSION<br>Working in the spirit of partnership and respect, the Faculty of Medicine is committed to delivering integrated excellence in education, research and evidence informed care; meeting the unique health needs of our rural, remote and urban communities; and advocating for health, equity, Indigenous health and healthy populations.   |   |  |
|   | OUR VISION<br>Through excellence, we will integrate education, research and social accountability to advance the health of the people and communities we serve.  |   |  |
|   | IMPROVING LIVES  |   |  |
|   | THRIVING LEARNERS AND GRADUATES  | IMPACTFUL RESEARCH  | HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES  |
| To meet the needs of the PEOPLE we serve.             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learners achieve academic success throughout their Faculty of Medicine educational journey</li><li>• Learners rate their educational experience as excellent</li><li>• Learners feel connected, supported and challenged to reach their full potential, with resilience</li><li>• Learners gain the skills to lead and participate in inter-dependent teams</li><li>• Graduates are prepared to respond to population needs and to be tomorrow's scientific and clinical leaders</li><li>• Graduates are equipped with the competencies needed to thrive in the 21st century health system</li><li>• Learners, faculty and staff are lifelong learners</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our research addresses pressing and emerging needs of regional, Indigenous and global populations</li><li>• Our research accelerates the transfer of discoveries into clinical practice, education and the health system</li><li>• Faculty, staff, researchers and learners are active partners in integrated research and scholarly pursuits</li><li>• Our inter-dependent research projects are community informed and inspired</li><li>• Our research achievements are nationally and internationally recognized and acclaimed</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The communities we serve are actively engaged in identifying community needs, influencing education, research and service priorities and evaluating new models of practice</li><li>• Learners are motivated to remain in our communities after graduation and to support underserved, rural and remote areas</li><li>• Government, academic and health partners are involved in the pursuit of our mission</li><li>• We participate in sustainable regional, provincial, national and global partnerships to shape and improve health equity and the health system</li><li>• Faculty, staff, learners and graduates embrace their social responsibility to positively impact the health status of our communities</li></ul>  |
|   | EDUCATION EXCELLENCE: We must excel at...  | RESEARCH EXCELLENCE: We must excel at...  | SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY: We must excel at...   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivering high quality, dynamic and innovative academic programming</li><li>• Enabling faculty to be exceptional teachers and learner advocates</li><li>• Providing learners with active, engaged, empowering and authentic community-based experiences that include longitudinal learning activities</li><li>• Incorporating competency-based learning, programmatic assessment and inter-dependent practice</li><li>• Accelerating the effective use of education technologies across all programs and teaching spaces</li><li>• Teaching, mentoring, assessing and supporting learners</li><li>• Providing learners with career planning services to support and prepare them to return to work in our communities</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifying focused areas of research strength where we can lead and maximize return on investment</li><li>• Empowering researchers with appropriate resources, support and efficient processes</li><li>• Embedding an integrated and coordinated research curricula across all programs</li><li>• Promoting and nurturing the development of inter-dependent research teams to accelerate scientific discoveries</li><li>• Building robust academic and external partnerships and networks</li><li>• Effectively disseminating our research outcomes to the scientific and clinical communities and the public</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incorporating global health and community engagement principles and competencies into academic programming</li><li>• Preparing learners to understand the determinants of health and health policy and to advocate for patients and communities</li><li>• Actively listening to and collaborating with the populations we serve and our health and research partners</li><li>• Evaluating and enhancing our education, research and service programs in alignment with community needs</li><li>• Developing partnerships that strengthen community capacity in underserved populations and rural and remote areas</li><li>• Building structures that expand our influence and presence in Canada and on the global stage</li><li>• Expanding philanthropic funding models to advance our mission</li></ul> |
|   | EMPOWERED PEOPLE   |   |  |
|   | CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE: We will...  | INSPIRING LEADERSHIP: We will...  | EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE: We will...   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unify our team around a focus on excellence and achievement of our shared vision, mission and values</li><li>• Create a productive, engaging, enjoyable and supportive work experience for faculty and staff</li><li>• Weave social accountability into everything we do</li><li>• Embrace meaningful change and translate ideas and solutions into action</li><li>• Cultivate an environment of lifelong learning</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nurture and support formal and informal leaders to inspire and lead, in alignment to our vision and mission</li><li>• Facilitate effective communication and collaboration amongst learners, faculty, staff and community partners</li><li>• Encourage and support leadership development for current and future leaders</li><li>• Create and embrace opportunities for all staff, learners and faculty to achieve their potential</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work in a dynamic organizational structure, and ensure our people are in the right roles, equipped with the right skills, focused on the right priorities</li><li>• Build our talent and workforce capabilities through strategic recruitment and retention programs and succession planning</li><li>• Facilitate exceptional faculty and staff development and mentoring at all career stages</li><li>• Foster an environment that encourages valiance for all</li><li>• Recognize and celebrate individual and team achievements</li></ul>   |
| So, we can operate with EFFECTIVENESS and EXCELLENCE. | ROBUST INFRASTRUCTURE: We will...  |   |  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay at the forefront of advances in educational, research and information technology</li><li>• Enhance technologies that enable teamwork and collaboration</li><li>• Harness the full power of existing and new technology, equipment and labs</li><li>• Fortify data management capabilities and capacity to capture, store, preserve, access and utilize data securely</li><li>• Provide spaces where faculty, staff and learners can network and collaborate</li></ul>   |   |  |
|   | ENDURING LEGACY  |   |  |
|   | EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE RESOURCING: We will...   | CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT: We will...   | DYNAMIC ADVOCACY: We will...   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allocate resources to the strategic priorities, in direct alignment to our mission and to the health needs / priorities of the populations we serve</li><li>• Enhance our fundraising efforts to attract more charitable donations in support of our mission</li><li>• Expand and diversify Faculty of Medicine revenue</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Track, measure and analyze our performance across our academic mandates</li><li>• Use data to continuously improve performance and results and to set improvement goals</li><li>• Strengthen program evaluation to enable improvements</li><li>• Improve efficiency and productivity through process, technology and quality improvement initiatives</li><li>• Share our performance results with faculty, staff, learners, partners and communities</li><li>• Monitor population health and our external environment, including emerging opportunities, risks and challenges</li></ul>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify, foster and participate in partnerships that advance our mission</li><li>• Promote the mission and vision of the Faculty of Medicine and communicate our contributions to our communities and to society</li></ul>  |
| To build a STRONG and PREPARED team.                  | OUR GUIDING VALUES   |   |  |
|   | We:<br>Put the needs of our learners and communities at the forefront of everything we do<br>Support faculty and staff to succeed<br>Act and lead with integrity and professionalism<br>Embrace learning, creativity and innovative thinking in all we do<br>Foster inter-dependent teamwork and collaboration   |   |  |
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| We use our RESOURCES wisely.                          |  |   |  |
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| Guided by our values.                                 |  |   |  |
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- ✓ Sustainable partnerships to improve health equity; the communities we serve are actively engaged
- ✓ Graduates remain in communities to support underserved, rural & remote areas
- ✓ Developing partnerships that strengthen community capacity in underserved populations and rural and remote areas
- ✓ Evaluating and enhancing our programs in alignment with community needs
- ✓ Weave social accountability into everything we do
- ✓ Communication and collaboration amongst learners, faculty, staff and community partners

## Sustainability & Growth

- The Government of Nunavut has approved ongoing funding to continue the NunaFam program beyond the pilot phase
- NunaFam is now a permanent part of the family medicine residency program
- Future plans to include Memorial FM undergraduate learners: earlier and longer the exposure = connections & commitment
- Discussions regarding a dedicated seat in the medical school for Nunavut

Thank you....

