

Tungasuvvingat Inuit

Smoking Cessation Program

July 2019

In July of 2019, Tungasuvvingat Inuit's Regional Cancer Program, in partnership with Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, developed and facilitated an Inuit-specific smoking cessation program in Ottawa, Ontario.

The program supported six Inuit women in their journey to reduce or quit smoking tobacco.

Among the group, the length of time in which participants had been smoking ranged from 2 to 42 years. Participants shared that having a hard time breathing, coughing, and difficulty being active were all believed to be health issues associated with their smoking habits. By participating in the program, clients were expecting to gain support, coping strategies, routine, knowledge and ultimately to quit smoking.

The program was structured by way of four weekly meetings, at the same time and place, with a combination of guest speakers, activities, knowledge sharing, and group discussions.

In Week 1, we welcomed Inuk Elder, Piita Irniq, to speak to the participants on the introduction of tobacco into Inuit communities and his own personal story and journey on quitting smoking.

In Week 2, we asked Laura Baikie, a Registered Pharmacist and Smoking Cessation Specialist for the Government of Nunavut, to come in to discuss and answer any questions related to Nicotine Replacement Therapy. Laura was able to provide free Nicotine Replacement Therapy for any participants who were interested.

Also in Week 2, we discussed short and long-term goal setting. The group shared a number

of short-term goals, which included; not buying cigarettes they like, continue to leave the house without cigarettes, delaying the time that they smoke, and replacing smoking with drinking cold water or chewing gum.

In week 3, the group had a fieldtrip to the Riverside Hospital where they were greeted by Ellen Alie, Manager, Integrated Cancer Screening and Prevention who provided the tour of the Hospital CT room (lung screening tour) Ellen explained the eligibility risk factors considered when a patient is considered for a CT scan such as: Family history, Smoking history and Age. The group had the opportunity to experience the process taken when an individual is getting CT scan completed and how the results are reviewed. The use of the CT scan and the instructions explained in Inuktitut was a surprise to all and very comforting process. The group felt better in understanding what they could look forward to when they are due for screening.



In Week 4, a post survey form was completed, an overview from the previous week was discussed during the field trip to the Riverside Hospital and how happy the group was to have taken the tour, quit smoking posters were handed out, a reflection on goals were discussed and how the program helped our participants. A mini celebration was had with

certificates for each participant, followed by lunch and cake for all. In addition the Nunatsiaq News posted an article on the TI Smoking Cessation Program.

<https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/ottawa-inuit-work-together-to-quit-smoking/>

Successful Smoking Cessation Workshop!

