

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## NCC EXTENDS IKAJUKATIGEK MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM TO END OF MARCH 2025

**HAPPY VALLEY-GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR, May 15, 2024** – The NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) today announced funding of \$2.2 million for the continuation of the ikajuKatigek (ik/ga/you/hot/de/geek) Medical Transportation Program (MTP) to March 31, 2025.

The ikajuKatigek MTP provides much-needed financial support for NunatuKavut Inuit that have to travel to access specialized insured medical services primarily outside of the territory. Over 700 applications have been processed through the program over the past year, with many members having to utilize it multiple times.

NCC program staff have been working hard to strengthen the internal administration of the program. As a result, there have been some revisions to the [Terms and Conditions](#) and program forms. One notable change is that the maximum annual amounts accessed through the program are renewed as of April 1 each year, budget permitting.

Funding for the ikajuKatigek MTP is currently being provided through NCC's own-source revenues. Provincial and federal resources are desperately needed for program sustainability. Without government support, it will be challenging to continue the program past the end of March 2025. It is imperative that NCC gains access to funding to help deliver essential programming like the MTP and tangibly improve the health, safety and well-being of NunatuKavut Inuit.

### Quick Facts

- The MTP was first launched by NCC in January 2020 and revamped in June 2023 as the ikajuKatigek MTP.
- Translated from Inuttitut, ikajuKatigek means helping one another and is reflective of NCC's vision of governing ourselves, providing and caring for one another, our families and our communities while nurturing our relationship with our lands and waters.
- Cardiology and cancer treatment are the top two reasons for medical travel under the ikajuKatigek MTP.
- NCC is the representative governing body for Inuit who reside primarily in south and central Labrador.
- NunatuKavut means "Our Ancient Land" in Inuttitut and is the traditional territory of Inuit who belong to this territory.
- In July 2018, NCC entered into talks with the Government of Canada on the Recognition of its Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination (RIRSD). In September 2019, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed.

### Quotes

"Our Governing Council is pleased to be able to continue the ikajuKatigek Medical Transportation Program for another year. Many of our people have expressed how vital this program is and how it helps alleviate some of the financial stress when needing to travel to very critical appointments. Nakummek to all our staff for their

commitment to making this program a success. NCC will continue to work hard to push for the federal and provincial support needed to make this and other programs accessible and sustainable. We must be able to continue providing programs and services that make a meaningful difference in the lives of our people.”

— *Todd Russell, President of NCC*

“My mother and aunts, who due to their medical diagnosis, required immediate travel. This cost posed a financial burden in addition to the stress and scare associated with a negative health diagnosis. This program offered them an essential lifeline to necessary travel required for the purpose of getting diagnosed and getting better. The scope and impact of this program is more than just money, though money is helpful given the cost of travel and living. This program provides a peace of mind to many who have to worry about high travel costs in addition to their medical affliction.”

— *Recipient of the Medical Transportation Program*

## **Associated Links**

- For further information on NCC and our programs, please visit [www.nunatukavut.ca](http://www.nunatukavut.ca). Please also join in the conversation at [Facebook.com/nunatukavut](https://www.facebook.com/nunatukavut), [Twitter/X @nunatukavut](https://twitter.com/nunatukavut) and [Instagram @nunatukavutinuit](https://www.instagram.com/nunatukavutinuit).

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