

Delivering for Inuit families and building for the future

WHERE WE'VE HELPED



HOW WE'VE HELPED FROM APRIL 1 TO MARCH 31

 **100**
Total cases

 **4**
Education

 **21**
Supplies

 **7**
Therapy

 **68**
Travel and accommodation



Impact Report
2021-22

Meeting the unique needs of Inuit families

MESSAGE FROM OHSNI'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DANIELLE DORSCHNER



By almost every measure, children and youth across Canada have taken the worst of this pandemic. That's especially true for kids with complex needs and kids who need just a little extra assistance to live life to their full potential.

That's why the Inuit Child First Initiative is so critical. It helps Northern families get the health, educational, social, and medical travel support their youngest members need. We applaud the federal government's expanded commitment to the ICFI, as announced in Budget 2022. OHSNI remains a committed delivery partner in meeting the needs of Inuit children and youth.

MESSAGE FROM OHSNI'S CFI COORDINATOR DHEEKSHA REDDY



At OHSNI, we are exceedingly proud to support families' applications and we are gratified by each federal approval we receive. It is the honour of a lifetime to make each call telling a family 'yes.' Yes, we can help make a positive difference in the life of a child or youth in your care. Yes, they can get the individualized support they need. Yes, the field has been leveled for them - if only a little bit - so they have a fair shot at overcoming barriers and living a fuller, happier, healthier life. Yes, this is a dream job.

Sincere thanks to the families, advocates, and federal partners who help make it so.



Moses and Malaika's story

When you're young, being apart from friends and loved ones is stressful enough. Being out of school for weeks or months can set you back. And dealing with the possibility of losing a parent is stressful... to say the least.

That's exactly what 13-year-old Moses and 9-year-old Malaika Qanatsiaq were facing – until their mom, Lizzie, connected with OHSNI and asked for help.

"It's been an adventure, and a struggle," Lizzie says of the family's recent medical ordeals.

Her husband, Jacob, had to be transported from the family home in Hall Bay to Ontario for a heart (and possibly a lung) transplant, after years of living with COPD.

The family wasn't used to being in big cities – the noise, the distances, the costs. So, CFI supported with groceries and other necessities.

Moses and Malaika also received new laptop computers so they could keep current with their studies and stay connected with their friends.

"It's been so helpful," says Lizzie. "It's a relief for us. One less thing to worry about. After this, we're hoping for a normal life."

OHSNI was grateful to see extended funding for [Jordan's Principle](#), in which the CFI is rooted, in the most recent federal budget. [Budget 2022](#) commits an additional \$4 billion over six years via Indigenous Services Canada. Here's to supporting many more families like the Qanatsiaqs.



Social worker story Amélie Cardinal

Amélie Cardinal is always learning – and, more precisely, listening to learn, learning to understand. She is working with CHEO and OHSNI - Ottawa Health Services Network, Inc., to help families work through the barriers to accessing health care and any other challenges that risk holding them back.

"I'm coming in as an ally, as a helper, and – yes – as a learner," Amélie says. "I have learnt so much while working in this position and I continue to learn every single day. The most important teachings have come from Inuit families that I have encountered during their medical travels to Ottawa. I have learnt how resilient Inuit are and how despite all of the hardship, barriers, and grief they continuously face, there is always a reason to smile and laugh - always."

Mental health and overall well-being can mean something different to each and every one of us based on life experiences and values/beliefs that are often rooted in cultural identity. Amélie has also seen firsthand the effects of multi-generational traumas and of colonialism.

Alongside CHEO and partners like Amélie, OHSNI ensures that medical travel, especially for children, is rooted in family and making trips as short and efficient as possible.



“Setting a family up for success can make such a difference in their journey while down South - preventing/limiting trauma, creating a safe environment, having a non-judgmental and welcoming presence, encouraging families to share and practice their culture while away from home, etc. Small gestures based on cultural sensitivities, awareness and safety go a long way for these families.”



Thanks to the Child First Initiative, OHSNI and our partners are able to ensure that children are prioritized and given the care they need, whether or not they're the ones receiving medical travel.

"Ongoing efforts are being made through the CHEO-OHSNI partnership that I believe have and will continue to make a huge difference in educating the staff and providing opportunities for everyone to learn more about Inuit and create a more welcoming and safer place for Inuit on medical travel for CHEO services."