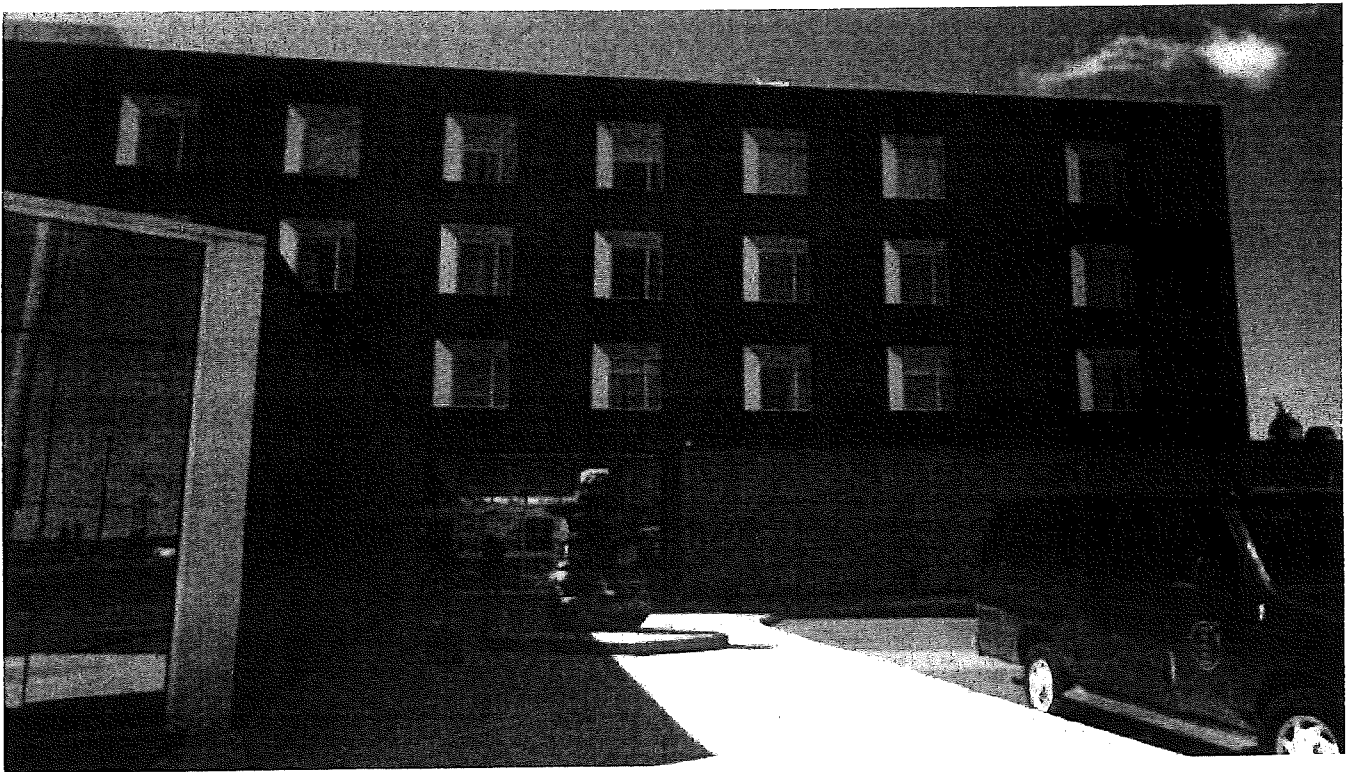




Montreal boarding home for Nunavik medical patients over capacity since opening

Ullivik director says load is not sustainable, would like to see hospital built in Nunavik

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The Ullivik boarding home is a 91-room, 143-bed facility for medical patients from the Nunavik region of Northern Quebec. The home has been over capacity since the day it opened. (Submitted by Maggie Putulik)

The Ullivik boarding home in the Montreal suburb of Dorval, has been over capacity since it opened last December.

Ullivik, which means 'a place to stay or wait,' houses medical patients from Nunavik travelling to Montreal for treatment. It held its official ribbon-cutting last month.

Maggie Putulik, Ullivik's director, said on the first day the facility opened they had to rent 11 hotel rooms because all 91 rooms at the boarding home were full.

Ullivik has 143 beds but needs to accommodate about 200 people on any given day. The centre uses sofa beds and rents between 20 to 25 hotel rooms to meet the extra demand, Putulik said.

"The centre is already too small and that's because the number of patients and escorts coming down to Montreal is increasing annually," she said.

Ullivik had 7,000 visits last year, with people staying between a temporary facility at a downtown YMCA and the new boarding home. Putulik expects the centre will manage between 800 and 1,000 more visits this year. Not all of those are unique visitors, some could be patients returning for follow-up appointments, but she said the trend is not sustainable.

To combat the overcrowding, she would like to see a hospital built in Nunavik.



Maggie Putulik has been with the boarding home since 2014. She thinks Nunavik needs its own hospital. (Submitted by Maggie Putulik)

"The idea of having a regional hospital in Nunavik is a must — it's a necessity — because unless certain specialities are repatriated back to Nunavik in a regional hospital, the number of our clients arriving will only be increasing."

Nonetheless, she says she feels much more comfortable and safe in the brand new facility.

After the previous boarding home, Nunavik House, closed in 2011, patients had been housed downtown at the YMCA. The new, custom-built centre offers patients an arts and craft room, puzzle room, and a country-food dining area in a welcoming neighbourhood.

With files from Qavavao Peter

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Exhibit: *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*

Location/Phase: Part 11: Calgary

Witness: Panel 11

Submitted by: Elizabeth Zarpa, ITK

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