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# **Public Health Association of British Columbia**

## **2008 – 2009 Annual Report**

**Presented at the Annual General Meeting  
November 24, 2009  
Plaza 500 Hotel, Vancouver**



## Public Health Association of British Columbia

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The Public Health Association of British Columbia (PHABC) is a voluntary, non-profit, non-governmental organization whose mandate is to reflect the public's needs and interests in the promotion of public health and disease prevention; to put public health on the government and public agendas; and to advocate for the development of healthful public policy.

PHABC helps to promote and protect the public's health by actively working to:

- Encourage the development and implementation of healthful public policy;
- Facilitate the sharing of health and related information;
- Encourage research into the broad issues that affect the public's health;
- Co-operate regionally, nationally and internationally with other organizations to promote the public's health;
- Encourage governments to provide sufficient resources for disease prevention and the promotion and protection of the public's health;
- Advance opportunities for professional development.

The Association encourages membership from individuals, both professional and voluntary, who have an interest in the public's health. PHABC currently has over 130 members in all regions of the province. The membership includes: community development workers, public health nurses, health care administrators, medical officers of health, health system analysts, environmental health officers, researchers and others. Membership in PHABC offers individuals the opportunity to have a voice with government and other federal and provincial organizations to collectively work towards public health issues.

PHABC is a provincial affiliate of the Canadian Public Health Association. A registered non-profit society for almost 30 years, PHABC is run by a voluntary Board of Directors. Work is done by the Association through voluntary representation in various communities in BC, and through contracts with the public or private sectors.

**For more information, you are welcome to visit our website at [www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org),  
Or contact PHABC electronically at: [staff@phabc.org](mailto:staff@phabc.org)  
Or send your request to the address below.**

## President's Message

My first term as President has certainly been rewarding and I am looking forward to taking on a second term. The highlight for me over the last year has been the way the Board has strengthened its committee structure to focus on its revised strategic priorities. The Board has empowered its committees to take on the work of the Association and focused Board time on policy direction and oversight. The success of this has a lot to do with the quality of the Board Committee chairs who report to the Board at each meeting and volunteer significant time between meetings to lead the work of the Association. It is well worth the time to read their updates in this Annual Report.

Another notable feature of the Board work this past year has been the efforts to strengthen PHABC partnerships especially in the priority areas of the Strategic Plan. Again I want to acknowledge the work of Board members who volunteer their time to participate with partner organizations and make a contribution to fulfill our mutual goals. PHABC is fortunate to be in a position where we have been able to provide some financial support and resources in a couple of key areas such as the work of the BC Healthy Living Alliance and the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition. A list of some of our Committees is included in the Appendix.

The revised PHABC strategy map is presented in the Appendix. For those who are familiar with the previous plan, you can see that we have clearly evolved our key directions and the activities that will take us forward. Two important areas are advocacy and capacity building. Notably, we have increased the membership on these committees. Through the Committee work we have made significant contributions provincially. The pre-election candidates forum and our series of regional workshops were new initiatives over the past year that deserve particular mention. The effort to stage our Annual Conference is huge but is one of the highlights of capacity development for the public health community - especially given that other organizations are finding they do not always have the resources to maintain some of their basic educational efforts.

Within our strategic plan, we have better integrated our project and research activities in some key content areas with a focus on demonstrating innovation in health promotion. We have successfully added some new projects and continue to deliver the larger, multi-year projects on time and on budget. A quick summary of some of our projects is included in this Annual Report. I was especially pleased to make opening remarks at the provincial Farm to School Gathering that is part of the Farm to School Salad Bar project and see the excitement over the implementation of salad bars in over 16 schools and to hear about the learning gained from these pilot locations. Congratulations to Joanne Bays who has successfully mentored that project. It is also exciting to see the progress of the core competency project designed to identify and develop the competency requirements that support the implementation of core public health programs in BC. We have a better understanding of the competencies required in areas such as leadership, community capacity building and health assessment. The project is now moving on to develop tools and resources to support the public health workforce in these areas.

We approved a new set of bylaws at last years Annual Meeting and the Board's Governance Committee has developed the policies and rules under these bylaws. Our new Board is selected using these new policies.

Our website continues to grow in scope and utility for a broad range of audiences with some special sub-sites now operational within it. A new strategic priority for the Association is to communicate with the public. Our website will become an important tool in that work. I am always amazed at the "hits" on our website. We have gone from 81,000 page views a month to around 200,000 per month over the last two years.

In the coming year, we will continue to pursue our strategic directions. While we have been successful, there is still a great deal we want to do. We have secured new funding and new projects but more needs to be done to build a sustainable financial model. We have positioned the website as a "go-to" place for public health but need to improve our "push" communications with members and the public health community at large. And we have developed new tools and resources for the membership of PHABC but we must reach out to encourage greater use and engagement of the members in their naturally forming communities of practice.

I want to make special mention of the great work and dedication of Katherine Whitworth who has been for a number of years the office manager and for many of you the voice on the phone at PHABC. She supported the Board and its Committees and was always walking the extra mile to ensure the success of PHABC. She served as our corporate memory and was a key to the success of many of our projects. Katherine has decided to slow down her busy life a bit and has left her role with the Association. She is a great friend of public health and we will miss her.

For next year and beyond, the most important challenge will be working with our partners to ensure public health is positioned for the 21st century. That exciting vision is as important as it was after the SARS crisis. But is public health maintaining the momentum it has had over the last three or four years? And can we sustain it with many of our current public health leaders nearing retirement? PHABC has raised with our government partners the importance of public health renewal and the need for a strategic plan for public health for the next 10 years. Whatever the decision in that regard, PHABC is clearly already helping to define public health for the 21st century.

Ted Bruce  
President

## **Finance Committee**

Over the course of the year, we have been without a Treasurer but our in house personnel and external accountant have been a terrific resource for the Committee. Our main accomplishments this year have been to arrange for a full external financial audit. Although this is not a requirement of the Society's Act, the growth of the Association and significant cash flows warranted this more careful financial oversight. The Committee also focused on the development of a two year budget and sustainability plan and is confident that the Association has sound financial plan for the next two years. A review was carried out of selected financial policies and some improvements were made in the banking policies to ensure the Association maximizes its investment income. Over the year, monthly regular Board reporting on all PHABC accounts has been improved. The Committee also initiated a search to recruit a new Treasurer and is pleased that Mr. David Proctor will be coming on to the Board in that capacity.

Ted Bruce  
President

## **Governance Committee**

The Governance Committee is please to report that the By-laws passed by the Membership at the AGM in 2008 were registered with the BC Registrar of Companies in February 2010. Since that time the Board of Directors has been operating under these By-laws. The Committee prepared Nominations and Election Standards to complement Part 5.0 of the By-laws. These Standards were approved by the Board of Directors in September 2009, and were used to conduct the 2009 Nominations and Elections.

The Call for Nomination for the following position was issued the first week of September and closed on Sept 28, 2009.

The Positions were: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and five Directors-at- Large positions. Eleven applications were received. Three applications were incomplete, and thus were not considered; one applicant withdrew. Thus the results are:

President - Ted Bruce – acclaimed – 2nd Term

Secretary - Irv Rootman – acclaimed

Vice – President Position – no applicant. The By-laws provide the Board with options about how it can proceed to fill this position. Section 5.3(b) of the By-laws states how the Board may proceed to fill the position.

- Current Vice-President (Irv Rootman) to continue in this position until the vacant Vice President position is filled.
  - Issue a Call for Nominations and schedule an election for this position.
- Or
- Appoint a member to the position.

If appointing a member to the position is the Board's choice then Section 3.14-3.15 of the By-laws enables a Director-at-Large to be appointed by the Board to this position for a period of one year. At the end of the year the position goes up for Election. The Director-at-Large appointed as Vice President is eligible to run for the position.

The 2010-2011 Board will be asked to consider these options.

The following five Directors-at -Large are acclaimed; two are returning for a second 2 year term and three are new members to the Board.

Darryl Quantz – 2nd term

Patrician O'Hagan– 2nd term

Dr. Brian O'Connor – new

Marilyn Ota – new

Margaret Anotolovich – new

Congratulations to all those returning and new Board members.

In closing, I would like to thank Elaine Berthelet and Susan Yeats for their work on the Governance Committee.

This concludes the report of the Governance Committee.

Sandra McKenzie  
Chair  
Governance Committee

## **Capacity Building Committee**

Several new members joined the Capacity-Building Committee in 2009. The Current members are: Paola Ardiles; Marlene Barber; Ted Bruce; Michelle Burtnyk; Simon Carroll; Steve Corber; Dee Duncan; Louis Giguere; Gen Grigg; Theresa Hermary; Kim Jensen; Svetlana Kishchenko; Paulette Lacroix; Katrina Ludwig; Marit Main; Denise McKay; Warren Michelow; Marina Niks; Patricia O'Hagan; Marilyn Ota; Irv Rootman; Breann Specht; and Kelly White. Irv Rootman and Marina Niks agreed to Co-chair the Committee.

The Committee reviewed its Terms of Reference and Strategic Plan and agreed that its operational work should be done through sub-committees and that its main role should be to oversee the work of these committees and that it should focus on medium- to long-term planning related to Capacity Building.

To these ends, the Committee established a sub-committee to plan the 2009 Conference as well as one to plan the December 2009 and May 2009 Workshops and heard reports from these committees at its meetings. Workshop presentations are on the PHABC website. The Conference will occur on November 23 and 24 and will include a community event on the first evening. Additional information is on the PHABC website.

In addition to overseeing the sub-committees, the Committee reviewed existing and proposed capacity-building work of the Association including the Core Competencies Project, and proposals for workshops on Evaluation in Public Health and on Training for International Practitioners.

Any member who is interested is welcome to join the Capacity-Building Committee or to suggest ideas and opportunities related to building capacity for public health in British Columbia. If you wish to do so, contact Irv Rootman [irootman@telus.net] or Marina Niks [Niksm@douglas.bc.ca].

Many thanks to the members of the Capacity-Building Committee and it's subcommittees, all of whom made a significant contribution to the building the capacity of public health in B.C. this year.

Irv Rootman and Marina Niks  
Co-Chairs, PHABC Capacity-Building Committee



## **Policy, Advocacy and Communications Committee**

This last year has been full of exciting opportunities for the Policy, Advocacy and Research Committee. The Committee was developed with the goal of increasing the voice of PHABC on public and population health issues. Indeed, our engagement of the full PHABC membership is our ultimate goal and we will continue to facilitate advocacy efforts on behalf of our members.

As a Committee, one of our primary areas of activity has been the implementation of the inequities resolution. The Committee is supporting the call for a poverty reduction plan and participated in a number of partnership media efforts with the message that poverty reduction is a key strategy for improving the health of British Columbians. In addition, the Committee also supported one of our partners, First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, in their annual media and public release of the Child Poverty Report Card.

The Committee continues to support and advocate for the development of population health promotion capacity. Committee members were successful in publishing letters to the editor on this issue and endorsed a paper on policies to reduce the impact of alcohol. The latter resulted in the development of a resolution on the issue.

The Committee was also very active during this year's provincial election. The Committee was pleased to work in partnership with the BC Healthy Living Alliance to host an all candidates forum with participation from the NDP, Liberals and Green Party. This was an excellent opportunity to engage candidates in discussions on prevention activities, health inequities and early child development. The Committee also developed election materials for PHABC membership to build their awareness of public and population health issues.

In the year ahead, the Committee looks forward to increasing the profile of the Association and strengthening our advocacy voice.

Darryl Quantz and Debbie Leach  
Co-Chairs

# Report from the Membership Committee

## Membership Committee Members

- Barbara Crocker (co-chair)
- Maureen Rowlands (co-chair)
- Michael Barnes
- Julie Kerr
- Judith Krajnak
- Patricia O'Hagan
- Katherine Whitworth

## Purpose

To develop and maintain PHABC's membership recruitment strategy

## Update on membership

The total number of members of the association has remained stable from 2008 to 2009.

- November 2009 – 449 total members
  - Individual and conjoint – 258
  - Online communities/other - 191
- October 2008 – 445 total members

## Activities of the Committee for 2009

In 2009 the Membership committee reviewed the On-Line Communities of Practice Members and their usage of the PHABC web-based tool. As well, the Committee prepared and presented a summary report from this project and a listing of member benefits for discussion at the June 2009 Board meeting.

## Web Supports for Members 2009 Hits to website Statistics

The website is the major vehicle for member supports. Summary of increased usage of website during 2009:

- In 2008 the PHABC website averaged 81,168 page views per month.
- In 2009, the PHABC website is averaging 180,393 page views per month.
- This year PHABC set a new record with 300,000 page views in October.

Barbara Crocker and Maureen Rowlands  
Co-Chairs

## ***PHABC Project Updates***

### **Core and Technical Competencies for Public Health in BC**

The Core and Technical Competencies for Public Health in BC will contribute to ensuring that the public health workforce has the right mix of people equipped with the right mix of competencies, in the right place and at the right time for the effective and efficient delivery of public health in BC. The project is a partnership between the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC), the BC Academic Health Council, the BC Ministry of Healthy living and Sport, and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). PHABC is managing the project, with funding from the PHAC and the BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport.

In fiscal 2008/09 the project identified the core and technical competencies most critical to implementing the BC Ministry of Health [Framework for Core Functions in Public Health](#) and identified competency profile gaps.

In fiscal 2009/10 the project will implement processes to meet the competency profile gaps identified in the needs assessment, recommend appropriate education response, identify the education/training opportunities that facilitate the development of competencies throughout the BC public health sector, and develop tools for education and workforce planning.

### **Healthy Foods Initiative: Farm to School Project**

PHABC's Farm to School program funded through the BC Healthy Living Alliance aims to prevent childhood obesity through improved local food security. This means increasing access to fresh, locally-grown, nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate foods in a sample of BC schools. Sixteen schools are operational and more than 3,000 school aged children residing in communities from Fernie to Fort St. John will have the opportunity to access fresh local fruits and vegetables on school premises.

PHABC is developing A New Crunch in School Lunch: The BC Farm To School Salad Bar Guide. The resource will be available on the PHABC website some time in the next few weeks. We are also exploring the possibility of conducting regional workshops to disseminate the guide and planning a fall conference to acknowledge and celebrate successes, to share learning's, and to inspire the support and development of additional programs.

For more information please visit the farm to school website at [www.phabc.org/farmentoschool](http://www.phabc.org/farmentoschool).

### **Food Security Gateway**

On October 16, World Food Day, the Public Health Association and the Provincial Health Services Authority launched the [Food Security Gateway](#). The Gateway is a web portal that will connect you to BC initiatives and important resources that can help to create **healthy eating environments** and **food secure communities in BC**. It is

meant to be a resource for public policy makers, food industry leaders, civil society organizations and interested citizens in BC. The Population and Public Health program at the Provincial Health Services Authority, through its role in the Food Security Public Health Core Program, is working with the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, the five Regional Health Authorities and other key partners to address systemic issues that can make healthy food the easy option. The PHABC website is a consolidated network tool for Public Health partners, practitioners, and interested citizens. The food security gateway represents the expansion of this vision and strengthens the association's commitment and activities aimed at food security and reducing health inequities.

To learn more about PHABC and our projects please visit [www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org).