



Call for Abstracts - Please submit by Thursday September 1, 2011

2011 Public Health Association of British Columbia Conference

Public Health Association of British Columbia
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“The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion: Critical Engagement from a Health Equity Perspective”

November 28 & 29 (Monday, Tuesday), 2011
8:30AM – 5:00PM

Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre
7311 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC V6X 1A3

The Public Health Association of British Columbia is planning a conference to explore the role of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion in reducing health inequities. This two-day event will challenge participants to look beyond the now abundant evidence that widespread inequities in health exist in British Columbia (and elsewhere), to new and innovative forms of action aimed at reducing these inequities.

As the foundation document for health promotion, the Ottawa Charter can offer a potential framework for developing more concrete strategies for reducing health inequities. While the Charter itself aspired to address this issue from the very beginning, with hindsight we can now critically address a series of key questions:

- Has the Charter succeeded in helping to address health inequities and if so, how?
- What is the future potential for the Charter’s principles, strategies and action areas to tackle these inequities?
- What new elements need to be considered in order to improve upon the Charter’s foundation?
- How do the new emphases on the social determinants of health and globalization, fit with the Charter’s framework?

The conference will explicitly structure its program around the notion of ‘critical engagement’ with the Ottawa Charter, giving conference attendees a real opportunity to develop a collective assessment of the past, present and future of the Charter and its role in pushing forward a progressive agenda for the new public health.

We encourage researchers, practitioners, students, policy-makers, and community members to participate in this conference and to submit abstracts that are congruent with the conference theme and that reflect collective, collaborative efforts to address health inequities.

Additional Context

The Ministry of Health's Service Plan recognizes the need for action to reduce the gap between the health of our Aboriginal populations and the average British Columbian. This is an important first step. However, recent evidence, such as that contained in the Health Officers Council of BC Discussion Paper, 'Health Inequities in British Columbia' shows that in BC, as in other jurisdictions, "health tends to be unevenly distributed among social groups within the population on a gradient corresponding to socioeconomic status". This means that the inequities suffered by Aboriginal peoples are only the most visible and extreme aspect of health inequity in BC. More hidden is the deeply entrenched gradient in health as we move along the socio-economic ladder. Nevertheless, this entrenchment is largely due to remediable social determinants of health, and thus constitutes 'inequity' rather than simply an 'inequality' or 'disparity'.

Unfortunately, these inequities are only theoretically remediable; to actually have positive change, we need effective public health action strategies to help address the underlying determinants of health inequity. Using the Ottawa Charter as a backdrop, we will investigate new approaches, collaborations and partnerships aimed at action towards reducing health inequities.

Conference Format

- Plenary sessions to stimulate thinking about the conference theme
- Communities of Practice workshops to build skills and strategies
- Oral presentations to present findings related to the conference theme and sub-themes
- Poster presentations to present findings related to the conference theme and sub-themes
- Facilitated World Café discussions to stimulate reflection and feedback related to the conference theme and sub-themes
- Annual meeting of the Public Health Association of BC
- Community event

Based on the restricted opportunities for oral presentations, we strongly encourage applicants to consider structuring their proposals, particularly if they are practice-based research, around the poster format or the World Café discussion format. The conference will provide opportunities for 'rapid-fire' poster presentations, where selected posters are highlighted and presenters will have a short opportunity to introduce their poster to an audience. In addition, there will be organized poster 'walk-about', designed to structure maximum interaction with the presenters and their work.

As a part of the PHABC Conference, a World Café session has been proposed to allow for the facilitation of in-depth discussion in relation to reducing health inequities and the key action areas of the Ottawa Charter. The World Café session has been scheduled for 1.5 hours on November the 29th. 10 tables will be set up with a maximum of 15

participants per table. Participants will spend 30 minutes per table and will be able to rotate through three tables total during the session.

By submitting an abstract for this World Café session, please indicate how you would lead a 30-minute in-depth discussion – what your key question, theme or issue would be – and how you would engage a small number of participants and build upon shared ideas with each table rotation. It is suggested that approximately 5-10 minutes be spent setting the stage for discussion with the remaining time for participant interaction and feedback.

World Café sessions can be used as a means of helping with brainstorming, exploratory or evaluative processes. It would be excellent to have a variety of research, theory, programs and practice represented in the Cafe from a local, national and global perspective.

Abstract Submission Requirements

Please specify in your abstract submission what presentation format(s) you are applying for (you can apply to more than one format):

- Oral presentation (15 minutes + question and answer)
- Poster presentation
- World Café facilitated discussion

The conference organizers request that you submit your abstracts to fit under the five action areas of the Ottawa Charter:

- a. Building healthy public policy
- b. Creating supportive environments
- c. Strengthening community action
- d. Developing personal skills
- e. Reorienting health systems

In addition, please consider how your submission may align with other significant elements of the Charter:

Values and Principles:

- Participation
- Empowerment
- Equity

Prerequisites for Health:

- Peace
- Shelter
- Education
- Food
- Income
- A stable eco-system
- Sustainable resources
- Social justice, and equity

Strategies:

- Advocate
- Enable
- Mediate

Evaluation Criteria

Due to limited space and the need for the most relevant and highest quality program, the Conference Program Committee (CPC) has outlined several criteria by which the quality and relevance of abstracts submitted will be judged.

1) **Action:** We are aware of the tendency of the public health community to slip back into a 'description' of health inequities, even when intending to address the need for action. Abstracts that not only emphasize, but also outline how they have, or intend to address the concept of 'action' on health inequities will be judged as more relevant.

2) **Innovation:** The challenge of addressing health inequities requires innovation and inventiveness. While the CPC will consider familiar interventions and approaches, it encourages new ideas and modes of action be presented in order to foster debate and dialogue about the most promising ways forward.

3) **Partnerships, Collaboration and Inter-sectorality:** While these three concepts are not synonymous, they share a common thread that emphasizes participation and inclusiveness. We are particularly interested in novel and successful attempts to involve consumers, community members, multiple sectors, multiple levels of government, community-university partnerships and other forms of collaboration aimed at addressing health inequity.

4) **Assets and Strengths:** The CPC encourages submission of abstracts related to a variety of public health approaches to addressing health inequities; however, it is particularly interested in approaches that explicitly focus on reservoirs of strength and resilience, even in the most disadvantaged communities, as 'assets' for health. This is particularly the case for our Aboriginal communities who often feel they have been 'pathologized' by public health research and wish us to focus more on how deeply embedded cultural and spiritual capacities are resources for improving health and reducing health inequity.

GUIDELINES: Limit of 250 words. Again, please indicate whether you are applying to lead a world café discussion, an oral presentation or a poster presentation.

ABSTRACT DEADLINE: Thursday September 1, 2011.

Please email submissions online to staff@phabc.org.

Please write **your name + PHABC Conference Abstract Submission** in the subject line.

Thank you very much for your interest in the 2011 PHABC Conference.