



# PHABC NEWSLETTER

September 2010

## PHABC.org BC's public health portal?

The PHABC website continues to grow in popularity including hosting important sub-sites for other organizations. PHABC wishes to thank its partners, members and visitors for helping us set a new record for page views in a single month this July with over 340,000 page views. For more information please visit [www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org)

### PHABC Advocates for Healthy Public Policy

The association has written three letters advocating for its members on three important public policy issues. The first is a request to Minister Lawrence Cannon to express concern regarding the revelation that the chair of the board of Canada's International Development Research Agency (IDRC) was a tobacco executive until recently. "The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control prohibits direct funding or involvement from the tobacco industry in research, or any other development activities; its guiding principles call for protection of government policy-making from tobacco industry influence." The board supports the position put forth by the Canadian Medical Association Journal and the Canadian Public Health Association calling for the resignation of Barbra McDougal.

Second, the association sent a letter to Minister Tony Clement regarding our concern about the plans to discontinue the long form Census questionnaire (2b) and to replace it with a voluntary National Household Survey (NHS). As the health care system is increasingly challenged by a surging demand that exceeds the growth in resources, the need for accurate data to support planning is acute. The ability to effectively and efficiently plan health services will be irreparably diminished by replacing the mandatory census with a voluntary survey.

The President of PHABC also wrote to the Minister of Health Services

requesting a meeting to discuss concerns that health authorities have been asked to re-direct 10% of their public health budgets to new priorities. The letter stressed that public health is already underfunded and redirection of funds may advance one area of public health but at the expense of another critical core function. PHABC has advocated for several years for government to increase public health funding significantly as was called for by the government's own Standing Committee on Health. PHABC was pleased to see that distinguished PHABC member Dr. John Blatherwick articulated similar views in an opinion piece published in the Vancouver Sun: <http://www.vancouversun.com/business/Health+care+cuts+count+productive/3164129/story.html>

### PHABC Joins Forces with Medical Community to Debunk Common Myths and Urges BC Government to Act on Pesticides

PHABC is pleased to partner with seven other BC medical and health organizations calling on the provincial government to enact province-wide legislation banning the sale and use of cosmetic pesticides. "Reducing pesticides in the environment is a prudent cautionary action, particularly when good alternative approaches to cosmetic pesticides are available," says Dr. Paul Hasselback, Public Health Physician, PHABC. "Numerous Canadian communities have already successfully reduced pesticide use; it is something the majority

of Canadians support and most Canadians are very concerned about the health effects of pesticides.” [http://www.cancer.ca/British%20Columbia-Yukon/About%20us/Media%20centre/BC-Media%20releases/Medical%20Community%20Debunks%20Common%20Myths%20and%20Urges%20BC%20Government%20to%20Act%20on%20Pesticides.aspx?sc\\_lang=en](http://www.cancer.ca/British%20Columbia-Yukon/About%20us/Media%20centre/BC-Media%20releases/Medical%20Community%20Debunks%20Common%20Myths%20and%20Urges%20BC%20Government%20to%20Act%20on%20Pesticides.aspx?sc_lang=en)

### **PHABC Summer School in Public Health a Big Hit**

On July 26 and 27 a pilot Public Health Summer School organized by PHABC in partnership with University-based Schools and Programs in Public Health, Health Authorities and others was held with about 70 participants in four sites connected by video-conference technology. The Topic was “Supporting Community Change from a Population Health Promotion Perspective” chosen on the basis of a survey of members of the Association. A case study approach was used with two cases presented and analyzed by participants (“The Positive Action Towards Health Project” presented by Neena Chappell from The University of Victoria and “The Community Capacity Building Program with the BC Healthy Living Alliance” presented by Rose Soneff from Interior Health and Cathy Adair from the Canadian Cancer Society – BC and Yukon).

In addition, three Tool boxes were held. The first on “Evaluation Tools” was presented by Chris Lovato from UBC, the second on “Framing Population Health Promotion for Decisions Makers” by Dan Reist from CAR-BC and the third on “Engaging Communities and Organizations” by Greg Halseth from UBC, Julie Kerr from Northern Health and Jami Brown from Fraser Health. A session on “Theory & Practice: Population Health Promotion & Community Capacity Building” introduced the Summer School with presentations by Jim Frankish (UBC), Nancy Hall (Consultant and SFU) and Michael Hayes (recently at SFU and now at UVic).

To date, the feedback has been extremely positive. A systematic evaluation is currently underway which will be reported on the PHABC website along with presentations from the Summer School. Based on the findings of the evaluation, the Association

will decide whether or not to organize another Summer School in 2011 and perhaps annually.

### **Health Literacy Think Tank**

On June 25 and 26, PHABC organized a “Think Tank” on Health Literacy (HL) for the Chronic Disease Prevention and Control (CCDPC) Centre of the Public Health Agency of Canada. Eight Experts on Health Literacy from across Canada, two graduate students three representatives from PHAC and the Executive Director of PHABC participated. The objectives were to provide advice on: (1) the CCDPC Framework for HL; (2) Conceptual Models for HL; (3) the role of HL in relation to chronic disease; and (4) the CCDPC Health Literacy plan. Presentations were made on the CCDPC Framework and Plan, on Conceptual Models and on a CPHA report on the Impact of Low Health Literacy on Chronic Disease Prevention and Control. Based on the discussions, a report was produced for CCDPC which is currently under review.

### **Workshop: Prosperity and Health a New Agenda to Reduce Health Inequities**

On June 30th, 2010 the PHABC held a workshop focusing on the social determinants of health using a regional video conference format.





### **Health Promotion forum: Eating disorders, obesity prevention and beyond**

Presentation by Dr. Gail McVey, PhD, CPsych. Oct 22, 2010. For more information:

[http://www.phabc.org/userfiles/file/GailMcVey\\_poster.pdf](http://www.phabc.org/userfiles/file/GailMcVey_poster.pdf)

### **PHABC 2010 Board of Directors Nominations and Elections**

The Call for Nominations opened on September 8<sup>th</sup> and closed on Sept 22, 2010. A member of the Governance Committee of the Board of Directors will contact each candidate to answer any questions. A slate of candidates will be prepared and the Election process will commence on October 6<sup>th</sup> and close on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 if required.

The results of the election will be announced at the Annual General Meeting in November, 2010 and posted on the website following the meeting.

For more information please contact [staff@phabc.org](mailto:staff@phabc.org).

The sites included Cranbrook, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nelson, Prince George and Victoria. Around 120 people across the province participated in the event, representing a broad group of people.

### **PHABC Continues Its Leadership in Public Health Renewal**

PHABC strategic plan sets out a role for PHABC to provide leadership and innovation in workforce development as well as new approaches to population health promotion programming. Over the past several years PHABC has worked with its partners to undertake significant projects in these areas. With continued funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, PHABC will move to the next phase of its Core Competency project. In this next phase, PHABC will further assess the competency requirements of public health staff in health authorities and develop tools to help them meet these competencies similar to the 2010 PHABC Summer School. For more information on these projects visit [www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org).

### **PHABC-Centenary Webinars**

As part of CPHA Centenary celebration PHABC has organized a series of webinars with the leaders from the past. The next session is on September 30, 2010 with Dr. John Blatherwick's presentation: "Public health in B.C. (from 1970 to 1990) what are the challenges for the future?" Presentation will be available on-line for future reference.

The third webinar will be on November 18, 2010 with Frank White with a presentation titled: "International and Global Public Health – Who reaps the benefits?" Stay tuned for more details at [www.phabc.org](http://www.phabc.org)