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# **Public Health Association of BC**

**2017 – 2018 Annual Report**

**Presented at the Annual General Meeting  
November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
Sutton Place Hotel, Vancouver, BC**



## President's Report

I am truly honored to have had the opportunity to work with such dedicated staff, volunteers, board members and our working committees. One of the biggest strengths of the association is the dedication and expertise of our members. Thanks to their terrific contributions, we have made important strides moving forward and expect great things for the year ahead. I've highlighted some of the accomplishments and plans below and invite you to read the full report to find out more.

This year the PHABC Summer School focused on "The Public Health Approach: Building Safe and Inclusive Communities". Our Capacity Building Committee worked tirelessly to develop the program and deliver it with the aid of our coordinators and staff. The topic areas were diverse with strong attendee involvement linked in from the Okanagan, Prince George, Victoria, and Lower mainland. This year was the first time that another province participated in the Summer School with a number of Public Health professionals linked-in through video conferencing from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Their participation was invaluable.

In terms of school health, PHABC has received multi-year funding by MOH to administer the Farm to School program. This initiative assists school-aged children in BC to learn about growing, procuring and consuming healthy and nutritious local foods. Another program supported by PHABC is Kids Boost Immunity (KBI), a free, online program being used in schools across Canada with over 30 lessons in science and social studies. KBI is being very well-received by teachers and students alike for its engaging "game" format and opportunity for students to earn vaccines for children in support of UNICEF. Since March, over 340K questions have been answered and over 18K vaccines earned. We are proud of what our KBI team has accomplished provincially, nationally, and internationally with this school-based vaccine awareness initiative.

PHABC has a number of key partners and allies. I would like to acknowledge the BC Health Literacy Network and the Health Promotion BC network, both of whom are receiving administrative support from us, and hosting on the PHABC website. Our newest partner is the BC Population Health Network – PHABC will serve as the secretariat to this group. Bridge for Health, is a partner in a number of activities including public event and conference planning and is also a member of Prevention of Violence Canada – a coalition PHABC is a founding partner in. The Poverty Reduction Coalition is a key partner with their work towards significantly reducing poverty and homelessness, and in concert with their work is First Call an advocacy group for child health in BC. I would be remiss if I didn't mention Farm to Cafeteria Canada with whom we share a national grant and SPARC BC an administrative partner for that grant. Another of our key allies is the BC Alliance for Healthy Living Society, and our Executive Director is the current chair of that proactive group of agencies seeking to improve population health. We are also members of the World Health Organization Vaccine Safety Network as a result of our work with Immunize BC and I boost and Kids Boost Immunity. Our Executive Director is part of the global advisory committee for the Vaccine Safety Network. We also participate actively in the World Health Organization Violence Prevention Alliance and several of our colleagues from this coalition are joining us at our conference this year. The list goes on but it is clear that we work collaboratively for our mission and goals and we welcome the strength that comes with working in concert with like-minded individuals and agencies.

As with every year, we are faced with mixed emotions as we say farewell to our board members finishing



their terms and also welcome some new faces full of new ideas. This year we bid farewell to Maureen Rowan, Brian O'Connor, Brittany Bingham, Simon Carroll, and Veronica Fynn-Bruey, all of whom have been instrumental in the development of our conferences, advocacy efforts, communications, and public engagement initiatives over the last few years. It is remarkable to look back and acknowledge that all of this work is done on a volunteer basis. Thank you on behalf of PHABC for sharing your knowledge and passion with us throughout the years. We are a stronger and wiser association because of you. I conclude by congratulating our newly elected board members: Chris Van Veen, Theresa Healy, Lara Frederick. These members will bring a wealth of experience and diverse perspectives that can support PHABC to become an example of a vibrant, member-driven, sustainable organization in the future.

We've accomplished a significant amount this year and our plans for next year are even bolder. We have a creative and dynamic team in PHABC with Shannon Turner as our Executive Director. We remain committed to strengthening the impact of people who are active in public health in BC and achieving our mission of promoting health, wellbeing and equity for all British Columbians through leadership in public health. Reaching this requires a community or support and we hope we can count on your involvement so that we can continue to make a difference.

With sincere gratitude,

Gord Miller  


President, PHABC



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## Governance Committee Report

The Governance Committee has had another productive year. The Committee started this year with developing a 12-month action plan to address some of the most pressing governance issues for PHABC. As a blended policy and working board, the Board of Directors at PHABC needed some intentional efforts to prioritize the governance discussion at our meetings. Working with our President, we modified the agenda for board meetings to ensure that governance discussions are prioritized. In addition, we also conducted a review of the Board Committees to better define their function, ensure up-to-date terms of reference, and provide clarity in their accountability either to the Board or the Executive Director. This effort has provided board members with better guidance to determine whether they are engaged in a governing or an operational function at any given time. Initial efforts were taken to identify how best to support incoming board members, including a renewal of the orientation binder. Our Constitution and By-Laws were updated to ensure compliance with the BC Government New Societies Act and Transition, 2016. The Governance Committee also worked with PHABC's President and Executive Director to in a review of our strategic plan for the organization. The revised plan offers a more accurate reflection of the organizational activities and our desired direction. Finally, the Governance Committee reviewed the five nominations received for the Director-at-Large positions in the Board. All candidates were acclaimed.

Sincerely,

Juan Gabriel Solorzano and Veronica Fynn Bruey  
Co- Chairs

## Finance Committee Report

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2018, PHABC has experienced a notable increase in revenues and associated growth in program delivery, as well as an improvement in the diversity of revenue sources. Despite new investments in intangible assets and improved infrastructure, PHABC has experienced another healthy increase in net assets and continues to hold a comfortable operating reserve. Overall, PHABC continues to be a fiscally healthy and vibrant society.

Sincerely,

Roger Wheeler, MSc, MBA, CPHR  
Treasurer

## Capacity Building Committee Report

The purpose of the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC) Capacity Building Committee (CBC) is to foster innovation and excellence across the spectrum of public health practice and build workforce capacity by developing, operationalizing and maintaining PHABC's goals related to capacity building as outlined in the PHABC Strategic Plan.

To achieve these goals in 2017/2018, the CBC focused attention on four initiatives and established sub-committees for each:

1. The 2017 PHABC Annual Conference
2. The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual 2018 Public Health Summer School
3. The 2018 PHABC Annual Conference
4. The establishment of the Marjorie MacDonald Scholarship

### **2017 PHABC Annual Conference:**

The 2017 Public Health Association of BC (PHABC) Conference was hosted at the Sutton Place Hotel in Vancouver, BC on November 16th and 17th. The focus of the conference was "Facing a Changing World: Transformative Leadership & Practice". Using evidence-based methods and case studies, the applications and effectiveness of transformative leadership and practice were explored across four diverse public health topics: Child & Youth Health, Immigrant & Refugee Health, Indigenous Health, and Planetary Health - Healthy Built Environments. A total of 129 participants were in attendance, inclusive of paying registrants, invited speakers, volunteers and PHABC board members. The goal of the conference was to create a forum for deliberative dialogue and respectful exchange of ideas related to transformative leadership and practice as well as collective impact. A variety of plenary sessions, oral presentations, workshops and poster presentations offered participants diverse opportunities for engagement, discussion, and networking.

In addition to the main conference program, PHABC hosted two affiliate events: A Public Forum and PHABC's Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Public Forum was open to the public and was held on the evening of November 15th to kick off the conference. Our partner was Bridge for Health a cooperative working bringing social innovation to building wellbeing primarily in the workplace. Through partnership with I Boost Immunity, PHABC was also able to offer a complimentary flu shot clinic to participants, while raising awareness surrounding immunizations. Overall, the 2017 Conference was very well received by participants. The survey results further supported participant's satisfaction with the conference.

### **2018 Summer School- Building Safe & Inclusive Communities: A Public Health Approach**

The 2018 Summer School, *A Public Health Approach: Building Safe & Inclusive Communities* included 7 presentations in one of four topic areas: *Health Equity in Practice, Building Healthy/Safe/Inclusive Environments, Healthy Relationships & Emergency Response, and Community Inclusion & Literacy*. A Think Piece was developed to support learning and discussions. In addition to the presentations, the program also included four hands-on group activities, and introductory and closing presentations for each day.

The 2018 Summer School, took place July 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 across the four main BC sites of UBC in Vancouver, UVic in Victoria, UBCO in Kelowna, and UNBC in Prince George with one remote site in Fort St. John. This year the Public Health Association of Saskatchewan worked with PHABC in planning and

delivery of the Summer School in that province. All the sites were linked by the UBC Faculty of Medicine's videoconference technology for the duration of the two days.

A total of 74 participants attended the Summer School across the four main BC sites and an additional two (2) participants joined in remotely from Fort St. John, BC. The actual number of attendees at the Saskatchewan site is unknown, but rough estimates place the attendance in Saskatchewan at ten (10), giving an estimated overall Summer School attendance of 86 participants. Sixty-two percent (63%, n = 48) of all BC participants were paid registrants, with the remaining 37% (n = 28) of participants having received complimentary registration as either a volunteer (8%), an SPC Committee or PHABC Board Member (9%), a speaker (12%), or a facilitator (8%).

Evaluations were distributed at the four main sites with findings in the final report only representative of attendees at these locations (N = 74), i.e. UBC, UVic, UBCO and UNBC. Thirty-five (n = 35) completed evaluations were collected from the four sites, giving a response rate of 47% (35/74). This response rate was a significant improvement from that of the 2017 Summer School, which had a response rate of 12% (11/92).

Increased registration in past years is positively correlated to sponsorship and financial viability of the Summer School, so continuing efforts to connect with organizations to offer complimentary registration for some staff in exchange for sponsorship would be beneficial for increasing participant numbers. The development of bursaries are also another option worth exploring in the future.

***Acknowledgements:***

We would like to thank our sponsors and partners for their generous contributions to this event: UBC Faculty of Medicine, University of Northern BC, UBC Okanagan, Vancouver Coastal Health, the University of Victoria and the Public Health Association of Saskatchewan. We would also like to thank all of our amazing speakers, facilitators and volunteers who so graciously donated their time and shared their knowledge and experiences.

**A Note about the 2018 Annual Conference:**

The PHABC 2018 Annual Conference has been built on the work of the 2018 Summer School and a continuation of the theme of **Building Safe & Inclusive Communities: A Public Health Approach**. The Conference will also feature sessions on the current opioid crisis in the province and public health responses to it.

We are taking what we have learned from both Summer Schools and the 2017 Conference as well as the 2018 Conference to develop a paper on Transformative Leadership and Practice as well as Building Safe Inclusive Communities for publication.

***Acknowledgements:***

We would like to thank our sponsors and volunteers who made the 2017 Conference and associated Networking Event, the 2018 Summer School and 2018 Conference possible. A lot of time and effort goes into planning and delivery, and all of the volunteers, speakers and presenters were valuable contributors.



We would also like to say a special thanks to the PHABC staff who worked tirelessly to plan and deliver both the conferences, summer school and networking events.

Sincerely,

Maureen Rowan & Shannon Clarke  
Co-Chairs

## PARC Committee Report

### Our Mission:

The purpose of the Policy, Advocacy, Research and Communications Committee (PARC) is to advance policies that promote health, well-being and social equity. We achieve this by advocating for the implementation of healthy public policy at federal, provincial, regional and municipal levels of governments. We work effectively through partnerships with other non-profit organizations and civil societies to advance policy positions that align with PHABC's mandate. Finally, the PARC Committee also evaluates policy recommendations for final endorsement by PHABC Board of Directors.

### Highlight from 2018:

In 2018, the Provincial government provided PHABC with unique opportunities to contribute to very important strategic initiatives to address inequity and the social determinants of health in BC by making submissions to the BC Poverty Reduction Strategy and Mental Health and Addictions. We hope our submissions will help the Province develop evidence-based strategies rooted in social justice.

In our report on poverty reduction we named targets and timelines which have been agreed upon by the Poverty Reduction Coalition, and we asked that the government take a cross-ministry approach to poverty reduction, from social development, to agriculture, to mental health. We asked that a poverty reduction strategy have a social justice and human rights foundation, and we asked it take a lens of the social determinants of health. We asked that it include wealth redistribution to decrease the growing gap in income equality. We also gave evidence-based examples of programs that have worked for poverty reduction, or to address the social determinants of health, which are intricately, times to poverty, and programs that are showing promising results, in other jurisdictions. We focused on five particular areas: income supports and wealth redistribution, investment in youth (early childhood education/education/youth aging out of care), housing and homelessness, health care services, and food security. Later in the year we wrote a letter to the Poverty Reduction Coalition asking to strengthen their calls for what needs to be included in a poverty reduction strategy for BC.

Our submission to the Mental Health and Addictions strategy was similar due to the inextricable link between poverty, trauma, and mental health. We asked for upstream investment in public health programs and services designed to ensure: early identification of risk factors and developmental delays; strong maternal child health supports for parenting, attachment, and household safety; referrals to effective support services for children and families at risk; surveillance and monitoring of child safety in school-based settings. We asked the strategy include meaningful participation and engagement of those



impacted by mental health and substance use problems in the development and design of the strategy as well as the implementation and evaluation.

We asked that a strategy recognize the need to address and mitigate stigma through adoption of harm reduction principles, trauma and violence informed care and cultural safety training. We recommended incorporation and expansion of mental health services in team-based primary care and community care models. In our submission we focused on three particular levers: Integrated Health Care, Childhood Mental Wellness, and Poverty Reduction/ Societal Resilience, and provided evidence of programs with proven results and/or promising practices.

**Working Towards Our Goals:**

In 2018, we worked on the following areas to continue advancing our mission:

**Collaborative Leadership towards the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)**

In order to raise awareness about the influence of the SDOH and to discuss possible strategies for policy changes to decrease SDOH’s negative impacts, the Public Health Association of BC (PHABC), the BC Population Health Network (BCPHN) and the City of Vancouver (COV) jointly hosted an inaugural event, “Collaborative Leadership towards the Determinants of Health” on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the Van Deusen Gardens in Vancouver, BC.

Some of the learnings from the day included how to:

- Work with government platforms and embed your evidence and strategy into the government framework.
- Use a constructive approach to celebrate what is working and find ways to improve what isn’t working.
- Engage the public to promote your agenda in a positive direction.
- Be ready with your proposals when a window for action on your issue, program, or mission arises.

**Advise the BC Government on Climate Accountability**

We asked the Provincial government to enact a *Liability for Climate-related Harm Act* which asks Fossil Fuel companies to pay for climate change related damages. This act would protect BC taxpayers and individuals from massive costs, avoid the need for protracted and expensive litigation to clarify legal responsibility for climate impacts, and, perhaps most importantly, would send a global message to the fossil fuel industry that its business model can no longer ignore the harm that it is causing.

**Advocate for Healthy Public Policy**

In addition to our advocacy efforts leading to the 2018 Election, PARC members were active on a number of other initiatives including:



- PHABC signed on to an open letter to the BC government by Bernie Pauly, signed by approximately 100 public health professionals/ organization, asking them to take a public health approach to tent cities, from a supportive not harmful lens, as tent cities can be an immense source of support for the homeless.
- PHABC wrote to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs and the Minister of Health in support of the Kaleden Irrigation District to ask that the ministries grant a review of the current policy that excludes improvement districts from infrastructure grants unless they join a regional water system.
- PHABC signed onto a statement of consensus principles for the establishment of National Pharmacare in Canada by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives as part of a diverse coalition representing health care providers, non-profit organizations, workers, seniors, patients and academics. The letter asked that National Pharmacare strategy be a seamless extension of existing services outlines in the *Canada Health Act*

**Support our partners on issues that matter to us**

The PARC Committee played a critical role in identifying and supporting partnership opportunities that align with our mandate. This year we supported the following initiatives:

- Farm to School: Last fall, Silverthorne Elementary received a grant from Farm to School BC. With the grant money they purchased their own salad bar kit, as well as new dishware, a toaster oven, and an electric grill for their hot breakfast program. This has allowed them to continue offering the salad bar, as part of their long-term plan for promoting healthy eating.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognize the generous contribution of our PARC Committee members who volunteer their time and expertise to help PHABC be a leading partner for promoting the health and wellbeing of our residents and addressing inequities that divide us.

Sincerely,

Juan Solorzano and Heather Ouellette  
Co-Chairs