



# **Public Health Association of BC**

**2019 – 2020 Annual Report**

**Presented at the Annual General Meeting**

**November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**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. Thanks to their contributions, we have made important strides moving forward. I've highlighted some of the accomplishments and plans below and invite you to read the annual full report to find out more.

This was our tenth annual Summer School which focused on "Simplifying Complexity: Public Health Approaches & Practice in Complex Systems". This year the summer school was expanded to reach a record 236 participants across five provinces and one territory thanks to our partners; Manitoba Public Health Association, Saskatchewan Public Health Association, Public Health Agency of Canada, the Yukon Public Health Community of Practice, and the videoconferencing technology provided by UBC's Faculty of Medicine and UBC's School of Population and Public Health. Reaching a record number of sites this year would not have been possible without the tireless efforts from our Community Capacity Building Committee, Scientific Program Committee, site facilitators, volunteers and presenters. Without them we would not have been able to create such a popular and impactful program or facilitate the numerous sites that allowed so many people to participate.

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 60 lessons in science/health and social studies for grades 4-12. Included are lessons that address vaccine misinformation through critical thinking related to bias, and strategies to evaluate information. 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 2018, almost 1 million questions have been answered and over 56K 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 are hosted on the PHABC website. Another key partner is the BC Population Health Network for which PHABC serves as the secretariat to this group. Bridge for Health is another strong partner in a number of activities including support for policy work, capacity building and working with public health interns. PHABC is a founding member of Prevention of Violence Canada a coalition dedicated to implementing the World Health Organization's recommendations on violence prevention. The Poverty Reduction Coalition is another 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 Net 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 Net and was recently named the Chair of that multi country forum. We also participate actively in the World Health Organization Violence Prevention Alliance. The list goes on but it is clear that we work collaboratively in order to fulfill 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 term and also welcome some new faces full of new ideas. This year we bid farewell to Paola Ardiles, Past-President, who has given ten years of service to PHABC and Angeza Mohammed who has actively supported our Risk Mitigation Strategy. Thank you Paola and Angeza. 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. We would also like to congratulate Sarah Dyer, our former office administrator, on her new role as Community Wellbeing Specialist at BC Healthy Communities. We wish you all the best! I conclude by congratulating our newly elected board member Mariah Robinson. Our board members 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

## Governance Committee Report

The Governance Committee started 2019 with the development of a 12-month action plan that focused our energies on strategic governance activities for the organization. We are happy to report that most of our planned activities were completed.

- Developed and obtained Board endorsement of a set of Guiding Principles for PHABC Board Members to help them focus on their governance responsibilities and assist with the performance evaluation of our functions as a governing body.
- Conducted follow up meetings with the chairs of every Board Committee in PHABC to ensure alignment of their planned activities with PHABC Strategic Plan as well as the Guiding Principles for the Board of Directors.
- Finalized the implementation of a review and restructure of Board Committees to better clarify their function, update their terms of references, clarify its accountability lines to either the Board of Directors (Governance Committees) or PHABC Executive Director (Operational Committees). This action was particularly relevant in providing role clarity and ensuring board members are aware when they are working as a member of the governance body versus a volunteer supporting an initiative of the organization.
- Developed a process for assessing the performance of the Board as a Governing Body. This utilized the Guiding Principles and was implemented at the Face-to-face meeting of the Board in the Summer of 2019.
- The Governance Committee supported the President of the Board of PHABC with identifying and prioritizing governance discussions in the board agendas.
- With support from the Governance Committee, the Board of Directors approved the following organizational policies:
  - Conflict of Interest
  - Corporate Sponsorship
  - Violence Prevention
- Designed engagement strategy and got approval from Board of Directors to allocate resources to reach out to public health professionals in British Columbia to assess how our organization can better represent them and support them.

Sincerely,

Juan Gabriel Solorzano and Shannon Clarke  
Co- Chairs



## Finance Committee Report

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, PHABC has experienced strong revenues, including significant deferred revenues for future program delivery. Despite new investments in infrastructure, required to enable increases in service delivery and international exposure, PHABC has managed to maintain its net assets and continues to hold a comfortable operating reserve. Of particular note this year is Canada Revenue Agency's formal notification of PHABC's successful application for charitable status. PHABC is now a registered charity, the culmination of a two-year effort.

Overall, it is my pleasure to say that PHABC continues to be a fiscally healthy and vibrant society.

Sincerely,

Roger Wheeler, MSc, MBA, CPHR  
Treasurer



---

## Capacity Building Committee Report

### Chatterhigh

#### **Introduction:**

This work has consumed the co-chairs and we have invested considerable time in this work and it is paying off. Developing questions with practitioners has opened some wonderful doors to new relationship and perhaps partnerships.

#### **Update:**

A total of 15 public health disciplines were identified and outreach to PHABC membership across these professions resulted in 11 excellent submissions for the quiz component. Follow up with drafts of a quiz related to the outstanding 4 was designed on the basis that perhaps this support would encourage review and editing by a member of that profession. This has proved not only successful but may have led to important relationship building.

#### **Next steps:**

The McCreary Youth Advisor Committee has offered to review the 56 question Draft document. They will be meeting on October 24th to review the document and provide feedback regard youth friendly readability. After they have provided feedback an additional review will occur to ensure a coherent flow is embedded in our final submission to Chatterhigh. Translation into French will follow. Thank you cards will be sent to the professionals who provided input into this project.

#### **Points to consider:**

There were so many ways to slice the Public Health high other than the 15 disciplines we identified. For example, we added a 16th category focused on populations in part to educate and draw awareness to the more social justice aspects of public health. Thus, we would appreciate the board's consideration of the Chatterhigh final submission to Chatterhigh as a draft wherein we can support updates and revision to our quiz bank.

#### **Gratitude for Sarah:**

We would like to express our appreciation for Sarah who has supported the work of this work so admirably. And thank to all the staff who make the volunteer hours so easy!

Sincerely,

Maureen Rowan and Theresa Healy  
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.

### Highlights from 2019:

The PARC Committee received a request from the Tobacco Reduction Program, VCH and Clean Air Coalition, to support their position for Smoke-Free Housing (SFH) policy. We had a healthy debate about harm reduction, stigma, building safe and inclusive communities and our concerns about the potential for worsening inequities. Chris VanVeen drafted a paper, which was reviewed by the committee.

We created a subgroup from the larger committee tasked to work on a PHABC position on the overdose emergency public health response. The subgroup developed a position statement endorsing an comprehensive public health approach to addressing the crisis that includes the provision of a safer, regulated supply of opioids to those at risk of overdose, the decriminalization of all psychoactive substance use, and work to decrease stigma and including capacity building for health practitioners. This bold, progressive position adds to the growing consensus, including voices like the VCH MHO, HoC, and PHO, that a new public health approach to substance use is urgently needed in BC. Following PHABC protocol, board approval was requested and a letter of support from PHABC. Advance copies are then given to the ministers so they are informed before attending press conferences.

Input was sought on the Basic Income approach to poverty reduction that David Green's group has been working on. All were in agreement that PHABC should be a voice at the table and that there is an emerging policy window for public health to provide a strong rationale for the positive population health impacts of poverty reduction programs and policies in BC.

Members of the PARC committee unanimously agreed to endorse John Millar's presentation to the city regarding climate emergency and inequities.

PARC co-chairs Heather and Chris had an opportunity to hear presentations from students who worked on five policies for PHABC during their practicum with the agency. They updated policies on electronic information, personal information, information management, respectful communication and integrity of operations. Both students did an outstanding job on updating and creating these policies to ensure quality of operations in the PHABC office.

Sincerely,

Heather Ouellette and Chris Van Veen  
Co-Chairs