



# SUPPORTING PUBLIC HEALTH

## B.C. Provincial Election 2024

### Purpose

This brief highlights the essential role of public health in preventing illness and improving population health, emphasizes the political backing needed for its success, and serves as a guide for engaging candidates on the key policies vital for creating a wellbeing society.

### What is public health and why does it matter?

Public health encompasses services that promote health, prevent disease, and enhance the quality of life. While crucial to community safety and well-being, its importance often goes unnoticed until crises like the COVID-19 pandemic or climate-related emergencies highlight the need for sustained funding to build a wellbeing-focused society. Public health addresses all aspects of health—physical, mental, spiritual, and social—while emphasizing environmental stewardship and equitable health for present and future generations.

Climate	Mental Wellbeing	Public Health Funding
Climate change poses the greatest threat to human health, and BC must formally acknowledge this reality. By leading the charge to protect and restore the environment, safeguard biodiversity, and reduce pollution, we can ensure a sustainable and healthier future for all.	One in five Canadians experience mental illness annually, and one-third will face it in their lifetime. Yet, many can't access necessary care, with 75% of children affected. We must value mental health equally to physical health and address these critical service gaps.	Less than 3-4% of healthcare budgets go to public health initiatives, yet public health addresses both communicable diseases and social determinants that influence up to 80% of health outcomes. Investment in prevention will save money and, more importantly, it will save lives.



Together, we can influence the future of public health in our province and continue to build a healthier, more equitable society for all.

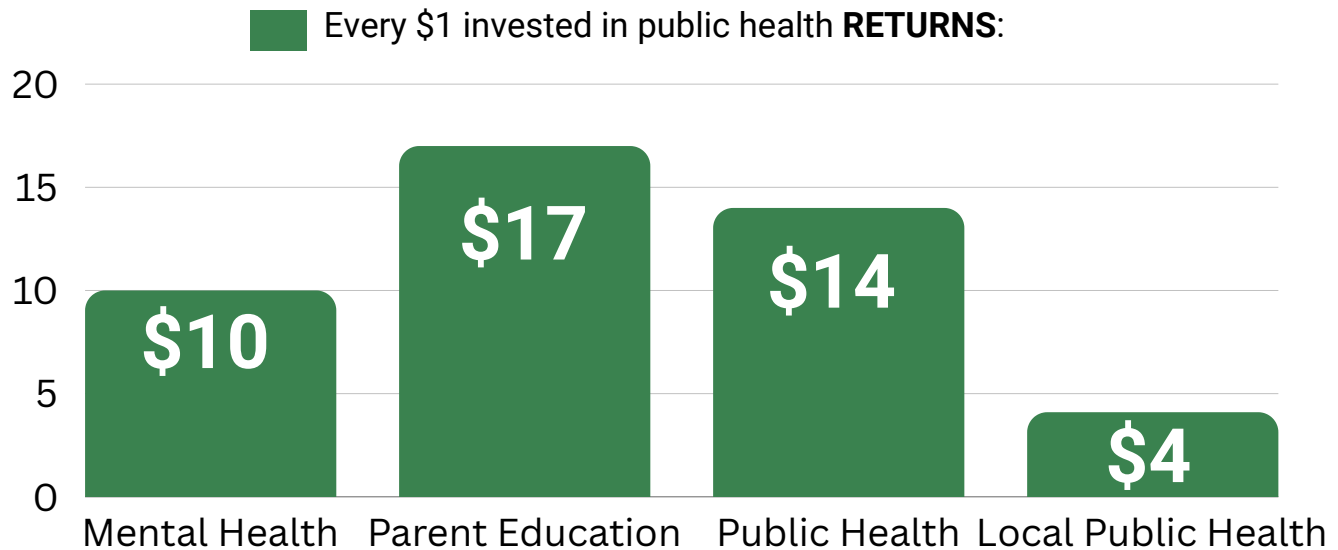
- Dr. Theresa Healy, President



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### Public Health: a good return on investment:



### About PHABC

The Public Health Association of BC is a voluntary, non-profit, non-government, member driven organization that provides leadership to promote health, well-being and social equity. We fulfill our mission through advocacy, collaboration, education and research and do this work through the spectrum of public health practice; including prevention, promotion, protection and policy.

### Question for Candidates

1. Given that only about 3-4% of the healthcare budget is allocated to public health, despite environmental, social and economic factors influencing up to 80% of health outcomes, how do you plan to address this funding gap to ensure our community gets the health promotion & protection it needs?
2. What plans would your party implement to strengthen public health and health promotion, while supporting services that enhance environmental, mental, and social well-being, especially for marginalized communities?
3. How does your party plan to foster meaningful partnerships to address the shocking decline in life expectancy among Indigenous populations and the growing gap in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous population?
4. Will you commit to making BC a Well-being society focused on achieving equitable health for current and future generations without further harming our environment?