



Public Health Association of BC

2022-2023 Annual Report

**Presented at the Annual General Meeting
November 22nd, 2023**



President's Report 2023

As I pen down the President's Report for 2023, it is with a mix of emotions. This marks the last President's report of my tenure as President of the Board in PHABC. The trust bestowed upon me to carry the duties of this role has been a profound honor. Throughout these years, I have been continually inspired and supported by my fellow Board members and the incredibly talented staff at PHABC. As I transition to the role of Past President, I am filled with gratitude and look forward to continuing my contribution to this esteemed organization.

This year, we are proud to highlight the incredible work accomplished through our various programs and partnerships:

- **Immunization Milestone:** PHABC reached a landmark achievement of one million vaccines donated across I Boost Immunity and Kids Boost Immunity. Our work within immunization has seen exponential growth, with KBI expanding its reach across Canada and even internationally.
- **Canadian Immunization Conference:** Our Immunization Team represented PHABC in Ottawa, leading a workshop on misinformation and vaccine hesitancy, presenting innovative approaches to understanding hesitancy and communicating about immunization.
- **Indigenous Education:** Kids Boost Immunity collaborated with Indigenous educators and consultants nationwide to develop social studies lessons focusing on Indigenous governance, unique histories, and the harmful effects of colonialism across Turtle Island.
- **Food Security in Northern BC:** In partnership with Food Banks BC, we are pioneering a project centered on food security in Northern BC, involving substantial funding for community-led food systems adaptation and development.
- **School Food Advocacy:** The BC Chapter for Healthy School Food successfully advocated for a record \$214 million investment in school food. The Coalition is now championing a universal school meal program across the country.
- **Farm to School BC Conference:** Our inaugural conference, "Planting the Seed," was a resounding success, bringing together health leaders, school food advocates, and champions of our food system.
- **Can You Dig It Workshops:** These virtual workshops are now available for community garden coordinators across BC, offering training on various topics, including garden management, community engagement, and accessibility.
- **Rise Up! Initiative:** Our new initiative aims to create impactful avenues for volunteers from diverse backgrounds to actively participate in BC's food systems.
- **Youth Volunteerism in Surrey:** We are delving into the factors that influence youth volunteerism in the food system in Surrey, BC, to ensure all youth have access to meaningful community contribution opportunities.



- **Policy, Advocacy, and Research:** Through the concerted efforts of the Policy, Advocacy and Research Committee, PHABC is at the forefront of promoting policies that contribute to the health of British Columbians.
- **2022 Conference:** The Capacity Building Committee hosted the "Our Planet, Our Health: Creating Well Being Societies and Making Peace with Nature" Conference in Victoria, BC, emphasizing the importance of ecojustice and an eco-social approach.
- **Operational Growth:** Our operations team has expanded, enhancing our capacity, collaboration, and strategy across all programs.
- **Board Initiatives:** Our Board has been instrumental in several initiatives, including the development of a Fund Development strategy and a presentation to the Select Standing Committee on Finance. Our Finance Committee, under Treasurer Gord Cote, has been pivotal in designing quarterly financial statements and adopting a proactive investment strategy for PHABC.
- **Governance Committee:** Recognizing the significant voluntary commitments of the board, the governance committee transitioned to quarterly board meetings for more effective use of board time.

I am delighted to welcome Dr. Theresa Healy as the incoming President of the Board. I have full confidence in her ability to steer the PHABC ship in the years ahead. Her dedication, expertise, and vision will undoubtedly guide the association to new heights. I wish her much success in her role.

The journey as President of the Board has been both inspiring and rewarding. I am deeply grateful for the unwavering support and dedication of everyone involved. As I step into the role of Past President, I am confident that PHABC will continue its legacy of promoting health, well-being, and equity for all British Columbians.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Juan Gabriel Solorzano

President

Public Health Association of British Columbia



Governance Committee Report

Despite the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on regular meetings of the Governance Committee, we are happy to report on the following accomplishments:

- During the early months of 2023, the Board of Directors welcomed and orientated a new Director to the Board who began their terms in November 2022, Allysha Ram. Our new member bring a wealth of experience and diverse perspectives that will support PHABC to be a vibrant, member-driven, and sustainable organization.
- The crisis of health human resources has continued to impact healthcare organizations across Canada as they struggle to recruit and retain talent. In addition, we are observing concerning levels of burnout in the sector.
- The Board moved to quarterly meetings in an effort to focus meetings more strategically, utilizing them to the fullest extent to drive our mission forward.
- The Executive Committee continues to meet monthly. The President of the Board continue to maintain ongoing communication with the PHABC Executive Director, ensuring that operations continue smoothly between meetings.
- In the face of these times in the labour market, PHABC has continue to strengthen its position as an employer of choice. In addition to generous health benefit packages, we are enhancing our supports for the well-being of our staff by offering more flexible work arrangements and access to resources for mental wellness and resiliency.
- The Board welcomes 2 new Directors-at-Large, Quwam Kelani and Muyi Iyamu. A fond farewell to out-going Director-at-large Astou Thaim and Zahra Mamdani.
- The Board welcomes new president Dr. Theresa Healy, as Juan Solorzano transitions in to the past president role and Dr. Gord Miller move to an advisory role with the Board.

Sincerely,

Juan Gabriel Solorzano
Chair
Governance Committee



Finance Committee Report

Sincerely,
Gordon Cote,
Treasurer

Capacity Building Committee Report

Building and Supporting the Public Health Workforce for the Future

The Capacity Building Committee has dedicated this year to enhancing public health knowledge and skills in an increasingly digital world, recognizing the profound impact that digital technology has on public health. They have executed this vision through a series of strategic initiatives and educational endeavors, culminating in the organization of a pivotal annual conference. The conference, titled "Public Health and Equity in the Digital Age," is a testament to the committee's commitment to addressing the intersection of public health and digital innovation. Scheduled to take place in November in Vancouver, the conference serves as an expansion of the topics discussed during the 2023 Public Health Summer Institute.



Figure 1



Figure 2

This year's conference is being led by Dr. Shannon Freeman and Dr. Alexandra Choi, who have been appointed as chairs of the Scientific Program Committee. They have been instrumental in shaping the

conference's agenda to ensure it reflects the urgent and emergent topics in the field. The committee has been particularly focused on four inter-related themes: AI, misinformation and disinformation; digital equity and access; innovation in public health technology and AI; and assistive devices and healthy aging. Each theme encapsulates a set of challenges and opportunities that have been identified as critical to the advancement of public health in the context of rapidly evolving digital landscapes.

In preparation for the conference, the committee has engaged in extensive capacity-building activities. These activities have been aimed at equipping professionals with the necessary tools to navigate the complexities of digital health, combat misinformation, improve access to digital resources, and leverage technological innovations for public health benefits. The committee's year-long efforts to facilitate knowledge exchange and skill development will be showcased during the plenary sessions. Through these sessions, they anticipate creating a forum for robust discussion, cross-sector collaboration, and the dissemination of innovative strategies that will lead towards a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable future.

Thank You

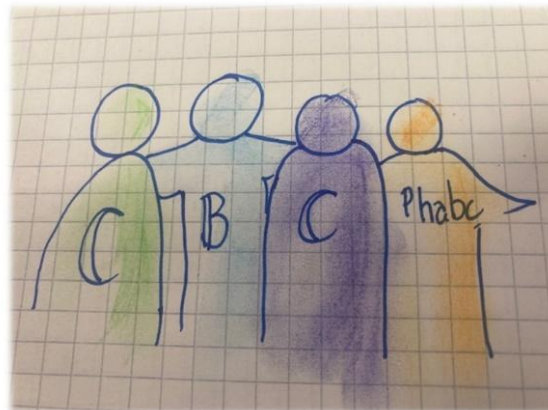


Figure 3

Sincerely,

Dr. Theresa Healy & Astou Thiam
Co-Chairs, Capacity Building Committee



PARC Committee Report

The Policy, Advocacy, Research and Communications Committee (PARC) committee strives 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.

I would like to acknowledge the expertise and commitment of the PARC committee members in promoting and advocating for healthy public policy.

2023 PARC Priorities

The committee chose three areas of focus for this year:

- Child mental well-being
- Economics of well-being
- Homelessness

Continued PARC Activities:

Just Transition work continues. It has been suggested that fossil fuels be phased out, starting with cancelation of fossil fuel subsidies and no further funding for fossil fuels operations or renewals or building. The Green New Deal is now known as The Sustainable Jobs Plan as the language is a bit more palatable. David Goodmen, a constitutional lawyer, has been leading conversations with the minister. PARC will continue to support this important public health work.

New PARC Activities:

March presentation: Profiling and Monitoring the Public Health Workforce in Canada from Emily Belita of McMaster University. Themes emerging from her research include constant change, challenges in decision making and communication, straddling diverse and multiple roles and overwhelming workload and pressure. PARC is in support of this work and will invite Emily back once her research is complete.

In May, the committee learned about advocacy work being done by three coalitions: Basic Income BC, BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, and Basic Income Indigenous Perspective. This fits with other work the PARC committee collaborated in. We think that PHABC could potentially create a position paper recommending this kind of support as a basic public health measure.

Selenna presented information on the passing of Bill C-18 that has made Canadian news no longer visible on Meta and Google platforms. We have already seen public health implications because of refusal to unblock news coverage about wildfires. Displaced families were unable to easily get news of their community, causing stress and mental anguish to those persons. PARC discussed looking at the policy monitoring tool as a possible tool for monitoring the situation to inform possible future recommendations.

PARC recommended that PHABC co-sign a letter promoting energy efficiency for low-income housing, along with several partner organizations.



Update on subcommittees:

The PARC subcommittees are currently on hold; due to attrition we no longer have chairs to lead these groups. The committee will revisit the concept of having subcommittees in 2024.

Respectfully Submitted by Heather Ouellette

Chair, PARC Committee