



Public Health Association of BC

2023-2024 Annual Report

**Presented at the Annual General Meeting
November 18th, 2024**



President's Report 2024

I would like to begin by acknowledging the First Nations of what is now known as British Columbia for the careful guardianship of their traditional (and in many cases unceded) territories. I am proud to be able to say that PHABC has been a prominent voice with and for Indigenous rights and responsibilities for many years now. We have also held an Elder In-Residence position since 2018. May our respectful partnership and cooperation continue to grow in

This is my first AGM report as president and I must say the first year has been a whirlwind of activities and expanding work and responsibilities for the organization

Many thanks are due to our wonderful Executive Director, and our staff who do such stellar work, much of it unseen, in guiding the daily operations with such dedication and effectiveness. The Board of Directors is a powerhouse group who thoughtfully contribute to charting the forward journey of Public Health in BC.

Our board members serve on traditional Governance committee like the Finance and the Executive committee, but they also steer operational committees, such Capacity Building Committee (CBC) that is responsible for this conference and Policy, Advocacy, Research and Communications Committee (PARC) committee which sets the tone for healthy public policy, goals support and shared research initiatives and steers our significant advocacy efforts. PHABC would not be able to serve its members and our mission without this significant and essential contribution by volunteers.

As a result of the combination of winning folks, PHABC enjoys a well-deserved reputation as a leader in tackling the leading-edge topics before they become news headlines.

This year, I am proud to present some highlights from our busy year with our various programs and partnerships

Branding Initiative:

A unified brand strategy was developed and refined to reflect PHABC's commitment to equity and social justice. Our new tagline, "Inspiration. Collaboration. Change," reflects the organization's renewed focus on education, social justice, and health advocacy.

BC Election Primer:

A major achievement this year was the development of the BC Election Primer, presented by Quwam Kelani. This primer focuses on key public health issues such as climate change, mental well-being, and public health funding, positioning PHABC as a vital player in advocacy efforts during the upcoming election.

Committee Successes:

PARC (Policy, Advocacy, and Research Committee): Focused on advocacy around substance use and housing crises, with an emphasis on influencing public policy through the BC Election Primer.

CBC (Capacity Building Committee): Continued efforts toward planetary health education with updates on the development of a planetary health module.



In closing, the first year has been equal parts exhilaration and terror for this new president. But, the generosity and wisdom of past presidents, and the support of the many and valiant supporters of Public Health in the organization's membership, and the hard work and commitment staff reveals just how blessed PHABC is in a turbulent world. We will be facing changing times that will present new (and some old / returning) challenges. The work that contributes to the health and wellbeing of all will be even more necessary. An old saying tells us that you only know who your friends really are in bad times. I am happy to report we do already know. We can enter difficult times, with a sure confidence that we are well tested, and well experienced, in speaking up for the health of all.

M. Theresa Healy

President

Public Health Association of British Columbia



Governance Committee Report

We are delighted to announce the addition of Lara Frederick as a Director at Large. This means the Board of Directors currently maintains a full slate, with no changes at this time. As no election is scheduled for this year, the next elections is scheduled for November 2025. We are in full compliance with our charitable statues.

Sincerely,

M. Theresa Healy

Chair

Governance Committee



Finance Committee Report

Capacity Building Committee Report

Building and Supporting the Public Health Workforce for the Future

I. 2024 Annual Summer Institute

A decision was made to sunset this year's Summer Institute to focus our efforts and resources towards planning for the fall conference. We hope to resume next year - stay tuned!

II. 2024 Annual Conference

Following the success of last year's conference, we are pleased to be the world's first public health association to host a conference on the Commercial Determinants of Health (CDoH). It will take place on November 18th and 19th, 2024 at the Sutton Place Hotel in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Entitled, "Commercial Determinants of Health: Moving from Harmful to Healthy," this year's conference was developed in partnership with the World Health Organization, National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, and a number of valued collaborators offering expertise including academic researchers, policy experts, and public health practitioners. Conference planning is led by the Scientific Program Committee, and notably its Co-Chairs, Dr. Claire Betker and Tina D. Purnat, who have provided exceptional leadership in guiding the conference's agenda.

The conference will follow four themes: taking action on industries that affect health (marketing, risks, and essential goods); building public sector strength (considering regulatory and functional opportunities); improving business practices (creating policies for healthier markets); and rethinking economic development (sustainable approaches and cultural perspectives). Attendees will gain a comprehensive understanding of the CDoH, analyze public health's role in addressing the CDoH, and explore strategies to mitigate the harmful impacts of commercial practices through strengths-based preventative interventions.

PHABC remains dedicated to providing innovative educational opportunities to build capacity among the public health workforce to lead transformative change through effective action towards current and emergent public health challenges.

III. Chatter High

PHABC has continued their long-standing relationship with Chatter High, an online content engagement platform that uses gamification techniques to help students learn about post-secondary and career options. This year, we reviewed and refreshed the public health daily quiz questions, public health module content, and finalized questions for the new planetary health module which is planned to launch in the upcoming future. With support from our community partners, we were able to engage a diverse group of over 40 youth in the development of the planetary health module content, to ensure that it remained relevant and meaningful to young people across BC.

Findings from Chatter High's report outlining youth engagement in the 2023-24 academic year showed that over 4000 unique participants engaged in public health content in over 90 schools across nearly 40 school districts in BC; thereby validating BC youth's strong interest in public health education programs and careers.



IV. Membership Survey

Development of a new membership survey is well-underway and is planned to launch in early 2025. Findings from this survey will inform planning for upcoming capacity building initiatives to ensure that they are reflective of our membership's interests and needs. We are thrilled to be offering incentives to our members to encourage uptake - keep an eye on your inbox and PHABC's communication channels for more information on how to participate!

V. Additional Activities

PHABC was invited by the Immigrant Employment Council of BC to represent the public health sector as part of their National Employer Feedback Forum. This event was attended by the Capacity Building Co-Chair where they contributed to dialogue on identifying challenges and proposing solutions related to effective policies in immigration and workforce development. We plan to attend the follow up Feedback Forum, which will take place this fall.

As part of our commitment to building workforce capacity, the Capacity Building Committee has welcomed and actively sought opportunities to engage youth to support their career development. Presentations are planned to occur in high school classrooms this fall on the topics of the social determinants of health, public health nursing practice, and climate change. We continue to welcome opportunities for youth engagement and supporting the public health learning pathways of youth across BC.

Following a scan of the Capacity Building Committee members, we identified an opportunity to increase representation from Indigenous perspectives and all health regions in BC. We recruited additional members accordingly and plan to revisit opportunities to diversify our committee membership on an annual basis as outlined in our updated Terms of Reference. We are keen to recruit new Members (space permitting) - prospective Capacity Building Committee members are welcome to contact PHABC indicating their interest to join.

Sincerely,
Allysha Ram & Lara Frederick
Co-Chairs, Capacity Building Committee



PARC Committee Report

The Policy, Advocacy, Research and Communications Committee (PARC) is comprised of PHABC members with strong interest, knowledge, and skills in advancing policies that promote health, well-being, and social equity. We work in collaboration with partners in other non-profit organizations and civil societies to advance policy positions that align with PHABC's mandate. Advocacy occurs at the federal, provincial, regional, and municipal levels of government.

The committee met in February, March, May, and September and will meet again in October this year.

Starting off, we were informed that revisions were being made to the NCCPH draft Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada. Members were encouraged to engage in the process as able.

Key priorities for the year were established. The focus for 2024 was on current public health crises: mental health, substance use, and housing.

We were treated to a presentation about the Healthy School Meals program, a little history of the program, and goals for the future. Promoting child and youth health through efforts to increase food literacy and security is a core value of the PHABC.

Trevor Hancock shared a draft of his Planetary Health and Well-Being Society document and recommended that PHABC consider creating a formal position paper to support public health advocacy and policymaking in BC. The PARC committee agreed to recommend such a position paper.

This being an election year, most of the work was creating an election primer. First, PARC members contributed priority suggestions via a survey. Quwam Kelani (board member) and Joshua Codd (PHABC policy analyst) sifted through the survey results and identified three priority areas of public health to focus on – Climate, Mental Well-Being, and Public Health Funding.

The election primer includes information on the identified priorities and their importance for public health, some statistics about public health in our province, and some suggested questions to pose to candidates. Hopefully, PHABC members have had an opportunity to pose these questions to a variety of candidates.

In our October meeting, PARC members will be discussing BC election results and discussing risk mitigation policy for potential corporate sponsorships.

Respectfully Submitted by Heather Ouellette

Chair, PARC Committee