



HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

DATE: 2024.05.13

LOCATION: Council Chambers – City Hall

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

413 Fourth Street, Kaslo

1. Call to Order

2. Adoption of the Agenda

2.1 Adoption of the Agenda for the 2024.05.13 Health Advisory Committee Meeting.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

3.1 Adoption of the Minutes of the 2024.03.11 Health Advisory Committee Meeting.

4. Delegations

5. Information Items

5.1 Member Reports

5.1.1 Bird 2024.04.06

5.1.2 Kaslo Community Acupuncture Society Patient Summery Report 2023

5.1.3 Kaslo Community Services Report May 2024

5.2 Correspondence

5.2.1 Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association CAMTS

5.2.2 Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association Accreditation

5.2.3 BC Rural Health Network 2024.03.15

5.2.4 BC Rural Health Network 2024.04.01

5.2.5 BC Rural Health Network 2024.04.15

5.2.6 BC Rural Health Network 2024.04.30

5.2.7 BC Rural Health Network 2024.05.01

5.2.8 Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital Health Foundations

5.2.9 Simon Fraser University - Recruitment for Qualitative Study on Cancer experience

5.2.10 Minister of Housing

6. Question Period

7. Business

7.1 **Dialysis Service in Nelson**

Discussion regarding possible recommendations to Council.

7.2 Engagement with BC Rural Health Network

Discussion regarding possible recommendations to Council.

8. Late Items

Consideration of any late items added to the agenda.

9. Next Meeting

July 15th, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in City Hall.

10. Adjournment



Karissa Stroshein

Subject: Health Advisory meeting May 13

From: Erika Bird <bird@kaslo.ca>

Sent: Monday, May 6, 2024 9:40 AM

To: Karissa Stroshein <admin@kaslo.ca>; Mayor Hewat <mayor@kaslo.ca>

Subject: Health Advisory meeting May 13

Hi Karissa and Suzan. In response to Karissa's question about whether there is a need for a meeting next week, I have a couple of suggestions for agenda items I'd like you to consider.

My first suggestion is to ask Council to respond to the outcome of the last WKRHB delegation regarding dialysis services in Nelson. Creating a Kidney clinic in Nelson does nothing for those people who currently have to travel to Trail for dialysis. It also does nothing for those people who end up needing dialysis because of kidney failure brought on by the sudden onset of a serious illness (my daughter-in-law being an example of someone who was perfectly healthy until she got sick and went into kidney failure just two weeks after falling ill with what seemed like flu) or even e-coli poisoning cases - an outbreak of food-borne e-coli poisoning among Alberta pre-schoolers caused sudden kidney failure in several of those children. A kidney clinic would not have helped any of the above.

I think we deserve a more detailed response from Interior Health as to why a community dialysis clinic has been shelved for an undetermined time. Is it money? If so, what is the funding gap and can local people help with fundraising? Is it lack of space? If so, ask the nurses and cleaning staff at KLH if there are underutilized spaces, or consider a storefront clinic - there are thousands of such clinics in the US. Is lack of staffing the reason?

My second thought for an agenda item for the Health Advisory Commission partially flows from the first. And that is that we should consider asking someone local to engage with the Rural Health Network as they try to drill down on the gap between local advocacy for improved access to complex health services and the responsiveness of the authorities who are charged with health care planning (see invitation below.) I see two local issues where the response from IHA has been inadequate and obtuse: As above: dialysis closer to home for North Kootenay Lake and Nelson area residents; and 20 years of useless advocating for an expanded number of long-term beds at the Kaslo hospital.

The invitation from the BC Rural Health Network:

Dear BC Rural Health Network Members;

The BC Rural Health Network and the Centre for Rural Health Research at UBC have just completed a project, funded by the Social Planning and Research Council of BC, on the gap that occurs between rural community input into health planning and decision-makers using the wisdom gained from lived and living experience. You can find a copy of the report [here](#). We heard

that most rural residents experienced a lack of engagement in the health planning process, that there was not a clear line to decision makers and that community needs were not well understood.

We have received additional funding to follow up through regional consultations to hear from rural residents about what the next steps should be. To action this, we are holding a series of virtual regional engagements over the next few months (May 23 and 30 for the Interior Health region). If you would like to attend, you will be provided with a link to the report, a one-page overview and an executive summary. During the engagement session, we will work through a series of questions and allow time for open discussion.

If you are interested in the role of community voice in provincial decision-making, we welcome your participation. Please reach out to Phoebe Lazier (Phoebe.Lazier@bcruralhealth.org), BC Rural Health Network Community Outreach Coordinator.

I am interested in what you think of these suggestions, Suzan.

Thanks,

Erika Bird



KASLO Community
Acupuncture Society

KCAS Patient Summary Report 2023

By Leni Neumeier, R.TCMP, R.Ac

December 31, 2023

Introduction

Between January 6th and December 22, 2023, Kaslo Community Acupuncture Society held a total of 26 clinics at the Heritage Hall of St. Andrew United Church, every second Friday from 1 – 5 pm. COVID regulations from the Ministry of Health and the BC Centre for Disease Control were lifted most of the year and only in the last two clinics, practitioners started to wear masks to meet public health standards.

The total number of treatments given in 2023 from January to December was 337; 60 treatments were given to new patients and 277 to repeat patients. Since we started community acupuncture in 2020, we have treated a total of 264 individual patients between the ages of 8 to 93. This results in a total of 1277 individual treatments from January 2020 until December 2023 in 98 clinic days with an average of 13 patients per clinic.

Treatment Details

In 2023, we treated a variety of ailments with acupuncture, gua sha, tuning forks and TCM herbal medicine. Here is a summary of all diseases and ailments we attended to in 2023:

- Acne
- Acute cholecystitis/gallbladder attack
- Acute and chronic digestive dysfunction, i.e. stomach pain, GERD, Acid Reflux
- Anxiety
- Addiction
- Allergies
- Hashimoto
- Mental Health
- Intercostal Pain
- Pain Management: back pain, shoulder pain, frozen shoulder ankle pain and strain, foot pain, hip pain, wrist and elbow pain, knee pain, hypochondrial pain, tailbone pain, jaw pain, headaches, painful neck tightness, ovarian pain, piriformis syndrome, sciatic pain, thumb pain,
- Trauma Response
- Balance Issues after accident with brain injury
- Brain injury after overdose with motor and sensory sense dysfunctions
- Constipation
- Stress Reduction and emotional support due to trauma
- Depression
- Skin problems due to night drooling, hives, eczema
- Eye Problems: eye infections, posterior Vitriors detachment
- Fibromialgia
- Numbness and Tingling in the fingers and hands
- General Health Support
- Heart Burn

- Heart and Chest Pain
- Heat Intolerance
- Fatigue
- Menopausal symptoms like hot flashes
- Hypertension
- Infertility
- Injury from a fall with edema in the feet
- Poor Sleep and insomnia
- Benign Lipoma
- Long Covid
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Low energy
- Post arm fracture
- Dizziness
- Post Chemotherapy support
- Post Concussion Syndrome
- Support to stop smoking
- Post bone fracture treatment
- Post Surgery treatment after Cholecystectomy
- Pregnancy support
- PTST
- Restless Leg Syndrome
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Rotator Cuff Inflammation
- Sinus Congestion
- Sleep Apnea and snoring
- Heart Palpitations
- Tendinitis in finger and elbow
- Trigeminal Neuralgia
- Urinary Retention
- UTI Infection

In Conclusion

To date, approximately 11.4% of Kaslo and Area D's population (total number of citizens = 2,311) has utilized community acupuncture and the need for acupuncture is high, especially in the areas of mental health, pain management, digestive health, addiction, and chronic illness management. The clinic is in high demand and the maximum number of patients we had to turn away was 7 people which was very hard to see.

Community acupuncture has shown to be an integral part of our community in Kaslo as a complementary medicine to our public health system. The benefits of affordability, increased accessibility, shared health experience, access to a holistic health approach and the integration into modern medicine is bringing more and more

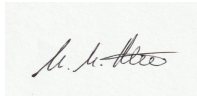
community members to our clinic and Kaslo is moving forward with health care recommendations mentioned in the [WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2013-2023](#).

Since community acupuncture is not a part of the public health service in British Columbia yet, KCAS is constantly facing financial challenges to meet the annual operating budget and in 2023 we showed a shortfall of 38%. This clearly shows that grants and private funding is not enough to run a sustainable community acupuncture clinic and more government support is needed.

Our strength is to improve health care with community acupuncture and Chinese Medicine, a world wide recognized complementary medicine to modern healthcare. Ultimately, we are striving to be an integral part of the Ministry of Health so that our budget is covered by government funds and we can focus on offering the best possible Chinese Medicine service to our patients.

In conclusion, I want to thank our volunteers, sponsors, practitioners and the KCAS board for making this invaluable clinic a success and we feel honored to offer barrier-free acupuncture to all citizens in Kaslo and Area D. Health is our priority!

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Neumeier", is placed on a light grey rectangular background.

Leni Neumeier R.TCM.P, R.A
KCAS Clinic Supervisor



May, 2024 - Senior Co-ordinator Report (Kaslo Community Services)

1. Fifty simple meals for 'The Healthy Aging' *Therapeutic Activation Program* (TAPS) are prepared at our Food Hub. Six meals are picked up by clients at the Food Cupboard in the Lardeau Valley Hall on Wednesdays, forty-four are delivered in person on Fridays. This delivery process provides an excellent opportunity to share information with Seniors, and creates a time of social interaction and check-ins. There is a full slate of 50 participants, and there is an active waiting list.
2. Free activities for the TAPS group of clients continue:
 - a) A 'Drop-In Social Walking Group' begins on Tuesdays at 10:00 at the Front Door of Abbey Manor. The walks are followed with a simple shared lunch. Any Seniors are welcome to join in the walk.
 - b) We will have our next in-person meal for the TAPS participants on May 28th, at the Heritage Hall from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm. Participants are encouraged to bring a friend, and RSVP's need to be received by Kathy before May the 17th. Participants can register at phone # 250-353-7691 Extension # 204 or they can email Kathy at kathyallaire@kaslo.services. The hall is wheelchair accessible, and the meal is funded by The United Way & Kaslo Community Services.
 - c) The Life Writers six-week workshop was held at Abbey Manor. The sessions were held at Abbey Manor from 12:00 – 2:30 on Thursdays from Feb. 8th – March 14th and began with a provided lunch. The program was very popular, and participants are continuing to gather with friends from the group to write their memoirs and share with one another, and others in the community!
 - d) The next TAPS Bowling sessions will take place at the Lardeau Valley Community Hall at 10:00 on May 13th and June 17th. Lunch will be provided and registration is required. See the contact information at #2b) above!
3. Digital Support is available with Angela by appointment at the Kaslo Public Library, it is linked to CBAL (Columbia Basin Alliance of Literacy) programing through Barb Szuta.
4. Volunteer Water Monitors are needed. Contact Patrick Steiner for more information @ patricksteiner@kaslo.services or @ ph. # 250-353-7691.
5. Senior Exercise took place every Friday morning at the Heritage Hall from November 3, 2023 to April 26, 2024. It was a well attended and beneficial program.

6. Lynda Beddow has assisted people with the filing of their income tax returns. Lynda can be contacted at ph.# 250-353-7725.
7. Medical and Non-Medical Rides for Seniors can be arranged through 'The Kootenay Seniors Volunteer Drivers Program', phone #778-463-5247. Volunteers or those needing rides can contact the K.S.V.D.P.
8. - The Seniors monthly in-person meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at The Seniors Hall in Kaslo beginning at 11:00 am. from September to June. The monthly meeting is followed by a delicious lunch served at noon, at the cost of \$15.00 for members and \$20.00 for visitors. The cost for Senior Annual Memberships is \$15.00.
- The Kaslo Seniors will be holding a garage sale and a high tea, at the Seniors Hall on the May Days week-end.
9. Kootenay Seniors Light Housekeeping Support is available now in Kaslo. Subsidized rates are available for low-income seniors. For more information contact the Program Coordinator by phone or email at: phone # 778-868-1308 or email: kaslocoordinator@nelsoncares.ca.
10. 'West Kootenay Nav-Care' – is a friendly visitor's program in Kaslo. Volunteers visit a senior once or twice a week for a time of social interaction. Contact Audrey Salazar Calvo if you would like to be a volunteer or know someone who would benefit from being paired with a friendly visitor at: ph.#778-689-6832 or email kaslo@westkootenaynavcare.org.
11. The TEETH Clinic is accepting new patients and a KCS Counselor Arielle Shuman, Lynda Beddow, and I, will be able to verify registrations for the TEETH Program.
12. The new 'Canadian Dental Care Plan' can be reached at <Canada.ca/dental>. To qualify you must be a Canadian resident, have an adjusted family net income under \$90,000, not have access to employer/pension-sponsored or private dental insurance, and need to have filed your tax return in the previous year. Letters should have been sent in phases by age group between December 2023 and March 2024 until all potential eligible seniors who are 70 years of age or older have been invited to apply for the CDCP. Online applications will begin for other eligible categories from May 2024 onward.
13. Please contact the Seniors' Coordinator with questions about the above information at the following email address:
<elizabethbrandrick@kaslo.services>



Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association
518 Lake Street, Box 14, Nelson, BC V1L 4C6
Phone 1-778-738-2208
www.kerpa.org

MAR 22 2024

March 20, 2024

Honourable Suzan Hewat
Mayor of Kaslo
PO Box 576
Kaslo, BC V0G 1M0

Dear Mayor Hewat:

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Dr. Nic Sparrow, and I would like to introduce myself as the President and Medical Director of KERPA (Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association), a registered charity and accredited Special Operations Medical Retrieval Service based in Nelson, British Columbia, Canada, and serving the communities of Nelson, Kaslo, Salmo, Castlegar, Winlaw and those remote areas within the region accessible via helicopter.

For the past decade, KERPA has been dedicated to saving lives, providing critical care to the ill and injured, and supporting the emergency services in our province, at no charge. Our team has worked tirelessly to ensure that those in need receive the prompt and expert care they deserve, regardless of their location or circumstances.

As a part of our commitment to transparency and collaboration, I am pleased to share our latest annual report with you. This report provides a comprehensive overview of our activities, achievements, and impact over the past year. I believe it will offer valuable insights into the vital work we do and the positive outcomes we strive to achieve.

I am reaching out to you with the hope of fostering collaboration and raising awareness of our organization's mission and accomplishments. We believe that by working together with like-minded individuals and organizations, we can further support patients, the emergency services and ultimately save more lives in our communities.

I have attached the annual report to this email for your review. I would greatly appreciate any feedback or suggestions you may have, as well as any opportunities for collaboration or support you may be able to offer.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about KERPA and our efforts to make a difference in the lives of those in need. I look forward to the possibility of working together to continue our important work.

Warm regards,



Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems

#91907

Special Operations Medical Retrieval Accredited Service

Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association - Canadian Registered Charity: 769710328RR001

Dr. Nicholas Sparrow

Special Operations Medical Retrieval Service



**Kootenay Emergency Response
Physicians Association**

Annual Report 2023

Canadian Registered Charity - 769710328 RR 0001
Special Operation Medical Retrieval Accredited Service #091907



KERPA's Emergency Response Vehicle & Physician

In 2016, KERPA became a Canadian Registered Charity and, in 2021, we became the **1st Canadian Physician Ground Based EMS Service** to be awarded full **Special Operations Medical Retrieval Certification** by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS). This accreditation marks the stringent international standards of medical retrieval, quality, safety and patient care KERPA provides (Appendix 1).

Calls Attended

Since May 2014, KERPA has been available to respond to **1284 calls**. These are the highest priority calls assigned by BCAS Dispatch and include primary missions (where our physician arrives on scene and makes contact with the patient), standbys and cancelled calls.

The level of care provided by the Emergency Response Physician (ERP) has varied from minimal, to critical lifesaving interventions. On a number of occasions, the ERP, in conjunction with the Emergency Services, has been instrumental in changing the clinical course and outcome of critically ill patients in the Kootenay Region. For example, in 2019 KERPA was dispatched to a young female stabbed multiple times in the City of Nelson. The patient survived and is enjoying life with her family in the Kootenay area.

Types of calls KERPA was available to respond to in 2023:

TRAFFIC INCIDENTS	53
TRAFFIC INCIDENTS - PINNED/TRAPPED VICTIM	2
INACCESSIBLE INCIDENT - ENTRAPMENT/AVALANCHE	2
STAB/GSW/PENETRATING - CENTRAL WOUNDS STAB	3
CONVULSIONS/SEIZURES	20
DROWNING/NEAR DROWNING	2
UNCONSCIOUS	43
OD/POISONING	32
PSYCHIATRIC	8
ALLERGIES - NOT ALERT	2
FALLS	12
TRAUMA - VARIED MECHANISM	14
PREGNANCY - HEAD VISIBLE/OUT	1
CARDIAC ARREST	48
OTHER MEDICAL EMERGENCIES	72

Early Advanced Diagnostics /Medical /Surgical Interventions - 2023:

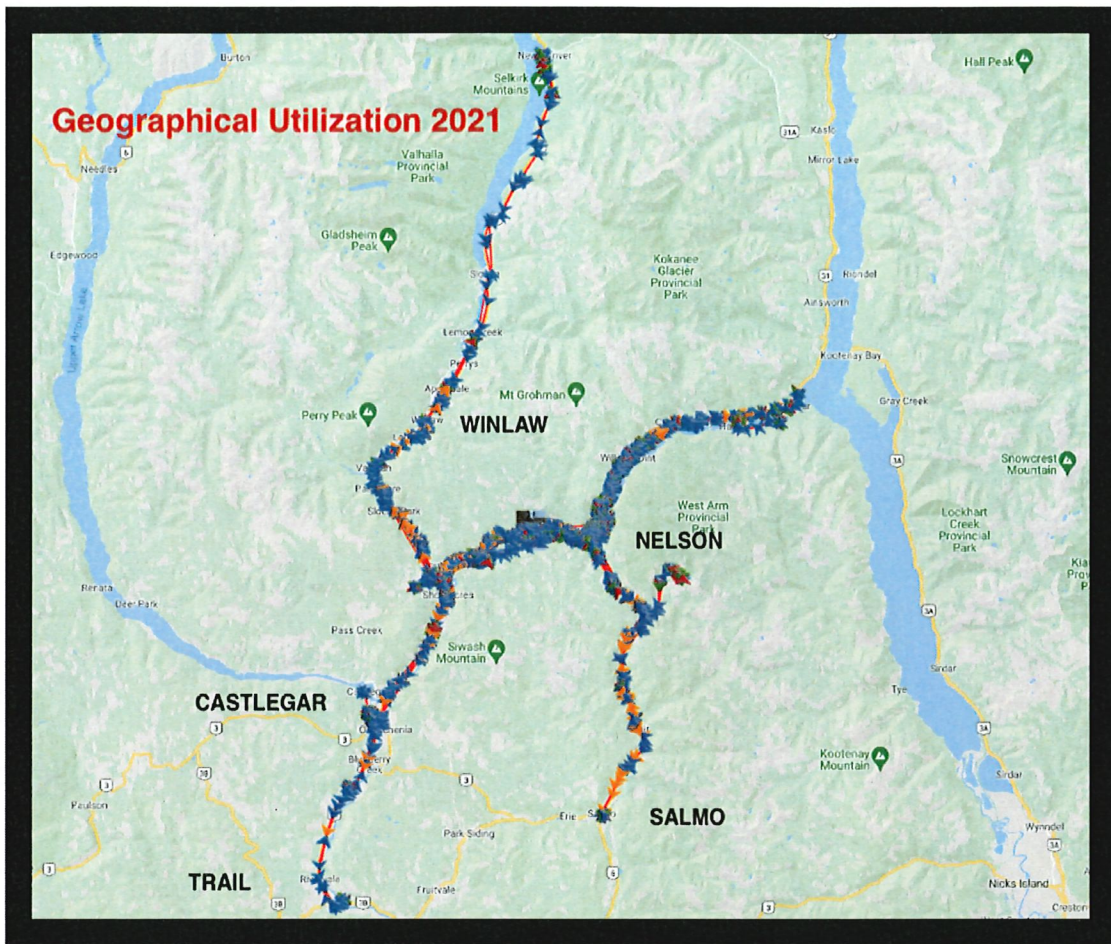
HEMORRHAGE CONTROL

DIRECT PRESSURE	2
HEMOSTATICS APPLICATION	1
TOURNIQUET USE	1

AIRWAY INTERVENTIONS

NASO-PHARYNGEAL AIRWAY	1
ENDOTRACHEAL TUBE INSERTION	3

Map 1 shows the geographically dispatch area for KERPA in 2021



Satellite Tracked Locations of ERP1 Response Vehicle

Program Developments

A number of improvements have been made to the ERP Program, since it began in May 2014, to enhance its effectiveness in the community.

- **Safety & Quality** - KERPA has a robust Safety and Quality Committee that meets quarterly, overseeing our operations. This has helped facilitate numerous improvements to ensure full Special Operations International Standards are met. We report to the BCEHS Medical Programs twice a year.
- **Physicians** - a second volunteer physician has joined KERPA and will be ready to respond by the summer of 2024 increasing our capacity in the Region. As part of KERPA's Special Operations Accreditation, we have stringent internal policies pertaining to the qualifications and training requirements of any physician wishing to work with the charity.
- **Scope of Practice** -The scope of medications KERPA provides continues to expand along with critical care and surgical equipment. In 2024 all KERPA vehicles will be carrying the Z Vent Transport Ventilators and our physicians are currently undergoing training for the use of these machine. Our ERPs participate in quarterly "Critical Skills Training" to practice all critical airway and surgical interventions, as well as scenario-based training.



**Critical Emergency Care Dispatches 2023
(38 patients)**

Number of Patients	Type of Call	Additional Information
15	Cardiac Arrest – Medical	x4 Drug overdose related
4	Cardiac Arrest - Traumatic	All motor vehicle related x1 Pediatric
5	Medical Emergencies	Seizure, Allergic Reaction, Overdoses
14	Trauma Related Dispatches	x1 Avalanche x10 Traffic Incidents x1 Massive Hemorrhage x1 Gunshot Wound x1 Drowning

A specific case is included below to demonstrate the service KERPA is able to provide:

Chain Saw Accident – Massive Hemorrhage

KERPA was able to respond to a remote incident by helicopter to assist a patient who accidentally cut one of their limbs with a chain saw.

The patient was monitored continuously throughout the flight using our cardiac monitor and given additional analgesia. The patient's limb was saved and they are now at home with their family rehabilitating.

"KERPA unquestionably played a pivotal role in preserving this patient's limb, alongside the other responding agencies."

Areas with potential for growth

1) Service Support

KERPA has received some program support from the BCEHS and local BC Ambulance Paramedics. However, communication and regional dispatch delays over the years have created additional administrative work for KERPA. This has negatively impacted our operational capacity and reach. Increased transparency, communication and service support would improve our ability to help critical patients and assist the Emergency Services.

Increased awareness and the establishment of collaborative partnerships with the Ministry of Health, Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues and Rural Coordination Centre of British Columbia could help in ongoing support and development of our reach as a Special Operations Medical Retrieval asset for the Province in the Kootenay Region.

2) Dispatch & Geographical Response Area

The current system for KERPA's dispatch is an automated cell phone text alert. On receiving the text alert, the ERP telephones Kamloops' dispatch to find out the call details and address of the location.

With the current system, the quickest time KERPA can respond from pager to being enroute is 4-5 minutes.

A Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) laptop, as used by local supervisors, would greatly speed up our ability to identify, and dispatch to, life threatening 911 calls in the Region.


3) Geographical Response Area

KERPA provides the highest level of ground pre-hospital critical care in the Kootenay Region. Over the years KERPA requested to be dispatched more regionally, being notified of all red and purple calls. Whilst this was slow to happen, we are thankful that as of April 2022, the BCEHS increased our reach to other nearby communities. The current system is working well and

Appendices:

Appendix 1

The Board of Directors of



Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems

hereby awards accreditation to

Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association

From July 17, 2021 to July 17, 2024

Presented in recognition for substantial compliance with CAMTS Accreditation Standards
in quality care and safety for patients requiring medical transport in the following categories:


Modes of Transport	Patient Types (<i>Care and Transport</i>)	Patient Types (<i>Transport Only</i>)	Levels of Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Wing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adult	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency Critical Care
<input type="checkbox"/> Rotorwing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PICU	<input type="checkbox"/> PICU	<input type="checkbox"/> Intensive Critical Care
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Surface Critical Care	<input type="checkbox"/> IABP	<input type="checkbox"/> IABP	<input type="checkbox"/> Specialty Care
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground ALS	<input type="checkbox"/> Perinatal	<input type="checkbox"/> Perinatal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special Operations
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground BLS	<input type="checkbox"/> Neonatal	<input type="checkbox"/> Neonatal	<input type="checkbox"/> ALS (Ground)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Escort	<input type="checkbox"/> ECMO	<input type="checkbox"/> ECMO	<input type="checkbox"/> BLS (Ground)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inhaled Nitric Oxide (INO)	<input type="checkbox"/> Inhaled Nitric Oxide (INO)	

**The Medical Transport Service is granted this Certificate of Accreditation
by the authority of
Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems**


An organization with equal representation from each of the following member organizations:

<p><i>Aerospace Medical Association</i></p> <p><i>Air Medical Operators Association</i></p> <p><i>Air Medical Physicians Association</i></p> <p><i>Air & Surface Transport Nurses Association</i></p> <p><i>American Academy of Pediatrics</i></p> <p><i>American Association of Critical Care Nurses</i></p> <p><i>American Association of Respiratory Care</i></p> <p><i>American College of Emergency Physicians</i></p> <p><i>American College of Surgeons</i></p> <p><i>Association of Air Medical Services</i></p> <p><i>Association of Critical Care Transport</i></p>	<p><i>Emergency Nurses Association</i></p> <p><i>European HEMS and Air Ambulance Committee</i></p> <p><i>International Association of Flight and Critical Care Paramedics</i></p> <p><i>International Association of Medical Transport Communications Specialists</i></p> <p><i>National Air Transportation Association</i></p> <p><i>National Association of EMS Physicians</i></p> <p><i>National Association of Neonatal Nurses</i></p> <p><i>National Association of State EMS Officials</i></p> <p><i>National EMS Pilots Association</i></p> <p><i>United States Transportation Command</i></p>
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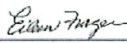
The Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems is dedicated to improving the quality of patient care and safety of the transport environment for services providing rotorwing, fixed wing and surface transport systems.



Chair



Secretary



Executive Director



Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association
518 Lake Street, Box 14, Nelson, BC V1L 4C6
Phone 1-778-738-2208
www.kerpa.org

April 17, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems will conduct an accreditation site visit of:

Kootenay Emergency Response Physicians Association on May 19 – 20, 2024.

The purpose of the site visit will be to evaluate the program's compliance with nationally established medical transport standards. The site visit results will be used to determine whether, and the conditions under which accreditation should be awarded to the program.

CAMTS accreditation standards deal with issues of patient care and safety of the transport environment. Anyone believing that he or she has pertinent or valid information about such matters may request a public information interview with the CAMTS site surveyors at the time of the site visit. Information presented at the interview will be carefully evaluated for relevance to the accreditation process. Requests for public information interviews must be made in writing and sent to CAMTS no later than 10 business days before the site survey begins. The request should also indicate the nature of the information to be provided during the interview. Such request should be addressed to:

Office of the Executive Director
Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems
PO Box 130
Sandy Springs, SC USA 29677

The Commission will acknowledge such written requests in writing or by telephone and will inform the program of the request for an interview. The Commission will, in turn, notify the interviewee of the date, time and place of the meeting.

This notice is posted in accordance with CAMTS requirements and shall not be removed until the site visit is completed.

Date Posted: _____

From: Paul <newsletter@bcruralhealth.org>

Sent: Friday, March 15, 2024 7:48 AM

To: Karissa Stroshein <admin@kaslo.ca>

Subject: March Mid-Month Update!

[View this email in your browser](#)



BCRHN

British Columbia Rural Health Network

February Mid Month Update

Introducing our new Director!

We are so pleased to introduce you to our newest director, Rhonda Elliott! Ronda's years of experience in the medical field and her lived and living experience in the Bella Coola Valley will be an excellent addition to our board. Welcome, Rhonda!

Rhonda has recently retired from the Bella Coola Medical Clinic where she worked closely with physicians for twenty-seven years, devoting herself to ensuring the best possible care for all the patients in the Bella Coola Valley. She has always been involved in her community by volunteering on numerous boards, including Co-op, Credit Union, Senior's housing, Fall Fair, and Parent Advisory Boards. Now retired from the clinic, she continues to work in health care as the Chapter Coordinator for the Rural and Remote Division of Family Practice, and pursuing new hobbies such as kayaking, sewing, and refinishing furniture.



Upcoming Workshops with Self-Management BC

Self-Management BC offers FREE health programs to adults in BC living with one or more ongoing health conditions.

In-person and virtual workshops are scheduled on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Self-management BC's website to see the full workshop schedule.

Self-Management BC Workshops



KNOWLEDGE + SKILLS + CONFIDENCE

put life back in your life

FREE Six-Session Workshops for Adults with Any Ongoing Health Conditions

- ✓ Learn techniques to better manage your health
- ✓ Set goals and problem solve
- ✓ Communicate more effectively with your family, friends, and health care team
- ✓ Deal with stress and difficult emotions
- ✓ Take action and live a healthier life

Family Members and Friends Welcome

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

ALSO AVAILABLE:

SELF-MANAGEMENT HEALTH COACH PROGRAM

FREE one-on-one phone support will help you get the most out of life!

Call 1-866-902-3767 or email smhcoach@uvic.ca for more information

IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS

Chronic Pain

Thompson-Nicola Regional Library
693 Tranquille Road
Kamloops BC
March 4 to April 15
Mondays, 1:00pm to 3:30pm

*

Orchard Valley Counselling Services
102—347 Leon Avenue
Kelowna BC
March 13 to April 17
Wednesdays, 4:00pm to 6:30pm

*

Nelson Public Library
602 Stanley Street
Nelson BC
March 20 to April 24
Wednesdays, 1:00pm to 3:30pm

To register or for further information:

www.selfmanagementbc.ca

604-940-1273 (Lower Mainland)

1-866-902-3767 (Toll Free)

selfmgmt@uvic.ca

Connect with us:  @SelfManagementBC
 @SMPatUVic



University of Victoria

Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health



BRITISH COLUMBIA



Join HCABC for their biannual Lunch and Learn Series, hosted by BCHPCA for both members and the public, covering a wide array of topics. For this Spring season, our series focuses on "Palliative Care Awareness: Bringing Hospice and Palliative Care to Home and Community."

Mark your calendars for **March 18th, 19th, and 20th**, where you can participate virtually from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm (PST). Additionally, don't miss their special in-person Panel Discussion on March 21st, 2024, taking place at the Executive Hotel Vancouver Airport (7311 Westminster Hwy, Richmond, BC V6X 1A3).

This series promises to be beneficial not only for the hospice palliative care community but also for individuals from charitable, non-profit, public, and private sector organizations. Whether you're a staff member, volunteer, or leader, this event will provide valuable insights and resources to support advocacy, partnership building, and government relations tailored to community needs.

They are excited to welcome distinguished speakers who will lead stimulating discussions, provide training, and offer education on how leaders and organizational teams can establish strategic advocacy relationships. Attendees can expect to gain practical knowledge on creating a diverse and inclusive environment to enhance community awareness, through advocacy.

[Learn More and register Here!](#)

Learn More and register Here!

Collaboration Opportunity with the Umbrella Mobile Clinics

Umbrella Mobile Clinics provides in-person and virtual health services to Spanish-speaking migrant farmworkers and is exploring partnerships with rural physicians in the Interior BC to extend the reach of the Umbrella Mobile Clinic into their communities.



Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op

If interested, please connect with the Program Coordinator, Shaina Schafers, as there may be an upcoming grant funding opportunity to support the work. She can be reached at: sschafers@umbrellacoop.ca or 778-512-0851

Learn about the supports and resources offered by Family Caregivers of BC

Family Caregivers of BC (FCBC) is a provincial, not-for-profit organization that proudly and compassionately supports over one million people in British Columbia who provide physical and/or emotional care to a family member, friend, or neighbour.

FCBC supports caregivers by providing access to information, education and support so that caregivers feel more confident and successful in their important role.

FCBC offers monthly virtual support groups for caregivers across BC. FCBC currently offers two virtual caregiver support group options:

1. **Adults Providing Elder Care: Virtual Support Group (closed group with 4 sessions):** This support group is tailored for adults taking care of elderly family members or friends. Participants find solace in sharing their experiences in a secure environment, exploring monthly topics on caregiving and coping strategies. This is a closed group with 4 sessions from 7:00 - 8:30 pm starting April 10th. To pre-register, please email: cgsupport@familycaregiversbc.ca
2. **Caregivers Connect: Virtual Support Group:** This group brings people together from across British Columbia who share a mutual experience of caregiving for a family member or friend. This support group is offered on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 2:00 - 3:30 pm. You can [register in advance here](#).

Family Caregivers of BC is proud to offer the virtual Powerhouse™ program that supports young caregivers. If you think you may be a young caregiver, or may know one, FCBC wants to hear from you! The program is led by a trained facilitator and will explore themes related to the experience of being a young caregiver.

This program is every Tuesday for four weeks starting on February 20, 2024 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm PT

To register, or [learn more about this program](#), please email our team at: youngcaregiverprogram@gmail.com



[Read FCBC's E-News](#)

Read FCBC's E-News

[Explore FCBC's Website](#)

Explore FCBC's Website



Family Caregivers of British Columbia

Save The Date
10th-11th May,
2024

NORTHERN
HOSPICE COLLABORATIVE PRESENT

Event Partners:



HOSPICE EDUCATION DAYS Strength In Coming Together

📍 UDA DUNE BAIYOH - PRINCE GEORGE

Early Bird Registration Period
11th March, 2024 - 1st April, 2024

PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

- ✓ Multicultural competency to support end-of-life care
- ✓ Learn how to implement care and programs that are inclusive, anti-racist and de-colonizing
- ✓ Networking to lessen isolation and provide inspiration and motivation

SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT

Richard Groves is an author, international lecturer, media producer and co-Founder of the Sacred Art of Living Center in Bend, Oregon



This year's Hospice Education Days event promises to be a unique and informative experience focusing on the specific needs of Northern Hospice Collaborative and the communities they support. The two-day in-person event will feature various engaging sessions and workshops addressing the challenges and opportunities of delivering

hospice care in northern regions. We have curated a program centred around the theme of "Northern Hospice Collaborative - Strength in Coming Together."

Topics such as multicultural competency to support end-of-life care, community outreach, and the practicality of virtual grief support will be covered in depth, providing attendees with practical tools and insights to better serve the hospice and palliative care communities. Additionally, the event will offer opportunities for networking and collaboration with allied professionals and community members.

The event is an excellent opportunity for hospice care industry professionals to stay updated, connected, and motivated while gaining valuable insight into the specific needs of northern communities.

Please stay tuned for more information on the [BC Hospice Palliative Care Association's website!](#)

Register Here!

Travel Assistance with Kindness and Compassion!

Hope Air is doing more than many know to help people reach medical treatment and appointments in BC and across Canada. Their "no patient left behind" policy is inspiring and greatly needed by many rural residents in our province. Hope Air provides not only air travel where needed but also helps many with out-of-pocket costs associated with accessing the care they need. Hotels, meals and ground transportation are all aspects of service that Hope Air not only provides but coordinates for those in need. [Visit Hope Air!](#)

BOARDING PASS

HOPE AIR

Passenger:
Atticus, 5 years old

Reason for travel:
Battling neuromuscular disease

Travel route:
Kelowna to Vancouver

Started travelling with Hope Air:
2022

Number of trips:
5 lifetime trips

BOARDING PASS

Hope Air's commitment is to ensure that no patient in need is left behind when it comes to accessing vital medical appointments.

We achieve this by offering four core programs to assist patients and their escorts with free Airline Travel, Hotel Accommodations, Meal Vouchers and Ground Transportation.

We only have two main criteria for assessing applications for the travel request:

- ✔ Confirmed medical appointment covered under the provincial health plan and supporting documentation
- ✔ You are in financial need to cover the cost of travel to medical appointments far from home



Learn more at:
hopeair.ca



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From: BC Rural Health Network <newsletter@bcruralhealth.org>

Sent: Monday, April 1, 2024 7:14 AM

To: Karissa Stroshein <admin@kaslo.ca>

Subject: Rural Health Matters April Edition



BCRHN

British Columbia
Rural Health Network

April 2024 Edition

April is Organ Donation Awareness Month

In this edition of the newsletter, you will see that the BC Rural Health Network has been actively working with a variety of groups to improve equitable access to transplant surgery for all residents in BC. This work has uncovered the many hardships that folks face throughout their transplant journey. It has also shone a light on the remarkable gift of life that many have provided by putting their name forward on the donor list. We commend all those who take the two minutes required to potentially [save up to eight other lives!](#)

There are many unsung heroes within this narrative - the dedicated transplant teams, healthcare professionals, health authorities, social workers, non-profit organizations, researchers and government agencies. Their unwavering commitment and exceptional care illuminate the lives of those awaiting life-saving procedures across our vibrant province. To these remarkable individuals and groups, we offer our heartfelt gratitude and recognition.

We stand in solidarity with those who find themselves overlooked, those who have been ensnared by despair, and those whose pleas for help remain unheeded. Our mission is to advocate for the equitable treatment promised under the Canada Health Act, ensuring that no one remains unseen within a healthcare system that, too often, overlooks the most vulnerable. Change is on the horizon. Should you wish to join us in this pivotal movement, or if you need support, reach out at info@bcruralhealth.org

Please take a moment and ensure you are a [registered organ donor](#). Thank you!

2023 Donation & Transplant Highlights



563 people received a transplant in 2023

Thanks to the gifts from:

160 deceased donors.

77 living kidney donors.

Numbers include 13 multi-organ transplants



22 heart transplants

353 kidney transplants

77 lung transplants

112 liver transplants

12 pancreas and islet transplants

Hospitals referred potential donors **989 times**

6,156 transplant recipients receiving care in B.C.

1.59 mil British Columbians have registered their organ donation decision



Thank you to our healthcare teams across B.C. who make organ donation and transplant possible.

* **Record** January 1- December 31, 2023



Register as an organ donor at **taketwominutes.ca**

[A Letter from our President](#)

Dear Readers,

April 1st! It's no joke about how quickly time seems to fly! And definitely no joke how much happened in the month of March!

I reviewed our mission statement recently:

The BC Rural Health Network (BCRHN) is the healthcare voice for all rural residents of British Columbia.

I must say for one short sentence, it is so awe-inspiring and maybe at times a bit daunting. Yet I believe in going big or going home when it comes to something so needed!

And I guess I'm not alone! We have grown in our membership and our board of directors has almost doubled in the last 6 months.

In keeping with the statement 'if you've been to one rural BC community ...you've been to one BC rural community '! I'm not sure who exactly said it but they were sure on the money!

Expanding both our membership as well as the Board of Directors helps us represent and communicate not only the common issues that affect rural BC but also the uniqueness of the individual communities.

There have been numerous issues in the province that have, I must admit, made me frustrated and frankly scared. However, as you will read on in Paul's report, so proud of the work we do.

So much of what we look at is how to inform policy on a larger scale, such as transportation and access, but this month I have heard firsthand just how life-altering bringing forward and communicating the issues can be.

Paul's report will discuss the efforts and the amazing work of the Transplant Committee. I am in awe of the work of this committee and the work of our members on the committee. Dr. Jude Kornelsen, who, as you know, is a liaison to our board and our Executive Director Paul Adams, and their work in conjunction with the Lung Transplant Housing Support team is creating change, gaining insights into lived experiences and informing many.

It is though, with heartfelt thanks and gratitude, I want to thank Christina Derkson-Unrau for sharing her story as she now awaits her life-saving surgery. By doing so she is highlighting the need for transplant housing and other issues, that are impacting the lives of all those in need of transplants who do not reside in Vancouver. Thank you, Chris. You are an inspiration!

Unfortunately, the last month also brought up more difficulties in rural areas, closures of Emergency rooms and diversions, all greatly affect rural residents across the province. The extra travel, the cost, and the extra stress that is put on not only the person seeking treatment but their family and community. It also affects the bigger centers whose workload increases. Further work on this province-wide issue is needed at a policy level as well as practical measures put in place.

A very scary situation arose last week when [911 services were disrupted](#) across a large part of the interior of B.C. This affected Emergency Services' such as Ambulance and Fire as well as the RCMP.

This has highlighted the need for backup service plans, and hopefully, these are being discussed.

I do also want to give a shout out to the DEIB committee of our board. They are committed to bringing us information and stories from people who are marginalized in our province and how they are affected by the health care system. There is so much to learn!

Please enjoy the rest of the newsletter! And the amazing stories that are shared!

Have a wonderful April!

Only my best!

Peggy

[From the Desk of the Executive Director](#)

Dear Readers,

As Peggy has described, the past month has been a transformative period for many within the BC Rural Health Network and for those we have the privilege of serving. The emotional toll of immersing ourselves in the lived experiences of individuals across our province cannot be understated. While we are not directly living these hardships, the act of bearing witness to the life-altering realities, discrimination, and systemic barriers faced by our fellow rural residents has been both heart-wrenching and eye-opening.

This month, we've been confronted with stark reminders of the inequities within our healthcare system—stories of life hanging in the balance due to financial constraints, of [emergency rooms closing doors](#), and of the [critical lifelines of transportation](#) and [communication failing](#) those in desperate need. These accounts paint a sobering picture of the challenges confronting rural and remote communities in British Columbia.

Yet, amidst this darkness, we've also been witnesses to incredible acts of humanity and kindness. The story of Christina Derkson-Unrau, once a symbol of lost hope, has transformed into a beacon of light. Christina's journey from despair to renewed hope, supported by the overwhelming generosity and support of the community, underscores the power of collective action and compassion. Her story, along with those of Tawnee, Erika, and Asmaa, who have shared their harrowing yet inspiring

transplant journeys, highlights the critical need for systemic change and the importance of accessible healthcare for all, regardless of geographical location.

Chris' story has been told across all media platforms but if you haven't seen, heard or read it yet please follow these links:

[Global TV \(1st Story\) - B.C. Woman Says She Can't Get Transplant Because Of Cost](#)

[Global TV \(2nd Story\) - B.C. Patients Forced To Travel Need More Financial Support](#)

[CTV News - 'We're The Forgotten Ones' B.C. Premier To Meet](#)

[CKNW Radio - Transplant inequities and ER Closure in Prince Rupert](#)

[CBC Radio West radio - Life-Saving Journey](#)

[Similkameen Spotlight - Penticton Entrepreneur Hailed As 'An Angel On Earth'](#)

[Omni TV \(Punjab edition\) - BUISNESMMAN HELPED LUNG TRANSPLANT PATIENT](#)



Image by Andrea Demeer - Similkameen Spotlight - Christina Derkson-Unrau and Gary Johal

We sincerely thank all who are helping Christina to not only receive the support she needs for surgery but also the support we need to go to Victoria and to see our Premier. A special thanks to the generous provision of flights to Victoria that have been arranged by [Hope Air](#) and through the generosity of [Harbour Air](#), we thank you so much!

The challenges we face are numerous, from ongoing ER closures to the broader issues of healthcare accessibility in rural areas. However, the spotlight cast by these stories has opened doors to critical discussions and opportunities for advocacy at the highest levels of government. Our upcoming meeting on April 11th with the Premier and key political figures in Victoria is a testament to the impact of our collective voice and the momentum we are building towards meaningful change.

Our efforts have not been without their struggles. The pursuit of grants and funding to support our mission has been met with challenges, underscoring the competitive and often exhausting nature of securing financial support for rural health initiatives. Yet, we remain undeterred, bolstered by the promise of discussions with government officials and the potential for opening new funding avenues to allow us to do our work in a meaningful way. More to come next month on our financial hurdles, barriers and the growing gap between our governments and the rural communities they represent!



In reflection, this month has been a profound reminder of the strength found in unity and the potential for change when we come together as a community. The stories of struggles and successes along with the tireless efforts of our team and the broader network, illustrate the critical importance of our work and the undeniable impact of collective voices.

As we look ahead, we do so with renewed determination and hope, driven by the belief that together, we can overcome the barriers to equitable healthcare in rural and remote British Columbia. We are a village, and it is together that we will forge a path toward a healthier, more inclusive future for all our residents.

As Christina likes to say “we got this bud!”

If you or your organization are not members, please consider including your voice with ours, the cost is minimal (\$30 to \$50) but the impact of including your voice with ours is priceless, please [join us here](#).

Yours in health and wellness,

Paul

Community Connect: An Update on Our Outreach Initiatives

Hi everyone!

For those I haven't had the pleasure of connecting with yet, please allow me to extend a warm introduction. My name is Phoebe and I am the Community Outreach Coordinator with the BC Rural Health Network.

As many of you know, in my role with the BCRHN as the community outreach coordinator, I have been engaged in a Community Outreach Initiative in collaboration with the [BC Association of Community Health Centres \(BCACHC\)](#) and the Innovations Solutions Unit (ISU) at UBC, [Hope Air](#) and [United Way BC \(UWBC\)](#) over the past few months.



As I continue with outreach work, I am immensely grateful for everyone who has taken the time to speak with me and share their insights and personal experiences related to accessing care in their community. We sure have some incredible individuals across the province working tirelessly to make positive change!

Through my outreach, I am confronted with countless stories depicting the hardships associated with limited access to care in the community and people having to leave their homes, their communities and their families to access care in larger centers which often has massive negative impacts associated with financial burdens, emotional distress, isolation and insurmountable logistical challenges. These stories demonstrate the importance of travel assistance programs such as [Hope Air](#), who are actively working to reduce the burden rural residents face.

As it is easy to focus on the negative, and the BC Rural Health Network is solutions-based, I think it is important to highlight some organizations that are actively working to improve healthcare access in rural BC.

[Options for Sexual Health](#) provides sexual and reproductive health care, information and education from a feminist, pro-choice, sex-positive perspective to BC residents. There are over 60 Options clinics across the province, many of which are located in rural BC. The clinics provide access to confidential, non-judgmental sexual health care rooted in reproductive choice. The clinics are run by certified nurses, doctors, and trained volunteers and provide birth control counselling, free contraceptives, sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening, cervical screening, pregnancy testing, pregnancy counselling, and general sexual health information and referrals. Services are LGBTQ2S+ friendly and for all ages in most locations. Options for Sexual Health now also offers telehealth. You can see a full list of Options Clinics across BC [here](#).

As you may know from last month's newsletter, I am a huge fan of [Foundry](#). Foundry provides safe, non-judgmental care, information and resources, and works to reach young people earlier – before health challenges become problematic. Foundry brings health and social services together in a single place to make it easier for young people to find the care, connection and support they need. At the beginning of March, the Province of BC announced 10 new Foundry Centre locations, several of which will serve rural and remote communities! Foundry's commitment to improving access and services in rural BC is commendable.

Thank you for reading! As always, I am continuing my community outreach work and would love to hear from you. Please feel free to send me an email at phoebe.lazier@bcruralhealth.org.

Best,
Phoebe

Collaboration opportunity with Umbrella Mobile Clinics

Umbrella Mobile Clinics provides in-person and virtual health services to Spanish-speaking migrant farmworkers and is exploring partnerships with rural physicians in the Interior BC to extend the reach of the Umbrella Mobile Clinic into their communities.

If interested, please connect with the Program Coordinator, Shaina Schafers, as there may be an upcoming [grant funding opportunity](#) to support the work. She can be reached at: sschafers@umbrellacoop.ca or 778-512-0851



Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op

Register Now

100 BRITISH COLUMBIA
RHC Rural Health
CONFERENCE

May 24 - 26, 2024

Whistler Conference Centre
On the ancestral and traditional territory of
the Skwxwú7mesh and Lílwat7úl peoples

There's something special about the [BC Rural Health Conference](#). It's not just the knowledge you gain, but also the friendships you form. Embrace the excitement, the learning, and the camaraderie that makes this event so exceptional!

We are thrilled to feature an amazing line-up of speakers and topics in our program that is packed with opportunities to network and interact with individuals who can share and learn the unique benefits of rural practice. Highlights include:

- Social and networking events to connect with rural peers, including locums
- Interactive breakout sessions and hands-on skills workshops to discover current and emerging trends in rural medicine
- Pre-conference courses include: [The CARE Course Goes WILDE](#) and the [Rural POCUS Congress](#)
- Presentation of the BC Rural Health Awards on Friday afternoon
- Wellness opportunities, including stretching and yoga sessions, complimentary chair massages, guided hikes and other excursions
- Free (and fun) childcare during conference hours

Register now! Discounted rates end March 31.

Register Here!

Nurturing Networks with the Caregiver Rx Program: Healthcare Providers Recognizing Family Caregivers

A family caregiver is a family member or friend who gives unpaid care and support to a loved one facing illness, disability, or aging. Despite its rewards, caregivers are often at risk of burnout. In B.C., about 34% of the 1.3 million caregivers are distressed.

If you are a healthcare professional, did you know that you are in a unique position to identify caregivers and encourage them to seek support early in their caring roles?



Once you've identified a family caregiver, you can easily make an online referral to FCBC's Caregiver Rx Referral and Consent Form [here](#).

Upon receiving a referral from a healthcare provider, FCBC's Caregiver Support Team reaches out to the caregiver within 2 business days. We conduct an intake session to understand their needs, prioritize their well-being, and offer emotional support. Additionally, we assist with system navigation and provide access to resources to enhance caregiver capacity and confidence.

For more information, email info@familycaregiversbc.ca or call toll-free 1-877-520-3267

Working Caregivers Connect: BC Virtual Support Group

This support group fosters a supportive environment where you can freely share your experiences, seek valuable advice, and connect with others who are also navigating the delicate balance between caregiving and work. This support group is offered on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm.

Register in Advance Here!



Facts on organ donation and transplant in B.C.

Did you know?	If you live in B.C., you must register your organ donation decision to have it officially recorded, either online or on a paper form. If you aren't registered, your family will decide for you.	You are more likely to need a transplant than you are to become an organ donor. Only 1-2% of deaths in hospital occur in a way that allows for organs to be donated.
Organ donation is considered only after all life-saving efforts are made. Two doctors, not involved in transplant, must declare death before organ donation can proceed.	Don't count yourself out. Register as an organ donor and let the specialists decide if your organs are healthy enough to be donated.	There is no age limit! You're never too old or too young to register. Anyone with a Personal Health Number can register.
	You only need to register once, and please talk to your loved ones about your wishes.	Think you're registered? Verify online at transplant.bc.ca and be sure!

April Member of the Month: Canadian Cancer Society



Canadian
Cancer
Society

Soci t 
canadienne
du cancer

‘You have cancer.’

These are three of the most devastating words a person can hear and, unfortunately, it’s estimated 30,400 people living in British Columbia were diagnosed with cancer and heard these words last year. At the Canadian Cancer Society, we know how hard it is to receive a cancer diagnosis. It’s even harder if you need to travel to receive care, which is a reality for those living in rural communities.

That’s why, with our partners at Hope Air and with the generous support of the Government of British Columbia, we have expanded our Cancer Travel and Accommodation Services program to support more people all across British Columbia. We hope this program will help reduce some of the financial burden of a cancer diagnosis, especially for those who need to travel to receive care.



For people living in rural communities, we know the burden of a cancer diagnosis goes beyond the physical and emotional burden. The logistics, and cost, of travelling to appointments can be overwhelming. A recent survey we conducted in partnership with the Angus Reid Group found that a staggering 90 per cent of people in British Columbia feel a sudden cancer diagnosis would impact their household finances. Sixty-six per cent said that the financial burden of cancer-related expenses would have a significant impact on their stress and mental health.






“We know each person’s cancer experience is as unique as they are,” said Mona Rozdale, Director, Cancer Support, Integration, Canadian Cancer Society. “With this in

mind, the Cancer Travel and Accommodation Services program has been created to provide a range of support options. We have a dedicated team of client support specialists who can help people navigate the program. Our goal is to provide as much support as possible to as many people as possible, especially for people living in rural and remote communities who need to travel to receive their cancer care.”

What support does the program offer?

The table below summarizes the support that is available. We’re pleased that through the expanded Cancer Travel and Accommodation Services program, we are:

- Increasing access and eligibility for travel grants through our Travel Treatment Fund while providing more funding to each eligible applicant and establishing a leukemia/bone marrow transplant grant for patients needing to travel for transplants
- Working with our partners at [Hope Air](#) to provide air transportation, ensuring people can get the support they need to get to and from their medical appointments however and whenever they need
- Eliminating patients’ out-of-pocket costs to stay at our BC-based Lodges for those who are not supported by any other government program (a nominal fee still remains for caregivers). We operate lodges in Vancouver, Victoria, Prince George and Kelowna
- Expanding our Wheels of Hope volunteer driving service to underserved areas in Vancouver Island and the Kootenay region

 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE* Travel Treatment Fund	Funding to help reduce cancer-related travel expenses within BC. Even if you’re travelling a short distance, financial support may still be available to help ease your travel expenses.
 BONE MARROW GRANT* Travel Treatment Fund	Funding to help support BC residents who need to travel or temporarily relocate to receive a bone marrow transplant.
 AIR TRANSPORTATION* Hope Air	Free flights arranged by Hope Air for those who need to travel for their medical appointments. To learn more about Hope Air’s travel support, visit hopeair.ca , email info@hopeair.ca or call 1-877-346-HOPE (4673).
 GROUND TRANSPORTATION Wheels of Hope	Free rides to BC medical centres supporting Prince George, the Southern Interior, Vancouver Island and underserved areas in BC through our Wheels of Hope program.
 ACCOMMODATIONS** CCS Lodges	Free lodging for people being treated for cancer who are not supported by any other government program. A support person may also stay for a nominal fee.

*Eligibility is based on your household income and the distance from your residence to the BC medical centre where you’re being treated

Who is eligible for the program?

Anyone who received cancer treatment in British Columbia on or after April 1, 2023, or is in treatment now, can apply to the program. Eligibility criteria for travel grants are based on household income and how far you need to travel to receive care. Some of our programs, like Wheels of Hope and our Lodges, are open to anyone receiving cancer treatment, regardless of income.

How are travel grants paid out?

It takes approximately two weeks for applications to be processed. If you qualify for a travel grant, you will receive a cheque by mail at the address provided on the application form. There is no need to keep receipts, as this is a grant, and you can apply for the program as long as you were in treatment on or after April 1, 2023, even if your treatment is now finished.

How can you apply?

Visit the [Cancer Travel and Accommodation Services](#) page on our website to learn more and fill out an application form, or call us at 1-888-939-3333 to speak with a dedicated Client Support Specialist. We're here to help.

The Canadian Cancer Society works tirelessly to save and improve lives. We fund the brightest minds in cancer research. We provide a compassionate support system for all those affected by cancer, across Canada and for all types of cancer. As the voice for people who care about cancer, we work with governments to shape a healthier society. No other organization does all that we do to make lives better today and transform the future of cancer forever. Help us make a difference. Call 1-888-939-3333 or visit cancer.ca today.

[Visit the Canadian Cancer Society](#)

[See more members of the month here.](#)

Call for Study Participants: Building Virtual Relationships: Rural Perspectives of the Therapeutic Relationship in Online Counselling.

Emma, an M.A. in Counselling Psychology Student at Adler University, is researching how adults in rural areas feel about online counseling. She would like to hear your experiences connecting with counselors online.

She is interested in knowing:

- What helped you connect with an online therapist?
- What didn't help?
- What else may have helped?

Study Criteria:

- Are you 19 years old or older?
- Have you lived most of your life in a Canadian rural community with fewer than 10,000 people, that is located outside of the commuting zone of an urban community (with a population of greater than 10,000 people)?
- Are you comfortable reading and speaking English?
- Did you have a good experience with online counseling?
- Did you do at least six online counseling sessions, like on Zoom or over the phone?
- Do you feel that currently, you are in a good place in terms of mental health?
- Is your emotional distress level currently at a 5 or lower on a scale of 0 to 10 where 10 is extreme distress?
- Can you do a 1-to-2-hour virtual interview and a 30-to-60-minute follow-up chat about your online counseling?
- Can you confirm you didn't have any other relationship with your counselor besides online counseling (i.e., friend, relative, co-worker)?
- Can you confirm you don't know the student researcher personally (i.e., friend, relative, co-worker)?

Your participation is voluntary, and your information will be kept confidential.

If you are interested or would like more information, please email Emma Fletcher at efletcher@adler.edu.

This research was approved by the Adler University Research Ethics Board – Vancouver Campus.

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2022

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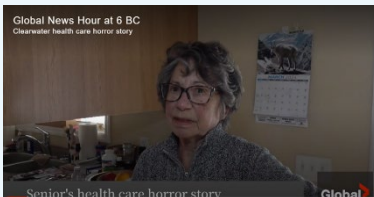
We only have two main criteria for assessing applications for the travel request:

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- ✓ You are in financial need to cover the cost of travel to medical appointments far from home

Learn more at:
hopeair.ca



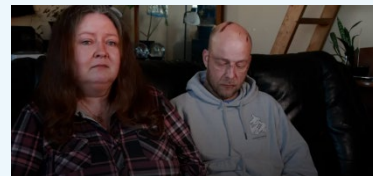

Popular Posts and News from March 2024



[B.C. Senior Discharged From Hospital Alone With No Ride To Home 120km Away](#)



[Penticton Entrepreneur Hailed As 'An Angel On Earth'](#)



['Abandoned By The System': Prince Rupert Family Shares Health-Care Horror Story](#)



[Health Canada Clarifies Eligibility For Seniors Under National Dental Care Plan](#)



[B.C. Medical Students Offer 5-Point Plan For Fixing Emergency Care](#)



['We're The Forgotten Ones': B.C. Premier To Meet With Woman Who Took Herself Off Transplant List Due To Costs](#)

We look forward to connecting with you.



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BCRHN
British Columbia
Rural Health Network

taketwominutes.ca Register as an organ donor

From: BC Rural Health Network <newsletter@bcruralhealth.org>

Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 7:52 AM

To: Karissa Stroshein <admin@kaslo.ca>

Subject: April Mid-Month Update!

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BCRHN

British Columbia
Rural Health Network

April Mid Month Update

**From Crisis To Care: How BC Can
Transform Transplant Access For Rural
Residents**



On April 11, 2024, Christina Derksen Unrau, Jaqueline Podewils (BC Lung Transplant Housing) and Paul Adams (BC Rural Health Network) meet with Premier David Eby in Victoria

Recent developments in British Columbia signal a pivotal shift towards equitable healthcare, particularly for those requiring organ transplants. Premier David Eby and various government officials engaged in intensive discussions this past week, addressing critical challenges faced by rural residents in need of life-saving transplants.

Christina Derksen-Unrau, a rural patient who had to withdraw herself from the transplant list due to prohibitive costs, catalyzed these conversations. Her ordeal illuminated the severe financial strains and logistical hurdles that many outside Greater Vancouver endure. In response to her situation, BC leaders, including Premier Eby, have vowed to reevaluate and enhance healthcare policies to ensure equitable access for all, as mandated by the Canada Health Act.



Over two days of dialogues in Victoria, Christina and her husband Arlen advocated alongside Paul Adams, Executive Director of the BC Rural Health Network, and Jacqueline Podewils, Co-Chair Lung Transplant Housing Support, emphasized the necessity of systemic reforms. Among the proposed changes are increased funding for high-acuity patient travel and accommodation. This initiative aims to reduce the massive costs that patients like Derksen-Unrau are forced to undertake, which not only incur significant personal expenses but also reflect inefficiencies in the healthcare system.

Moreover, the concept of ‘patient navigators’ was introduced to help guide individuals through their medical journeys, ensuring that no one is left to navigate the complex system alone. Discussions also touched on replacing temporary lodging solutions with permanent medical housing to provide safer, more cost-effective options for patients.



Highlighting the broad-based support for these initiatives, officials from various political spectrums acknowledged the need for action. “The acknowledgment from all parties during our discussions has been reassuring,” stated Adams. “It’s clear there’s a unified commitment to address these disparities and support our rural communities effectively.”



The provincial government's commitment extends beyond immediate financial aid, with suggestions to lobby for federal support and ensure sustainable funding models. The involvement of organizations like Hope Air and the potential for philanthropic contributions to support infrastructural developments were also discussed.



As BC strives to reform its healthcare landscape, the emphasis remains on practical, compassionate solutions that respect both the economic and personal dignity of every resident. “Change is inevitable, and with the concerted efforts of all stakeholders, we’re poised to make a significant impact,” Adams concluded, optimistic about the future of healthcare in British Columbia.

[See the GlobalTV story here....](#)

[See the CTV News story here....](#)

Special thanks to **[Harbour Air](#)** for donating the flights to Victoria.



Chris and Arlen heading to Victoria on a float plane to see the Premier

April is Organ Donation Awareness Month

The BC Rural Health Network has been actively working with a variety of groups to improve equitable access to transplant surgery for all residents in BC. This work has uncovered the many hardships that folks face throughout their transplant journey. It has also shone a light on the remarkable gift of life that many have provided by putting their name forward on the donor list. We commend all those who take the two minutes required to potentially save up to eight other lives!

There are many unsung heroes within this narrative - the dedicated transplant teams, healthcare professionals, health authorities, social workers, non-profit organizations, researchers and government agencies. Their unwavering commitment and exceptional care illuminate the lives of those awaiting life-saving procedures across our vibrant province. To these remarkable individuals and groups, we offer our heartfelt gratitude and recognition.

We stand in solidarity with those who find themselves overlooked, those who have been ensnared by despair, and those whose pleas for help remain unheeded. Our mission is to advocate for the equitable treatment promised under the Canada Health Act, ensuring that no one remains unseen within a healthcare system that, too often,

overlooks the most vulnerable. Change is on the horizon. Should you wish to join us in this pivotal movement, or if you need support, reach out at info@bcrruralhealth.org

Please take a moment and ensure you are a registered organ donor. Thank you!

2023 Donation & Transplant Highlights

563 people ^{*} received a transplant in 2023

Thanks to the gifts from:

- 160** deceased donors. ^{*}
- 77** living kidney donors.

Numbers include 13 multi-organ transplants

22 heart transplants

353 kidney transplants ^{*}

77 lung transplants ^{*}

112 liver transplants ^{*}

12 pancreas and islet transplants

Hospitals referred potential donors **989 times** ^{*}

6,156 transplant recipients receiving care in B.C.

1.59 mil British Columbians have registered their organ donation decision

Thank you to our healthcare teams across B.C. who make organ donation and transplant possible.

^{*} **Record** January 1- December 31, 2023

Register as an organ donor at **taketwominutes.ca**

Facts on organ donation and transplant in B.C.

Did you know?

If you live in B.C., you must register your organ donation decision to have it officially recorded, either online or on a paper form. If you aren't registered, your family will decide for you.

You are more likely to need a transplant than you are to become an organ donor. Only 1-2% of deaths in hospital occur in a way that allows for organs to be donated.

Organ donation is considered only after all life-saving efforts are made. Two doctors, not involved in transplant, must declare death before organ donation can proceed.

Don't count yourself out. Register as an organ donor and let the specialists decide if your organs are healthy enough to be donated.

There is no age limit! You're never too old or too young to register. Anyone with a Personal Health Number can register.



You only need to register once, and please talk to your loved ones about your wishes.

Think you're registered?

Verify online at transplant.bc.ca and be sure!

Register as an organ donor at taketwominutes.ca

#TakeTwoMinutes and save a life
One organ donor can save eight lives.

Contact Us info@bct.phsa.ca 1-800-663-6189

[@BCTransplant](https://www.facebook.com/BCTransplant) [@BC_Transplant](https://www.instagram.com/BC_Transplant)

Register to become an organ donor

Register Now!

Provincial Learning Event: Coordinating Community-Based Solutions for Older Adults

Join the BC Association of Community Response Networks and United Way BC on **April 16 at 10:30 am PDT** to hear about local community programs and resources at work across the province to ensure the safety and wellness of older adults.

Learn about:

- United Way BC and their new healthy aging program and service model, including the new Community Connector positions that are being rolled out across the province and enhancements to the Better at Home program.
- BC Community Response Networks and our work to keep communities safe from abuse & neglect through awareness and prevention as we develop a coordinated community response.

Speakers:

- Lisa Cyr, Regional Community Developer (Interior BC) – Healthy Aging Team
- Dr. Beverley Pitman, Senior Regional Community Developer (Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley, Sea to Sky) – Healthy Aging Team
- Indira Riadi, Regional Community Developer (Fraser Health Region) – Healthy Aging Team
- Sharon Johnson, Director of Administration – BC Association of Community Response Networks (BC CRN)



[Register now!](#)



United Way
British Columbia



BC ASSOCIATION OF
Community Response Networks

Stopping Adult Abuse and Neglect ...Together.

Callout for Stories: Seeking Rural BC Residents' Experiences with Travelling to Access Care in Urban Centres

Are you a resident of rural British Columbia who has had to travel to larger urban centres to access medical care? We want to hear from you!

Living in rural areas can present unique challenges when it comes to accessing healthcare services. We're looking for individuals willing to share their personal stories and experiences with:

- The difficulties and obstacles faced in accessing medical care in rural BC.
- Instances where you've had to travel to larger urban centres for specialized treatment or services.
- The impact of travel on your health, finances, and overall well-being.
- Successes or challenges encountered during your healthcare journey.
- Instances where you have utilized Hope Air's services or other travel assistance programs.

Your story could help shed light on the importance of accessible healthcare services in rural communities and advantageous travel assistance programs such as Hope Air.

If you're willing to share your story, please reach out to Phoebe Lazier at phoebe.lazier@bcruralhealth.org. Your voice matters, and together, we can raise awareness and work towards better healthcare access for all residents of British Columbia.

Collaboration Opportunity with the Umbrella Mobile Clinic

Umbrella Mobile Clinics provides in-person and virtual health services to Spanish-speaking migrant farmworkers and is exploring partnerships with rural physicians in the Interior BC to extend the reach of the Umbrella Mobile Clinic into their communities.



Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op

If interested, please connect with the Program Coordinator, Shaina Schafers, as there may be an upcoming grant funding opportunity to support the work. She can be reached at: sschafers@umbrellacoop.ca or 778-512-0851

Learn about the supports and resources offered by Family Caregivers of BC

Family Caregivers of BC (FCBC) is a provincial, not-for-profit organization that proudly and compassionately supports over one million people in British Columbia who provide physical and/or emotional care to a family member, friend, or neighbour.

FCBC supports caregivers by providing access to information, education and support so that caregivers feel more confident and successful in their important role.

FCBC offers monthly virtual support groups for caregivers across BC. FCBC currently offers two virtual caregiver support group options:

1. **Adults Providing Elder Care: Virtual Support Group (closed group with 4 sessions):** This support group is tailored for adults taking care of elderly family members or friends. Participants find solace in sharing their experiences in a secure environment, exploring monthly topics on caregiving and coping strategies. This is a closed group with 4 sessions from 7:00 - 8:30 pm starting April 10th. To pre-register, please email: cgsupport@familycaregiversbc.ca
2. **Caregivers Connect: Virtual Support Group:** This group brings people together from across British Columbia who share a mutual experience of caregiving for a family member or friend. This support group is offered on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 2:00 - 3:30 pm. You can [register in advance here](#).

Family Caregivers of BC is proud to offer the virtual Powerhouse™ program that supports young caregivers. If you think you may be a young caregiver, or may know one, FCBC wants to hear from you! The program is led by a trained facilitator and will explore themes related to the experience of being a young caregiver.

This program is every Tuesday for four weeks starting on February 20, 2024 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm PT

To register, or [learn more about this program](#), please email our team at: youngcaregiverprogram@gmail.com



[Read FCBC's E-News](#)

[Explore FCBC's Website](#)



**Family Caregivers
of British Columbia**

Save The Date
10th-11th May, 2024

NORTHERN HOSPICE COLLABORATIVE PRESENT
HOSPICE EDUCATION DAYS
Strength In Coming Together
UDA DUNE BAIYOH - PRINCE GEORGE

Event Partners:
NORTHERN HOSPICE COLLABORATIVE
British Columbia HOSPICE PALLIATIVE CARE Association

Early Bird Registration Period
11th March, 2024 – 1st April, 2024

PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

- ✓ Multicultural competency to support end-of-life care
- ✓ Learn how to implement care and programs that are inclusive, anti-racist and de-colonizing
- ✓ Networking to lessen isolation and provide inspiration and motivation

SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT Richard Groves is an author, international lecturer, media producer and co-Founder of the Sacred Art of Living Center in Bend, Oregon

This year's Hospice Education Days event promises to be a unique and informative experience focusing on the specific needs of Northern Hospice Collaborative and the communities they support. The two-day in-person event will feature various engaging sessions and workshops addressing the challenges and opportunities of delivering hospice care in northern regions. We have curated a program centred around the theme of "Northern Hospice Collaborative - Strength in Coming Together."

Topics such as multicultural competency to support end-of-life care, community outreach, and the practicality of virtual grief support will be covered in depth, providing attendees with practical tools and insights to better serve the hospice and palliative care communities. Additionally, the event will offer opportunities for networking and collaboration with allied professionals and community members.

The event is an excellent opportunity for hospice care industry professionals to stay updated, connected, and motivated while gaining valuable insight into the specific needs of northern communities.

Please stay tuned for more information on the [BC Hospice Palliative Care Association's website!](#)

[Register Here!](#)

**Travel Assistance with Kindness and
Compassion!**

Hope Air is doing more than many know to help people reach medical treatment and appointments in BC and across Canada. Their “no patient left behind” policy is inspiring and greatly needed by many rural residents in our province. Hope Air provides not only air travel where needed but also helps many with out-of-pocket costs associated with accessing the care they need. Hotels, meals and ground transportation are all aspects of service that Hope Air not only provides but coordinates for those in need. [Visit Hope Air!](#)

BOARDING PASS



Passenger:
Atticus, 5 years old

Reason for travel:
Battling neuromuscular disease

Travel route:
Kelowna to Vancouver

Started travelling with Hope Air:
2022

Number of trips:
5 lifetime trips

BOARDING PASS

Hope Air's commitment is to ensure that no patient in need is left behind when it comes to accessing vital medical appointments.

We achieve this by offering four core programs to assist patients and their escorts with free Airline Travel, Hotel Accommodations, Meal Vouchers and Ground Transportation.

We only have two main criteria for assessing applications for the travel request:

- ✓ Confirmed medical appointment covered under the provincial health plan and supporting documentation
- ✓ You are in financial need to cover the cost of travel to medical appointments far from home

 **HOPE AIR**

Learn more at:
hopeair.ca





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From: BC Rural Health Network <newsletter@bcruralhealth.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2024 8:39 AM
To: Karissa Stroshein <admin@kaslo.ca>
Subject: Rural Community Engagement in Healthcare Decision-Making

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BCRHN

British Columbia Rural Health Network

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RURAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTHCARE DECISION- MAKING?

Would you like to participate in a virtual focus group to discuss findings from a provincial study on rural community engagement, focusing on next steps?

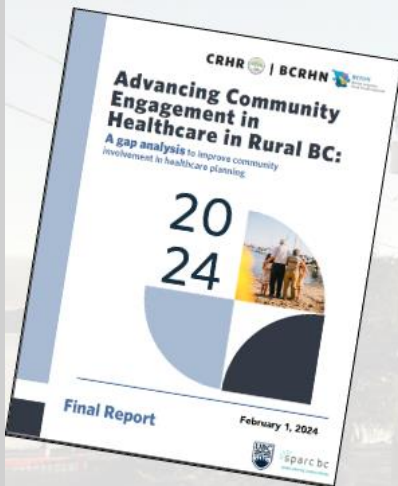
We will be facilitating regional focus groups across rural BC:

- Interior Health, May 23rd and May 30th
- Northern Health, June 13th and 27th
- Island Health, July 4th and 11th
- Vancouver Coastal Health, July 25th

Please contact Phoebe Lazier (Phoebe.lazier@bcruralhealth.org) if you would like to participate.

All participants will receive a \$25.00 honorarium

This study is lead by Dr. Jude Kornelsen, Department of Family Practice, UBC in collaboration with the BC Rural Health Network, and funded by UBC's 'Health After 2020' initiative.



Centre for Rural Health Research
Centre for Rural Health Research
Centre for Rural Health Research

Dear BC Rural Health Network Members;

The BC Rural Health Network and the Centre for Rural Health Research at UBC have just completed a project, funded by the Social Planning and Research Council of BC, on the gap that occurs between rural community input into health planning and decision-makers using the wisdom gained from lived and living experience. You can find a copy of the report [here](#). We heard that most rural residents experienced a lack of engagement in the health planning process, that there was not a clear line to decision makers and that community needs were not well understood.

We have received additional funding to follow up through regional consultations to hear from rural residents about what the next steps should be. To action this, we are holding a series of virtual regional engagements over the next few months. If you would like to attend, you will be provided with a link to the report, a one-page overview and an executive summary. During the engagement session, we will work through a series of questions and allow time for open discussion.

If you are interested in the role of community voice in provincial decision-making, we welcome your participation. Please reach out to Phoebe Lazier (Phoebe.Lazier@bcruralhealth.org), BC Rural Health Network Community Outreach Coordinator.

Advancing Community Engagement in Healthcare in Rural BC:
Gap Analysis

A



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From: BC Rural Health Network <newsletter@bcruralhealth.org>

Sent: Wednesday, May 1, 2024 6:29 AM

To: Karissa Stroshein <admin@kaslo.ca>

Subject: Rural Health Matters May Edition



BCRHN

British Columbia
Rural Health Network

May 2024 Edition

[A Letter from our President](#)

Dear Readers;

May 1st! I can hardly believe it! Looking forward to May flowers and even some more showers as at least in our area it still is pretty dry!

Lots happened for the BCRHN in April!

Exciting things are happening with the Transplant Committee, in that Premier Eby met with Christine and Paul to discuss the hardships faced by those who live rurally and need transplants in our province. Christine's courage to come forward and shine the light on difficulties people face with lack of service coordination, transportation, and cost.

We are also hopeful that looking at solutions to these issues that surround rural residents needing transplants, will also provide solutions to the challenges that rural and remote residents face who must travel for health services.

I am constantly learning new things by being a member of the BCRHN. I was recently introduced to the UBC Run and Ride for Rural Medicine. The 20th annual event was held on April 27th and April 28th and is an annual fundraiser organized by medical students to raise money for charity. I was so impressed that one of the members of one of the other groups I am involved with, the Rural Citizens Perspective Group, participated in the run. Thank you, Irina! Hope Air, as you know, is one of our partners here at the BCRHN and was the recipient of this year's fundraising event. I am so pleased that the difference that Hope Air makes in rural and remote residents' lives is recognized and honoured in this way.

Thank you to all involved in the organization, who participated in the run, and to those who donated!

Speaking of learning, the position paper on Agency Nursing that was initiated by the Implementation Committee will be released soon. I'm sure you will find it an informative and thoughtful look at this complicated topic.

The BCRHN's Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging committee continues to meet and provide information on these important topics to our board. Their most recent presentation was on micro-aggressions...so interesting! [see the video here](#)

If you haven't had a chance to look at the [Gap Analysis Report](#) that was recently completed by Dr Jude Kornelsen's team in partnership with the BCRHN, please take a bit of your time to have a look. The survey was pan-provincial and looked at "the gap that occurs between rural community into health care planning and decision makers using the wisdom gained from lived and living experience."

Rural and remote residents indicated that they felt a lack of engagement in the health planning process. We have received additional support to follow through with regional consultations to hear about what next steps should be taken to address these gaps.

The Executive resumed our regular quarterly meetings with Interior Health in April. We believe it's so important to have the Regional Health Authorities hear the difficulties being faced by rural residents directly from us. We are very pleased that this is important to Interior Health as well. We appreciate their time and commitment and we hope to engage the other Regional Health Authorities in regular meetings as well.

I also feel the need to mention the continued issues surrounding transportation. So frustrating to hear of people not being able to go to their appointments as they have no way to get there! Locally, I am aware of a situation where a person needed to travel 2 hours each way to get to their consult for surgery, relying on friends or volunteers to get there. Then again for their surgery, (thankfully [Hope Air](#) covered hotel costs for the night before surgery) and now for follow-up appointments. The person is not only very stressed about whether anyone can take her to her appointments but also feels so bad for "being a burden" to friends and volunteers for always having to ask them. Certainly, extra stress is not conducive to a restful recovery!

I am aware of the difficulties surrounding getting to ongoing treatments like dialysis in the Nelson area. People are having to make arrangements to travel to Trail, several times a week for their treatments. Travelling for Dialysis, Chemotherapy, and of course, just for routine appointments is a challenge when there is no transportation.

The "[Bus of the North](#)" is an initiative that has started in the North. It is set up to help an individual organize their transportation to appointments by providing contact information for transportation services in each of the communities it serves, from Haida Gwaii to Prince George and from Fort St. John to Williams Lake, and the communities between. This initiative is a great step in the right direction but more work on accessible and reliable transportation in rural and remote BC is needed.

Before I sign off, I want to acknowledge that it was National Volunteer Week in Canada April 14 -20th. I want to send a thank you to all volunteers who give so much of their time to make life better for all!

And a special shout out to Paul and Phoebe who work so hard and volunteer so much of their time in addition to their paid hours to the BCRHN, our Board of Directors, and Liaisons for their commitment to giving time and knowledge to move the Network forward.

Please enjoy the rest of the newsletter!

Only my best,

Peggy

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Greetings Members and Supporters,

April has been a month of meaningful progress and advocacy for the BC Rural Health Network, marked by significant milestones and strategic engagements aimed at advancing our mission to improve health equity across British Columbia. We have focused on our transplant patients and the financial hardship faced by them, but this work is leading to broader and more comprehensive work in travel, housing and assistance for those needing to leave their community for care.

Here's an overview of our activities and what's next for our network:

Newsletter Subscription

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time and you are a member of the BC Rural Health Network, I apologize! I thought that all members of the Network were automatically enrolled in our newsletter subscription, but this was not the case. If you are now receiving this newsletter and don't want to, please unsubscribe and you will not be re-added. From now on though, all new members will be subscribed to the newsletter, and I apologize if you have not received these updates on a regular basis, you can always view past editions by visiting the newsletter archives [here](#).

Housing, Travel and Transplants

As reported in the mid-month news, this month, I travelled to Victoria alongside Jacqueline Podewils from the Lung Transplant Housing Support Group where we accompanied Christina Derksen-Unrau, a lung transplant patient and Arlen Unrau, her husband and care provider. We met with key political leaders, including the BC Conservatives, BC United, BC Greens, and the Premier of British Columbia. Our discussions focused on the challenges faced by transplant patients, particularly those travelling long distances for care. We were hosted for lunch by Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health, Jennifer Rice, and Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Development, Roly Russell, and had some great discussions with all we engaged with. We were all recognized in the Legislature by the Premier and Roly Russell which was both moving and appreciated. This visit has set the stage to ensure transplant patients will receive support, creating a foundation for addressing broader travel assistance needs for rural and remote residents.



Jacqueline Podewils taking over Victoria and celebrating our future win on "Housing is Healthcare"!

The work has just begun on creating equity in access for this niche group of patients who face egregious inequity in seeking the life-saving surgery they need. Following the meetings in Victoria, our work continued with a variety of meetings with many key stakeholders as well as philanthropists who have a desire to help those in need.

Post Victoria, I met virtually with Eric Lun, who is the Executive Director of the BC Transplant team and was most generous in providing his time and his ear to our concerns. We wanted to ensure that BC Transplant and all key stakeholders know that our concerns are not with the amazing work of the transplant teams, and the amazing support of many charities and non-profit organizations that help patients, but with the gaps in coverage and the system-wide lack of assistance in navigating the complex and scattered resources that could be and should be available to all those in their care. Eric has been appreciative of the feedback and input and has assured working with us in providing better solutions moving forward. We are not a group that starts a project without moving forward with solutions and we intend to continue our work until we have a comprehensive support system in place for all those who need our help.

Some amazing people have come to light in this process. Christina found her "earth angel" in the generous donation from Gary Johal who has provided the financial support she will need following her surgery. Likewise, at least 3 other people have been given financial support and housing support to allow them to have a less stressful journey through their surgical and postsurgical care from anonymous supporters. Thank you so much to those who give so much to others, you are all heroes, and we appreciate you. One such hero is working on bringing investors into

the picture to purchase real estate for long-term utilization as medical housing. This presents yet another amazing opportunity for those needing to stay close to Vancouver for care and presents challenges in ensuring that such a facility remains as intended (housing for healthcare), has operational funding and can provide a much-needed long-term solution to this ever-increasing challenge.

As you also know, we have many existing groups that provide services to help rural and remote residents reach the care they need. We partner with Hope Air and recognize them for their amazing service and continue to promote their services pan-provincially. We also support the work of many other organizations that provide niche services and are sometimes overlooked in the bigger picture but I do want to thank the amazing work of Angel Flight East Kootenay, Angel Flight, Helicopters without Borders, Wheels of Hope, Canadian Cancer Society, United Way, Ronald McDonald House BC and Yukon, Shriners Care for Kids, Canuck Place, Living Kidney Donor Expense Reimbursement Program, Lung Transplant Housing Support, Heart Transplant Home Society, The Kidney Foundation, Happy Liver Society, Burn Fund Centre, The Right Fit, David Foster Foundation and the many government and indigenous programs that do assist many people in reaching care and providing mobility options for those in care outside of their home community. Thank you all! (I apologize to the many who I have likely missed.)

Health Authorities

As mentioned by Peggy, our meetings with the Interior Health Authority Executive and supporting staff have resumed. These meetings provide the opportunity for direct engagement and provision of the community experience at the highest level. In our latest meeting, we covered a variety of topics and set the stage for more productive and action-oriented conversations moving forward.

We have also engaged with the Northern Health Authority Executive and I was informed today that a meeting is now being set to establish an initial meeting with the NH Executive and Peggy and I. The meeting date will be provided soon and we hope to establish regular meetings moving forward as a means to enhance the community engagement process with Northern Health as well as the Interior Health Authority.

It is our sincere hope that the work we continue to do in partnership with UBC Centre for Rural Health Research and the Gap Analysis will lead to providing insights into new pathways to community engagement and processes that are not driven by our view on how this should occur but from the viewpoint of the communities we champion. You will have received and been given the opportunity to engage in the next round of community consultation on this project and these regional working groups will provide the foundational work in presenting solutions and options to the Health Authorities and to the Ministry to effectively engage with those who currently feel invisible. If you missed this invite please reach out to us at info@bcruralhealth.org

Media Engagement

Our efforts to raise public awareness continued to gain momentum through media engagements. The story of Christina's transplant journey has opened doors for further publicity and political engagement. We recently shared insights on CBC Radio North regarding our Gap Analysis and other local media and radio spots we have engaged

with in April. Our active media strategy ensures that rural health issues remain a focal point as we advocate for solutions.



Could **you** be the missing piece?



Fundraising Initiatives

Post-Victoria, I met with marketing specialists in Vancouver to refine our fundraising strategies. A personal friend and amazing human has also generously offered his services and is helping connect us with potential supporters. We are exploring new fundraising avenues, including a dedicated donation page and targeted marketing campaigns, to sustain and amplify our impact. We are limited in our ability to network, travel and work with others simply due to the lack of funding streams available to us. We appreciate all our existing supporters which include HopeAir, the Ministry of Health, the RCCbc, UBC Centre for Rural Health Research and the travel support we have been provided by hosts of meetings and conferences to which we have been invited without the financial means to attend. Thank you all! We do need more money to do our work in a meaningful way and have the ability to pay our existing employees a living wage and to further expand our team. We are not there yet but we will overcome this challenge too!

Collaborations and Community Engagement

Our network is expanding, with new members such as the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, Mackenzie Social Services, Williston Lake Elders Society and the Canadian Cancer Society joining us. Our outreach efforts, led by Phoebe, continue to strengthen our community ties. Thank you, Phoebe, I cannot say enough good things about the work you do and the time you give to make life better for rural residents in BC.

Looking Ahead

In the coming month, our focus will shift towards enhancing our fundraising efforts and preparing for a presentation to the Select Standing Committee on Finance. We are also planning a town hall session with the [British Columbia Association of Community Health Centres](#). With the provincial election season approaching, we anticipate increased media interest and public engagement.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to the BC Rural Health Network. Together, we are making strides towards a healthier, more equitable British Columbia.

Yours in health and wellness,

Paul

Community Connect: An Update on Our Outreach Initiatives

Hi everyone!

For those I haven't had the pleasure of connecting with yet, please allow me to extend a warm introduction. My name is Phoebe and I am the Community Outreach Coordinator with the BC Rural Health Network.

As many of you know, in my role with the BCRHN as the community outreach coordinator, I have been engaged in a Community Outreach Initiative in collaboration with the [BC Association of Community Health Centres \(BCACHC\)](#) and the Innovations Solutions Unit (ISU) at UBC, [Hope Air](#) and [United Way BC \(UWBC\)](#) over the past few months.



As I continue with outreach work, I am immensely grateful for everyone who has taken the time to speak with me and share their insights and personal experiences related to accessing care in their community. We sure have some incredible individuals across the province working tirelessly to make positive change!

In our last newsletter, we did a callout for stories from rural residents on their experiences in travelling to access care in larger centres. The response we received was incredible. Over the past few weeks, my inbox has been full of stories from rural residents such as yourselves, taking the time to share their stories with me. I can't thank you enough for your care and courage in trusting me with your stories. Although these stories were coming from all over the province and were unique in their experiences, the sentiments remained the same: more support is needed for rural residents in accessing care and navigating BC's healthcare system. These stories further highlight the importance of the support services that do exist, including but not limited to local community service societies, local support networks, volunteer driver programs, and [Hope Air](#).

As we move into the warmer months, I know that many of us are worried about what the summer will hold, with many areas already in a drought, the prospect of record-breaking heat and forest fires already sparking across the province. It is important to stay up-to-date on current events in your area and relevant information on how to stay safe. You can check out the [Emergency Response and Preparedness Page](#) on our website for resources and information. I urge you to have an emergency bag ready with enough essentials to last you at least 72 hours, and your important documents.

Please visit [FireSmart BC](#) for further information and resources to help you prepare yourselves and your homes. During these times, make sure to check on your neighbours!

Thank you for reading! As always, I am continuing my community outreach work and would love to hear from you. Please feel free to send me an email at phoebe.lazier@bcruralhealth.org.

Best,
Phoebe

Everyone has questions about sex. Ask Options for Sexual Health!

Sex Sense is a free, pro-choice, sex-positive, and confidential service. Their team of registered nurses, counsellors, and sex educators offer information and resources on sex, sexuality and sexual health, for people living in British Columbia and the Yukon.

Their hours of operation are Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Pacific Time. They are closed on weekends and public holidays.

How to get in touch:

- Call at [1-800-739-7367](tel:1-800-739-7367) throughout BC or [604-731-7803](tel:604-731-7803) in the Lower Mainland
- Submit your question through the email form [here](#).

Visit the Sex Sense Website

OPTIONS FOR
SEXUAL
HEALTH

RHSRNbc Youth Symposium 2024



The Rural Health Services Research Network of BC is holding a virtual symposium with a focus on engaging with and empowering rural youth leaders in the face of climate change and ecosystem disruption. A big theme for this symposium is the term solastalgia, which refers to the distress that individuals feel when they witness environmental changes impacting them directly in their home environment.

Participants will have an opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals, hear directly from youth who are already making an impact in their communities, and learn actionable items that they can take back to their local contexts as leaders.

This event is open to all ages, but with a particular focus on youth (age 15 – 30), as we discuss the need for bottom-up approaches driven by the cumulative effects of grassroots and local initiatives, in addressing the climate crisis.

[Learn more and register](https://blogs.ubc.ca/rhsrnbcysymposium2024/)

Photography Contest:

RHSRNbc is running a photography contest alongside the symposium! Submit up to three of your favourite photos to describe what solastalgia and climate change look like to you, and be entered in a draw to win a \$75 gift card to a place of your choosing! More details can be found [here](#).

The deadline for photo submissions is May 14, 2024, 11:59 pm PDT



There's something special about the [BC Rural Health Conference](#). It's not just the knowledge you gain, but also the friendships you form. Embrace the excitement, the learning, and the camaraderie that makes this event so exceptional!

We are thrilled to feature an amazing line-up of speakers and topics in our program that is packed with opportunities to network and interact with individuals who can share and learn the unique benefits of rural practice. Highlights include:

- Social and networking events to connect with rural peers, including locums
- Interactive breakout sessions and hands-on skills workshops to discover current and emerging trends in rural medicine
- Pre-conference courses include: [The CARE Course Goes WILDE](#) and the [Rural POCUS Congress](#)
- Presentation of the BC Rural Health Awards on Friday afternoon
- Wellness opportunities, including stretching and yoga sessions, complimentary chair massages, guided hikes and other excursions
- Free (and fun) childcare during conference hours

Register now!

[Register Here!](#)



JUNE 17TH IS
**HOPE AIR
DAY**

Join us on June 17 as we shine a light on the medical travel needs of people living in B.C., and our commitment to equitable access to health care regardless of distance or cost.



Pledge your support at hopeair.ca/bc



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RURAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTHCARE DECISION-MAKING?

Would you like to participate in a virtual focus group to discuss findings from a provincial study on rural community engagement, focusing on next steps?

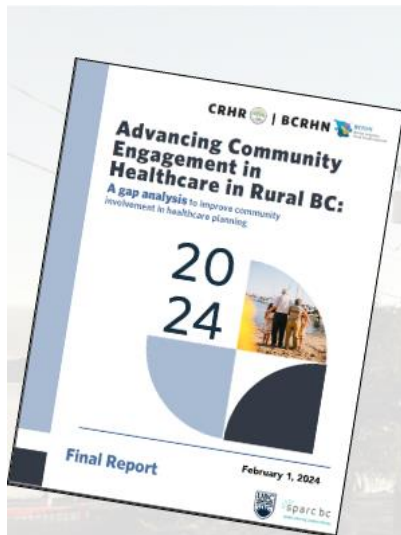
We will be facilitating regional focus groups across rural BC:

- Interior Health, May 23rd and May 30th
- Northern Health, June 13th and 27th
- Island Health, July 4th and 11th
- Vancouver Coastal Health, July 25th

Please contact Phoebe Lazier (Phoebe.lazier@bcruralhealth.org) if you would like to participate.

All participants will receive a \$25.00 honorarium

This study is lead by Dr. Jude Kornelsen, Department of Family Practice, UBC in collaboration with the BC Rural Health Network, and funded by UBC's 'Health After 2020' initiative.



Centre for Rural Health Research
Centre for Evidence for Sustainable Rural Health Services

The BC Rural Health Network and the Centre for Rural Health Research at UBC have just completed a project, funded by the Social Planning and Research Council of BC, on the gap that occurs between rural community input into health planning and decision-makers using the wisdom gained from lived and living experience. You can find a copy of the report [here](#). We heard that most rural residents experienced a lack of engagement in the health planning process, that there was not a clear line to decision makers and that community needs were not well understood.

We have received additional funding to follow up through regional consultations to hear from rural residents about what the next steps should be. To action this, we are holding a series of virtual regional engagements over the next few months. If you would like to attend, you will be provided with a link to the report, a one-page overview and an executive summary. During the engagement session, we will work through a series of questions and allow time for open discussion.

If you are interested in the role of community voice in provincial decision-making, we welcome your participation. Please reach out to Phoebe Lazier (Phoebe.Lazier@bcruralhealth.org), BC Rural Health Network Community Outreach Coordinator.

Advancing Community Engagement in Healthcare in Rural BC

Northern Hospice Collaborative - Strength in Coming Together -

Save The Date

**10th-11th May,
2024**

NORTHERN
HOSPICE COLLABORATIVE PRESENT

**HOSPICE
EDUCATION DAYS**

Strength In Coming Together

📍 UDA DUNE BAIYOH - PRINCE GEORGE

Event Partners:



British Columbia
HOSPICE
PALLIATIVE CARE
Association

PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

- ✓ Multicultural competency to support end-of-life care
- ✓ Learn how to implement care and programs that are inclusive, anti-racist and de-colonizing
- ✓ Networking to lessen isolation and provide inspiration and motivation

SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT



PROFESSOR
RICHARD GROVES

Richard Groves is an author, international lecturer, media producer and co-Founder of the Sacred Art of Living Center in Bend, Oregon



This year's Hospice Education Days event promises to be a unique and informative experience focusing on the specific needs of Northern Hospice Collaborative and the communities they support. The two-day in-person event will feature various engaging sessions and workshops addressing the challenges and opportunities of delivering hospice care in northern regions. We have curated a program centred around the theme of "Northern Hospice Collaborative - Strength in Coming Together."

Topics such as multicultural competency to support end-of-life care, community outreach, and the practicality of virtual grief support will be covered in depth, providing attendees with practical tools and insights to better serve the hospice and palliative care communities. Additionally, the event will offer opportunities for networking and collaboration with allied professionals and community members.

The event is an excellent opportunity for hospice care industry professionals to stay updated, connected, and motivated while gaining valuable insight into the specific needs of northern communities.

[Learn more & register](#)

Working Caregivers Connect: BC Virtual Support Group

This support group fosters a supportive environment where you can freely share your experiences, seek valuable advice, and connect with others who are also navigating the delicate balance between caregiving and work. This support group is offered on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm.

[Register in Advance Here!](#)



Accessing Team-Based Care through the CHC Model

Please join us for a virtual event about the Community Health Centre (CHC) model of care and the benefits of team-based care. Hear from CHCs and ask questions about CHCs in the community.

Featured CHCs:



STEPS

*Supporting Team
Excellence with Patients
Society*
(Kamloops and Sun
Peaks)



Bowen Island Community Health Centre

(Bowen Island)



Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op

(New Westminster and
the Fraser Valley)

When: June 19th, 2024 from 1:00–3:00 PM PDT

Where: This is a virtual event held over Microsoft Teams

Please reach out to Phoebe at
phoebe.lazier@bcruralhealth.org
with any questions you may have

 [Click here to
register!](#)



BCRHN
British Columbia
Rural Health Network

Register Here!

May Member of the Month: Foundry



[Foundry](#) is a province-wide network of integrated health and wellness services for young people ages 12-24 and their caregivers. Integrated Youth Service (IYS) allow young people access to five core services in one convenient location: mental health care, substance use services, physical and sexual health care, youth and family peer supports, and social services.

Foundry's beginnings can be traced back to 2007 when a small team of psychiatrists at St. Paul's Hospital – an academic health sciences centre operated by Providence Health Care in downtown Vancouver – decided to take a completely different approach to helping young people. They knew that young people needed better access to mental health and substance use care, and primary health care. Also, numerous social issues such as homelessness, unemployment, sexual identity issues and lack of education needed to be addressed. As a result, St. Paul's Hospital launched the Inner City Youth (ICY) program, which soon transitioned into the

Granville Youth Health Centre. Since 2015, Foundry has expanded across the province, with [16 operating centres](#) (in addition to Foundry Virtual BC) including centres in several rural communities. There are 9 more centres currently in development, and an additional 10 to come with the recent [Foundry expansion announcement](#) that was shared in March 2024.

Recognizing the continued need for mental health and wellness services across BC, several teams at Foundry are focusing on how to make services more accessible and expand to youth living in rural communities. One of our primary goals is to work with and alongside community members to learn, adapt and evolve our services and better support the needs of rural and remote youth and families. Acknowledging we still have work to do in bringing this vision to reality, we hope to highlight the current and future direction for Foundry to increase accessibility for communities like yours.

Virtual Services for Youth and Caregivers Across BC

[Foundry Virtual BC](#) offers free same-day and scheduled services to youth aged 12-24 and their caregivers anywhere across BC, through the [Foundry BC app](#). All services a young person can access at their local centre are available through the Foundry BC app. Based on youth engagement and feedback, one unique element of Foundry's virtual services is the modality of which appointments are accessed. Youth and caregivers can choose whether they want to access services by video, audio or chat options. We also offer phone appointments and a [web portal](#) (accessed through desktop devices) for those without a smart device and where internet is not available.

The Foundry Virtual BC team is keen to work collaboratively with providers in rural and remote communities, where it is identified by the community that virtual services could play a supportive role—together with local services and providers—in helping fill service gaps. Open 7 days a week, all services accessed through the Foundry BC app free, and no referrals are required. When supportive, our team can bridge support between community providers and Foundry Virtual BC, through our Intake Coordinator. Please email online@foundrybc.ca to get connected!



Attending various wellness fairs, conferences and local events — including most recently the All Native Basketball Tournament in Prince Rupert — Foundry Virtual BC has had the opportunity to build relationships, make connections and increase

awareness and uptake of virtual services for young people and families in rural and remote communities. If you would like to learn more about virtual services and explore if/how they can support your community, please email Foundry's Communications Officer, Sierra Turner at sturner@foundrybc.ca.



Community Development at Foundry

Our Community Development team has been working with several communities to build capacity and reduce barriers to services. This past winter, we partnered with the Kaxla Heiltsuk Society to bring young people from Bella Bella to visit Foundry Port Hardy. Our hopes of having youth see and experience a Foundry centre were successfully met, and allowed our team to hear directly the wants, needs and feedback. Youth noted it was important for them to see a space and meet service providers in person, encouraging our team to explore further planning for future trips.

We also recently piloted an Access Point project in partnership with the Kootenay Columbia Learning Centre in Castlegar, where students co-designed a wellness room where they could comfortably and safely connect with Foundry Virtual BC. They taught us how we can be creative in relationship building and tested out a hybrid approach to meeting service providers both in person and through a virtual scavenger hunt!

We are continuing to build partnerships with rural, remote and Indigenous stakeholders across the province and are thrilled to join on as a member of the BCRHN. Foundry recently joined Northern Health as a key partner in the community-based substance use prevention project ([Planet Youth](#)), which aims to build capacity in the North, implementing the Icelandic Prevention Model.

Foundry is Expanding

The March 4th expansion announcement of [10 new centres](#) continued to push us to hear rural voices. This expansion process brought more applicants from rural communities than ever before, further highlighting the need for youth mental health and substance use resourcing. We will continue to learn from these communities in our goal to understand and deliver appropriate services in a meaningful way in non-urban communities. While the expansion of 10 centres was great news, it also meant many rural communities who applied did not receive a Foundry Centre. Our rural and remote community development team is continuing to work with these communities and hopes that we can find creative ways to fill any gaps, when appropriate.

Next Steps

In the spirit of learning from one another, Foundry offers a monthly Rural and Remote community of practice to bring together champions of youth (service providers, clinicians, educators) in rural communities. If you are looking to create connections, inspire hope and stay up to date on Foundry's Rural and Remote projects, email Raelene Hodgson, at rhodgson@foundrybc.ca

To learn more, please visit www.foundrybc.ca or email info@foundrybc.ca. If you have questions about our provincial virtual services, please visit www.foundrybc.ca/virtual or email online@foundrybc.ca. If your organization would like a presentation on Foundry Virtual BC's services, please email Sierra Turner at sturner@foundrybc.ca

- [Click here to download posters and promotional materials](#)
- [Click here to find your local Foundry centre](#)
- [Click here to learn more about Foundry's approach to supporting youth across BC](#)

[See more members of the month here.](#)

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

WHO?

We are looking for participants who meet **all** the following criteria:

- 2S/LGBTQ+
- BC resident
- Aged 18-39
- Diagnosed with cancer in the last 10 years

WHY?


We are conducting a study to better understand 2S/LGBTQ+ young adults' experiences with their cancer care providers.

HOW?

We're looking to interview 2S/LGBTQ+ young adults about coming out to their cancer care providers. Interviews can be held in-person or over Zoom. Please contact Whitney Qualls at wqa8@sfu.ca to learn more


RESEARCH STUDY: CANCER CARE PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR AYA PATIENTS

Who?






Cancer care professionals including oncologists, nurses, nurse practitioners, allied health professionals or GPs in oncology whose patients include those aged 18-39



What?



- We are looking to interview cancer care professions about their experiences in caring for AYA patients, including 2S/LGBTQIA+ patients
- Interviews will last between 45-60 minutes.
- Can be held in-person or over Zoom

If interested in learning more, please contact Whitney Qualls at wqa8@sfu.ca

Study Title: Improving Experiences for Young Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Queer Cancer Patients Primary Investigator: Stuart Peacock

Are you a cancer care provider or a 2S/LGBTQ+ young adult cancer survivor/ patient? We're seeking participants to share their experiences during a 60-90 minute interview. The interviews are part of a PhD research project and information gathered will be used to understand how cancer care professionals can better support their 2S/LGBTQ+ patients. **Email Whitney at wqa8@sfu.ca for more info or to sign up.**

Cancer care provider eligibility criteria:

- Works in BC
- Any cancer care professional whose patients include those aged 18-39

Patient/Survivor eligibility criteria:

- BC resident
- Aged 18-39
- Cancer diagnosis within the last 10 years
- 2S/LGBTQ+

BC Community Discussions to Build a Future that Works

The BC Federation of Labour coming to a community near you this spring for a province-wide discussion hosted by the BCFED, member unions and your local Labour Council.

Our environment and economy are changing. Our jobs and the communities we live in are being hit hard.

Nobody's immune from the impacts: workplace closures, wildfire evacuations, cold stress on construction sites, heat stress in schools and restaurant kitchens, and much more.

We need a meaningful plan to tackle these urgent issues affecting our families, our communities and our livelihoods — a plan that puts workers front and centre, and leaves nobody behind. And to do it right, we need to hear from you.

Please come to a community discussion near you, to help develop a worker and community-centred Climate Justice and Jobs Plan for BC. Join us to build a future that works for you, your community and future generations. [More information here.](#)

Community Town Halls

5:30 - 8:00 pm, with a light dinner at 5:30

Northern BC

Register by May 9th

- Prince George — 21 May
- Terrace — 22 May
- Prince Rupert — 23 May

Vancouver Island/Sunshine Coast

Register by May 10

- Nanaimo — 3 June
- Campbell River — 4 June
- Gibsons — 5 June

Southern BC

Register by May 17

- Abbotsford — 9 June
- Kamloops — 10 June
- Kelowna — 11 June
- Trail — 12 June
- Cranbrook — 13 June

Attention energy and resource workers

We know that energy and resource workers are bearing the brunt of these changes, so we invite you to attend a small focus group or interview in your community if you work in these sectors. Please contact Trish at tgarnier@bcfed.ca to sign up.

As well as the communities listed above, we'll be coming to Burns Lake, Cumberland, Duncan, Elk Valley, Fort St. John, Fraser Lake, Houston, Kitimat, Merritt, Port Alberni, Princeton, Sparwood, Vanderhoof and Vernon — and we'll wrap up in Chilliwack for our Regional Conference in mid-June.

Register for your nearest town hall

Travel Assistance with Kindness and Compassion!

Hope Air is doing more than many know to help people reach medical treatment and appointments in BC and across Canada. Their “no patient left behind” policy is inspiring and greatly needed by many rural residents in our province. Hope Air provides not only air travel where needed but also helps many with out-of-pocket costs associated with accessing the care they need. Hotels, meals and ground transportation are all aspects of service that Hope Air not only provides but coordinates for those in need. [Visit Hope Air!](#)

BOARDING PASS



Passenger:
Atticus, 5 years old

Reason for travel:
Battling neuromuscular disease

Travel route:
Kelowna to Vancouver

Started travelling with Hope Air:
2022

Number of trips:
5 lifetime trips

BOARDING PASS

Hope Air's commitment is to ensure that no patient in need is left behind when it comes to accessing vital medical appointments.

We achieve this by offering four core programs to assist patients and their escorts with free Airline Travel, Hotel Accommodations, Meal Vouchers and Ground Transportation.

We only have two main criteria for assessing applications for the travel request:

- ✓ Confirmed medical appointment covered under the provincial health plan and supporting documentation
- ✓ You are in financial need to cover the cost of travel to medical appointments far from home

 **HOPE AIR**

Learn more at:
hopeair.ca



Popular Posts and News from April 2024



[FIRST READING: B.C. Tells Nurses To Ignore Rising Phenomenon Of Armed Patients Doing Drugs In Hospitals](#)



[BCEHS Expands Paramedic Services For 21 Interior Communities](#)



[Fire Bans Announced In B.C. And Alberta As More Than 170 Wildfires Burn](#)



[B.C. Rural Health Network Seeking Stories From Rural Residents](#)



[Overdoses Prompt B.C. First Nation To Declare State Of Emergency](#)



[From Crisis To Care: How BC Can Transform Transplant Access For Rural Residents](#)

We look forward to connecting with you.





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BCRHN
British Columbia
Rural Health Network

For Immediate Release | May 1, 2024

KBRH Health Foundation donations help keep expectant families closer to home

TRAIL – Thanks to the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital (KBRH) Health Foundation and its generous donors, Interior Health will be able to keep more Kootenay Boundary expectant families facing early deliveries closer to home.

A new Tier 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at KBRH, made possible by \$745,000 in additional Foundation-funded equipment and the addition of specialized NICU healthcare workers by Interior Health, means KBRH has the capacity to support deliveries and care for babies born after 34 weeks, as well urgent acute care for babies born even earlier with moderate risk.

"Families who have babies before full term face additional challenges and stress," said Susan Brown, president and CEO of Interior Health. "In addition to the equipment from the Foundation, our nurses in Trail stepped up to take the specialized training needed to support this increased service, and we added new positions to the department. This commitment helps provide the best possible outcomes to these families without the burden of travel."

A Tier 3 NICU requires significant equipment upgrades to accommodate the needs of the newborns. Three newly funded isolettes (specialized cribs), monitors and stabilization equipment are available with care provided by neonatal healthcare professionals including a NICU educator and nurses, and allied health professionals.

"This is wonderful for families in the Kootenay Boundary," said Lisa Pasin, executive director of the KBRH Health Foundation. "The new neonatal medical equipment will improve accessibility to a higher level of care for families during what can be a challenging time and will also support specialist services and recruitment for our area."

"The only focus for expectant families should be their new baby," said Katrine Conroy, MLA for Kootenay West. "This new NICU will reduce the need for long-distance travel for early deliveries and is a great example of bringing the health care people need, closer to home."

The new service will benefit expectant families throughout the entire Kootenay Boundary, reducing the burden of travel and keeping them close to local extended family and supports.

"We are thrilled to open our Tier 3 NICU and care for mothers and babies close to home," said Ian Ferguson, obstetrician, gynecologist and department head of Maternity and Pediatrics at KBRH. "We can now keep patients local and repatriate other patients back

We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.

MEDIA, FOR INFORMATION:

PHONE 1.844.469.7077 EMAIL media@interiorhealth.ca



Interior Health



NEWS RELEASE

home sooner when they otherwise would have had to relocate for care. It has made a huge difference for the families of our region, and everyone is very excited.”

“Our pediatrics team is very excited to announce the official opening of the NICU at Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital,” said Dr. Brenna Eldridge, pediatrician. “This will provide much needed support for babies born prematurely and newborns who may require extra support, and will allow infants to stay in a supported environment as they recover and grow or await transport. We are immensely grateful to all those who supported this project.”

- 30 -

Interior Health Communications
1-844-469-7077 (media line) or
media@interiorhealth.ca

We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.

MEDIA, FOR INFORMATION:

PHONE 1.844.469.7077 EMAIL media@interiorhealth.ca





2

PHYSICIAN
STATION

PHYSICIAN
STATION

Incubator 3000 plus

Karissa Stroshein

Subject: recruitment for qualitative study on cancer experience

From: Whitney Qualls <whitney_qualls@sfu.ca>

Sent: Sunday, April 28, 2024 5:43 PM

To: Karissa Stroshein <admin@kaslo.ca>

Subject: recruitment for qualitative study on cancer experience

Hello,

I am a PhD candidate at Simon Fraser University recruiting participants for a study examining experiences of 2S/LGBTQ+ adolescents and young adults with cancer and their relationship with their cancer care team. I was wondering if the Health Care Select Committee ever posted invitations to participate in research in any sort of newsletter, blog post etc? If so, what would the process be for getting my study included on that circulation? I have attached an informational letter to better explain my study.

If this isn't something your organization typically does, I totally understand, I just thought I'd check. I'm still pretty new to BC so if you have any other ideas of organizations in your area that I should reach out to, I'd be happy to hear them!

Thank you!

Whitney Qualls

she/her/any

PhD Candidate | Faculty of Health Sciences

Simon Fraser University





BRITISH COLUMBIA

VIA EMAIL

Ref. 63107

May 6, 2024

Her Worship Suzan Hewat
Mayor of the Village of Kaslo
PO Box 576
Kaslo BC V0G 1M0
Email: mayor@kaslo.ca; admin@kaslo.ca

Dear Mayor Suzan Hewat:

I would like to thank you and your delegation for such an informative meeting with ministry representatives at last year's Union of BC Municipalities Annual Convention held in Vancouver. I am pleased that our governments had the chance to connect in-person and I apologize for the delay in my reply.

As the Minister of Housing, I write to acknowledge the topics we discussed during our meeting, including possibilities for shovel-ready housing projects in rural communities.

Regarding the suggested expansion of Abbey Manor, I have been informed that the building is owned and operated by the non-profit, Kaslo and District Senior Citizens Shelter Society. An option the society may want to consider is submitting a project proposal to the Community Housing Fund (CHF). The next CHF Request for Proposals is intended to be issued in late 2024 or early 2025. Applicants are encouraged to start planning for submission by having discussions with partners, including BC Housing. More information about the CHF can be found on BC Housing's website at:

www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/funding-opportunities/CHF

Another option for consideration is the Project Development Fund (PDF) which provides funding for eligible groups who have an affordable housing proposal and need additional support to advance their project to prepare a more comprehensive and competitive proposal. More information about the PDF can be found on BC Housing's website here: www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/funding-opportunities/project-development-fund.

.../2

**Office of the
Minister of Housing**

Website:
www.gov.bc.ca/housing

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9074 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E9
Phone: 236 478-3970

Location:
Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4
Email: HOUS.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Her Worship Suzan Hewat
Page 2

For any additional questions regarding funding for the expansion of Abbey Manor, you may contact Tyler Baker, BC Housing's Director of Regional Development, Interior Region, at: tbaker@bchousing.org.

You are also encouraged to connect with Interior Health's Corporate Office regarding your proposal for the expansion of the long-term care beds in Kaslo. Please see contact information below:

Interior Health Corporate Office
505 Doyle Avenue
Kelowna BC V1Y 0C5
Telephone: 250-469-7070

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ravi Kahlon', written in a cursive style.

Ravi Kahlon
Minister of Housing

pc: Brittny Anderson, MLA