VCH Healthy Public Policy Unit:
Innovation for public policy capacity in the public health system

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Canadian Network for Health in All Policies
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Land acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge that Vancouver Coastal Health facilities and services are located on the shared and unceded homelands of 14 First Nations.

Today we are grateful to join you on the unceded territory of the Kanien’kehá:ka (Mohawk) nation.
The Healthy Public Policy Unit (HPPU) at Vancouver Coastal Health

Addressing the root causes of health problems to promote population health and health equity for residents across the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region

Health in All Policies
Multi-sectoral approach highlights connections and synergies to shape policies within and outside health

Upstream focus
Understand the foundational influences on health and focus on policy solutions that address root causes

Health equity
Address systemic, avoidable disparities in social, economic, and environmental conditions that influence health

Healthy communities
Collaborate with local governments to build communities that support and protect health for everyone
What do public health teams need for policy work?
A mandate
In BC Public health has a mandate for healthy public policy

BC Public Health Act | Section 73(3)
Local Public Health Issues
Advise local government on public health (promotion & protection) issues, bylaws, policies

MHO Duties & Responsibilities
- Provide evidence-based opinions.
- Collaborate across sectors.
- Advocate for public health and vulnerable groups.
- Communicate with the public and elected officials on local health issues.
- Contribute to regional health planning.

BC Public Health Act | Section 83
Role of Local Government
Must delegate liaison for health, report health hazards, and consider advice provided by health officer

Community Charter | Section 8(3)
Public Health Bylaws
Protect health & enhance well-being with public health bylaws. Must consult health board or MHO

Local Government Act | Part 13
Regional Growth Strategies
Must consult provincial governments and agencies about Regional Growth Strategies

Healthy Public Policy Unit
A talented team
HPPU – September 2023
Organization chart
A skill set and expertise to fulfill our key functions and services

- Identify and monitor local or regional population health issues with data-driven and evidence-based approaches
- Monitor and analyze policy and program options and apply an evidence-based systems approach to support implementation
- Collaborate with partners and communities to co-create policy initiatives in a culturally relevant and equity-oriented way
- Co-create standardized policy frameworks and templates for adapted use in various community contexts
- Monitor policy windows, co-design campaigns, and effectively champion healthy public policies and services across the region
- Visualize data and share information tailored to reach diverse audiences and enable impactful policies and initiatives

**Public health leadership**
Bridge capacity gaps and advance healthy public policy practices that promote population health and wellbeing

**Healthy Public Policy Unit**
A team structure that reflects the key functions

**Knowledge Hub**

**Support**
Policy context, data, analysis, public health expertise, communications, strategy, tools, competencies.

**Policy analysts**

**KT & Communications**

**Practice, Research & Evaluation**

**Local/Regional**

**Influence**
Relational approach & contextual knowledge to engage proactively and respond to policy windows.

**Senior Policy Leads**

**Project Manager**

**Injury Prevention**

**Public Health**

**Collaborate**
Surveillance data & policy monitoring. Mandate, expertise & moral authority.

**Public Health Surveillance Unit**

**Medical Health Officers**

**VCH Healthy Communities Teams**

**Healthy Public Policy Unit**

Vancouver Coastal Health
How do we go about working on policy?
Anticipate and create windows of opportunity for policy action

**Policy Monitoring Framework**
- Legislative cycle and media monitoring of priority policy areas
  - Government and advocacy coalition activities, news, social media
- Allows team to be proactive, take advantage of policy windows, develop and mobilize informed policies, and track policy outcomes
- Tableau dashboard (PAM)
- CRM for engagement and network development

**Policy Analysis & Monitoring**
- Lacks reasoning & relationships
- Lacks rigour & practice guidance
- Lacks evidence

Healthy Public Policy Unit
Figure 1. Municipal council data count of policy proposals by theme over time

Table 1. List of Municipal council policy proposals (N= 13,233)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Policy Proposal</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Submitter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowen Island</td>
<td>Jan 2023</td>
<td>Agendas</td>
<td>Councillor Forth Opposed</td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
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<td>RES#23:35 It was Moved and Seconded That Council approve the age...</td>
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<td>Special Council Meeting January 30, 2023 BUSINESS ARISING FROM T.</td>
<td>Housing</td>
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<td>FILEHEAD</td>
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<td>Special Council Meeting January 30, 2023 Adopted on February 13, 2023</td>
<td>Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Business</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Motion by unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
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<td>Dec 2022</td>
<td>Agendas</td>
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<td>Move to a Closed meeting. RES#23:37 It was Moved and Seconded That Council move to a Closed Council meeting to discuss items pursuant...</td>
<td>Harm Reduction</td>
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<td>Page 1 of 7 Regular Council Meeting December 12, 2022</td>
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<td>RES#22.596 It was Moved and Seconded That Council approve the ag...</td>
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</table>
Figure 1. Upcoming policy proposals by policy theme, date and

Table 1. Future policy proposals
Inform policy with knowledge curation and strategic influence

**Policy Studio Process:** A systematic approach to develop comprehensive and evidence-based healthy public policy strategies

- Enhance team competencies
- Build issue-specific knowledge
- Strengthen internal and external collaboration
- Creates a theory of change for policy advocacy
- Based on UBC Policy Studio approach
- Stages are non-linear, iterative and non-consecutive
How do we continue to develop healthy public policy as a core public health practice?
Cast a wide net to enhance capacity for healthy public policy

Diverse team training & experience
- Public health & health sciences
- Public engagement & planning
- Policy analysis & advocacy
- Governance & politics

Leveraging & building tools & competencies
- Public health data & mandate
- Policy monitoring
- KT & engagement
- Data vis & communications

Leadership support & organizational buy-in
- Chief MHO as champion
- Internal validation from outset
- Broad support for upstream population health approach

Collaboration with HPP leaders & innovators
- NCCHPP & other NCCs
- GNHiAP/CNHiAP
- Health agencies (e.g. BCCDC)
- Non-profit organizations
Implement systems and structures to support practice

Lead for Research, Practice & Evaluation
Reflexive practice, capacity building, strategy

Project management and collaboration
SmartSheet, Slack, Teams, SharePoint

HPP Scholars Program
BCAHL partnership to host post-secondary students for special projects

Knowledge production
Research engagement to understand population health issues and/or support HiAP practice

HPP Practitioner Portal (SharePoint Site)
Tools, frameworks, templates, case studies, webinars, dashboards, external links, archive

Healthy Public Policy Packages
Topic overview with focus on HPP action and strategic communication

Capacity Building Programming
Facilitated interactives sessions on priority topics or processes:
Local Government 101, Working with MHOs, Understanding Power, Framing, etc.
Tell the story of how we influence public policy

1. Show the value of HPPU processes and practice
2. Illustrate the collective impact of HPPU work