



Vancouver   
CoastalHealth

2022/23

VCH Impact Report

# About VCH

VCH is committed to delivering exceptional care to more than one million people including the First Nations, Métis and Inuit in our region, within the traditional territories of the Heiltsuk, KITASOO-XAI'XAIS, Lil'wat, Musqueam, N'Quatqua, Nuxalk, Samahquam, shíshálh, Skatin, Squamish, Tla'amin, Tseil-Waututh, Wuikinuxv and Xa'xtsa. VCH is British Columbia's hub of health-care innovation, research and academic excellence, providing specialized care to patients throughout the province.



# About this report

The 2022/23 VCH Impact Report highlights our organization's programs and initiatives, emphasizing the strength of our values and showing our commitment to delivering exceptional care.

The report is categorized by our four VCH Pillars: Indigenous Cultural Safety, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Anti-Racism and Planetary Health, as well as our values of We Care For Everyone, We Are Always Learning and We Strive For Better Results.



# Message from the VCH Board Chair

For the more than 29,000 staff and medical staff who serve 1.25 million people around the province, the effects of these last three years will last far longer than the removal of masks for most of us. Add to this the opioid crisis and the need to provide ongoing support to the increasing numbers of those with mental health and substance use challenges, not to mention climate change alarm bells in the form of wildfires, snowstorms, atmospheric rivers and heat domes, and you have a workforce that has been challenged but shown a superhuman resolve. Unprecedented and unexpected describe both the events of the past year, and the leadership and heroism we've seen within our ranks. They get us through; they really do, and we are inspired and grateful.

This year's Impact Report covers several highlights of this work, all of which support our expanded strategic framework. The new VCH Pillars are the solid structure upon which we are building our future work. They are critical to optimizing health outcomes for the diverse population we serve at VCH and represent our strong commitment to:

- **Indigenous Cultural Safety:** Delivering culturally safe care to Indigenous Peoples every day in every way
- **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:** Promoting a sense of belonging where we can bring our whole selves to VCH
- **Anti-Racism:** Creating a community where we dismantle attitudes, practices and processes that impact people based on their race or ethnicity
- **Planetary Health:** Inspiring people to create, restore, steward and conserve healthy ecosystems

The stories in this report bring to life extraordinary people working through an extraordinary time. In small ways, and in large, we are able to deliver a full continuum of quality health care services, mostly because of our partnerships. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend our appreciation for the ongoing support of the Ministry of Health, and offer thanks to our partners at Providence Health Care and other organizations who share mutual goals. Grace and generosity have defined these partnerships, and we are grateful.

I feel hopeful as I think of what's ahead, because I know our people and our communities are in this together, and that makes us all want to do better for each other; to keep each other safe and healthy. It is a privilege for all of us on the Board to serve the people of Vancouver Coastal Health.

**Dr. Penny Ballem**

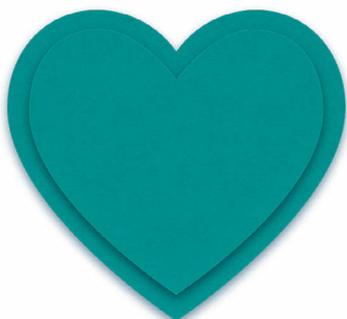
Board Chair



# Message from the VCH President and CEO

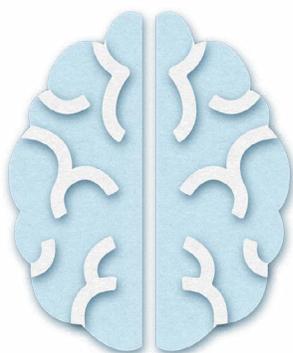


# Our core values



## **We Care For Everyone**

We believe being caring is at the heart of what we do, caring for our patients, their families, our colleagues, and ourselves.



## **We Are Always Learning**

We believe in staying curious, always open to innovative ideas and ways to improve health care.



## **We Strive For Better Results**

We believe in achieving better results across all functions of health care leading to better patient outcomes and improving health care.

# VCH Pillars

As part of our commitment to deliver an exceptional care experience for all, we continually look for ways to improve our programs and services to ensure they are culturally safe, respectful and appropriate, and advance health equity. With this in mind, and guided by our core values of We Care For Everyone, We Are Always Learning and We Strive For Better Results, we have introduced four VCH Pillars.

**Our pillars guide us in upholding our commitments to delivering safe, quality care.**



## Indigenous Cultural Safety

Delivering culturally safe care to Indigenous Peoples every day in every way.



## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Promoting a sense of belonging where we can bring our whole selves to VCH.



## Anti-Racism

Creating a community where we dismantle attitudes, practices and processes that impact people based on their race or ethnicity.



## Planetary Health

Inspiring people to create, restore, steward and conserve healthy ecosystems.

# Indigenous Cultural Safety

## Increasing access to culturally safe care

We are committed to improving access to culturally safe care to help close the health and social disparities gap experienced by Indigenous Peoples in B.C.

This year, we launched an initiative asking all patients who come into acute care or inpatient services at Vancouver General Hospital and 50 priority clinics if they wish to self-identify as Indigenous during the registration process. Using our new CST Cerner digital patient records system, we can now easily track self-identification, a process that is discreet, voluntary and inclusive. With this information now included on a patient's record, our teams are better able to provide culturally safe care and supports as part of their individual care plan.

The addition of Indigenous self-identification into a patient record, along with staff cultural safety training, has increased awareness around Indigenous health needs. Referrals to our Indigenous Patient Experience team has more than doubled in the last few months of 2022 and we have seen an increase in referrals to Elders for cultural support.

We continue to expand our Indigenous Patient Experience team, with early data

indicating their work is already leading to a decrease in the number of complaints.



**Hired additional Indigenous Patient Navigators (IPNs) and introduced a full-time position for an Elders in Residence coordinator.**



**IPNs have been assisting patients in urban hospitals for some time and we have now expanded services to Bella Bella, Bella Coola, Sechelt/shíshálh and the qathet region.**



**In Lower Mainland urban facilities, IPNs are now on-site seven days a week with expanded hours. They are assisting patients from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and from 9 am to 5 pm on weekends, while before their services were available from 9 am to 5 pm during weekdays.**



**IPNs add to the efforts of two Indigenous Patient Quality Liaisons who joined VCH in 2021 to help address Indigenous patient complaints in a culturally safe, equitable and restorative manner.**

# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

## Self-identification and workplace experience survey

Recognizing all dimensions of diversity including gender identity, race and ethnicity, sexual identity, Indigenous identity and disability is critical to delivering exceptional care and building a great place to work. With a commitment to advance equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the organization, our team engages with staff and medical staff to embed EDI principles in VCH policies, practices, programs and services.

The EDI team is focused on four main goals:

- 1. Have a workforce broadly reflective of the community.**
- 2. Identify and address barriers within the system.**
- 3. Attract and retain a talented, diverse workforce skilled at working in an inclusive and respectful manner.**
- 4. Create policies, plans, programs, practices and services that meet the diverse needs of our staff, medical staff, clients and community.**

An important step is understanding the state and needs of our workforce and identifying opportunities to improve our workplaces. In 2022, VCH launched an anonymous EDI-focused self-identification and workplace experience survey for all staff and medical staff.

We worked closely in partnership with the Indigenous Health team to adopt a trauma-informed and culturally safe process to collect sensitive information and mitigate potential harms that could be caused by data collection. This is in alignment with the **anti-racism data act**.

Insights from the survey will inform our work towards providing a culturally safe, inclusive work environment that celebrates our diverse workforce in the delivery of care.

# Anti-Racism

## Building an anti-racist organization

Racism and prejudices against Indigenous, Black and People of Colour continue to be heavily present in the health care system, leading to profound harm. All patients and clients have the right to access health services, free of racism and discrimination. We recognize the need for meaningful, systemic change and are committed to sustainable improvements that focus on human rights and health equity.

In 2022, we initiated an Anti-Racism program to build on our work of integrating Indigenous cultural safety and promoting greater equity, diversity and inclusion in our delivering of care.

### The program aims to:

- 1. Acknowledge, address and condemn racism and create an environment where patients, clients and residents receive safe, quality health care that is free of racism and discrimination.**
- 2. Create an environment where staff and medical staff feel confident in speaking up against racism and addressing discrimination as it happens, knowing that they are fully supported by leaders.**



Building our Anti-Racism program began with conducting engagement sessions with our staff and medical staff to understand lived experiences, discuss barriers to safety and receive input on possible actions towards becoming an anti-racist organization. The next phase of engagement will focus on external outreach with our patients, clients and community partners.

Input collected from engagement activities will inform a comprehensive VCH Anti-Racism Action Plan to facilitate our journey of becoming an anti-racist organization. Our intention is to understand how racism is witnessed and experienced, how racism impacts service delivery and access to health care, and how we can improve safety and confidence in reporting and accountability. We look forward to sharing our improvements as a result of our actions over the next several years.

# Planetary Health

Integrating sustainability in health care

**Planetary health refers to the interdependent relationship between the health of our planet and the health of our communities.**

Extreme temperatures, wildfires, droughts, storms and flooding have already had a negative impact on human health and care delivery across VCH. While the effects of climate change on human health and care delivery are clear, we also know that the health care system itself has a significant environmental footprint and contributes to climate change.

To address these intersections and impacts, VCH became the first health care organization in B.C. to integrate Planetary Health into its strategic plan and is committed to embedding planetary health principles into all that we do; from managing our facilities and the supplies we use, to delivering care.

This initiative is as ambitious as it is fundamentally collaborative. We are bringing together multiple stakeholders and teams who are making real, meaningful changes to support healthy communities and a healthy planet.

This critical work is led by VCH's Strategy and Innovation Office and the Planetary Health Collaborative composed of staff and medical staff in Sustainable Clinical Services, Public Health and Energy and Environmental Sustainability.

- The Sustainable Clinical Services team ensures we deliver high-quality, low-carbon care, making clinical decisions and improving processes to limit our environmental impacts. Read "[Finding solutions for health care's environmental impact](#)".
- The Public Health team works with our local governments and community partners to support climate change mitigation, emergency planning and response, air and water quality monitoring and more. To learn more about how our Public Health team works to improve health outcomes linked to factors such as climate change, noise and air pollution, community design and more, read "[Healthy environments and climate change](#)".

- The Energy and Environmental Sustainability team works to reduce energy consumption, water, waste and emission all across VCH sites and supports the development of sustainable and climate-resilient facilities like the Richmond Hospital redevelopment. Read "[Creating an environmentally sustainable and climate resilient VCH](#)" to understand how VCH is reducing the impact of our work on the planet.

**Together, we can face the climate crisis head on to deliver resilient and environmentally sustainable care that supports the health of people and the planet.**





# Caring For Everyone

We believe being caring is at the heart of what we do, caring for our patients, their families, our colleagues and ourselves.

# Expanded service for psychosis to help young people early



## What is psychosis?

*Psychosis is a treatable medical condition that affects a person's brain.*



## What are signs and symptoms of psychosis?

*A person experiencing psychosis has a loss of some contact with reality. Meaning, a person with psychosis is, at times, unable to tell the difference between what is real and what is in their mind, changing their perceptions, thoughts, beliefs and behaviours.*

In 2022, VCH's Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) Program expanded to bring care closer to home for clients and families. Specialized EPI services are now available to young people aged 13 to 30, who show early signs of psychosis, throughout Vancouver, Richmond and Coastal communities of care.

Psychosis can result from different causes and present differently in each person. Our comprehensive services and care are available to those who have early symptoms and are delivered by interdisciplinary teams. Having dedicated EPI teams in more communities helps reduce barriers when accessing person-centred care and supports.

Early intervention for psychosis can greatly increase the likelihood of a positive outcome and improves quality of life. When a person with psychosis gets help fast, they can regain the ability to think clearly, reengage with goals, meet developmental milestones and reduce social isolation, depression and the potential risk of harm to self or others.

EPI teams include psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, clinical counsellors, rehabilitation staff and peer support workers. Teams work collaboratively to provide assessments, care plans, medication management as well as supports for patients to set goals that maintain a healthy lifestyle such as going to school and finding work.

Recognizing that individuals and families are partners in care, the EPI program also provides psychoeducation and a safe space for families to share their concerns, learn about symptoms of psychosis and discuss new ways to support their loved one.

In 2022,

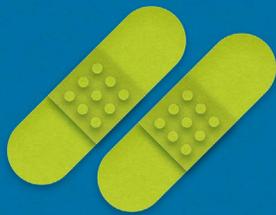
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**individuals received EPI services throughout VCH's three communities of care: Vancouver, Richmond and Coastal.**

# Making an impact with VCH's immunization campaigns

VCH has the highest overall COVID-19 vaccination coverage in the province:



More than

# 90%

two-dose coverage for VCH residents of all ages



# 95%

two-dose coverage for all adults 18+ years old



# 30%

one-dose coverage for children six months to four years of age

As the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic changed over the past year, the critical importance of vaccines as a tool to control the spread of infectious diseases has only grown more evident. Immunization continues to be a top priority for VCH's Public Health team, and for VCH overall.

While the focus in 2021 was largely on delivering the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines to VCH residents aged 12 and older; in 2022, the goals of the campaign became broader and the campaign more complex. Eligibility for COVID-19 vaccines expanded to include infants and children, and we administered booster doses to those aged 12 and up.

We also resumed administering routine childhood immunization clinics in schools that had been paused in the first year of the pandemic. The majority of children have been caught up on important vaccinations to protect them from infections and diseases like polio, diphtheria, measles and rubella.

The most impactful immunization campaign in 2022 was the one to protect against the spread of mpox (monkeypox). In mid-May, a strain of the virus spread from Africa — where it is endemic — to more than 70 countries where it is not, including Canada. The pattern of spread in this global outbreak is primarily human-to-human, sexually associated transmission, with most cases identified among men who have sex with men.

The first case of mpox in B.C. was confirmed in the VCH region in early June, and with Pride season quickly approaching, the VCH

Mpox Outbreak Response Team partnered closely with the BC Centre for Disease Control, community-based organizations and others to deliver more than 20,000 doses of mpox vaccine to those at risk over a three-month period in clinics, bars, sex-on-premise venues, beaches, parks and at Vancouver's pride festival.

This early use of vaccine among groups who are at the highest risk of spread, along with case and contact tracing efforts by VCH's Public Health team, successfully reduced transmission, prevented severe illness and limited risk to the wider population. With only 190 cases reported in B.C. (151 in the VCH region), and low levels of the virus circulating, the local mpox outbreak was declared over in January 2023. The vaccine is still available for at-risk, eligible individuals who wish to start or complete their vaccine series. Two doses are recommended for maximum protection.



CARING FOR EVERYONE

# New supported housing at Cambie Gardens





The redevelopment of George Pearson Centre (GPC) is a multi-phased project that met a significant milestone in October 2022 when the first group of GPC residents began to move into new community-based supported housing.

GPC is a long-term care home in the Oakridge neighbourhood of Vancouver. It was built in 1952 and today is home to more than 100 residents with complex medical and physical conditions. The redevelopment of GPC will replace the outdated facility with a variety of new housing with support options on site.

As part of the redevelopment plan, some residents will be moving from GPC into community-based supported housing at the new Cambie Gardens development in the same neighbourhood. This housing model is designed to support individuals to live as independently as they choose, as part of an integrated community that is welcoming and accessible for all. The model of care was designed in part by residents and disability advocacy groups, who are helping to shape the future of supported housing. As a result, GPC residents will share the apartment buildings with people from the broader Vancouver community.

The first phase of resident moves began in the fall of 2022. VCH and service provider, CONNECT Partners, will continue to move the first 44 GPC residents into their new homes in 2023. The remaining moves will happen in phases and are expected to be complete in approximately 2030, at which point GPC will permanently close.

These residents' new homes will include a community health centre that will bring together a wide range of health services and supports, a new therapeutic pool and a new adult day program.

*I am very happy this long-anticipated redevelopment and care model have become a reality. We look forward to seeing the positive changes this brings to residents and their families.*

**Bob Chapman**

Vice President, Vancouver Community,  
Vancouver Coastal Health

# Addressing the illicit drug toxicity crisis

The illicit drug toxicity crisis continues to result in the tragic deaths of hundreds of British Columbians every month. Throughout the pandemic, drug-checking services indicated the rising toxicity of the illicit drug supply as the presence of fentanyl, a potent opioid analogue, was increasingly detected in illegal opioids, as well as other contaminants including sedatives.

The composition of the illicit drug supply is of significant concern, as it increases the likelihood of an individual experiencing a fatal overdose. Unless people are offered regulated alternatives, it will be challenging to fully address this public health emergency and to save lives. At VCH, we have been working closely with federal and provincial governments to introduce pharmaceutical alternatives for people at high risk of overdose.

Prescribed alternatives can include powder, tablets, vials or patches containing known qualities of certain prescription-grade opioids,

offered in settings with clinical oversight. An example includes SAFER, a VCH pilot program launched in 2021 with funding from Health Canada.

**SAFER, located in Vancouver's downtown eastside, offers fentanyl-containing products to clients using a clinical model and operates as a partnership between the PHS Community Services Society and the B.C. Centre on Substance Use.**

In addition to prescribing pharmaceutical-grade opioids, clients are also connected to treatment, harm reduction and recovery support in the community. Another program that offers pharmaceutical alternatives is Insite, North America's first supervised consumption site. This site is expanding the availability of prescribed fentanyl products to some of its clients accessing harm reduction services.

Findings from client care at SAFER and Insite will generate evidence on how pharmaceutical alternatives can be offered more broadly to the community. While this work is ongoing, many other VCH sites also offer prescription fentanyl patches to clients who use substances, including community health centres and other VCH-funded sites. Collectively, this work reduces the clients' need to access the illicit drug supply and decreases their risk of experiencing an overdose.

These advancements in services are an essential component of the VCH response to the illicit drug toxicity public health emergency, along with prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery services. They enable us to meet clients where they are on their recovery journey and increase engagement in essential, life-saving health care services.



# Working together to provide culturally safe care

## **Providing exceptional care to Indigenous clients starts with a culture of humility and collaboration.**

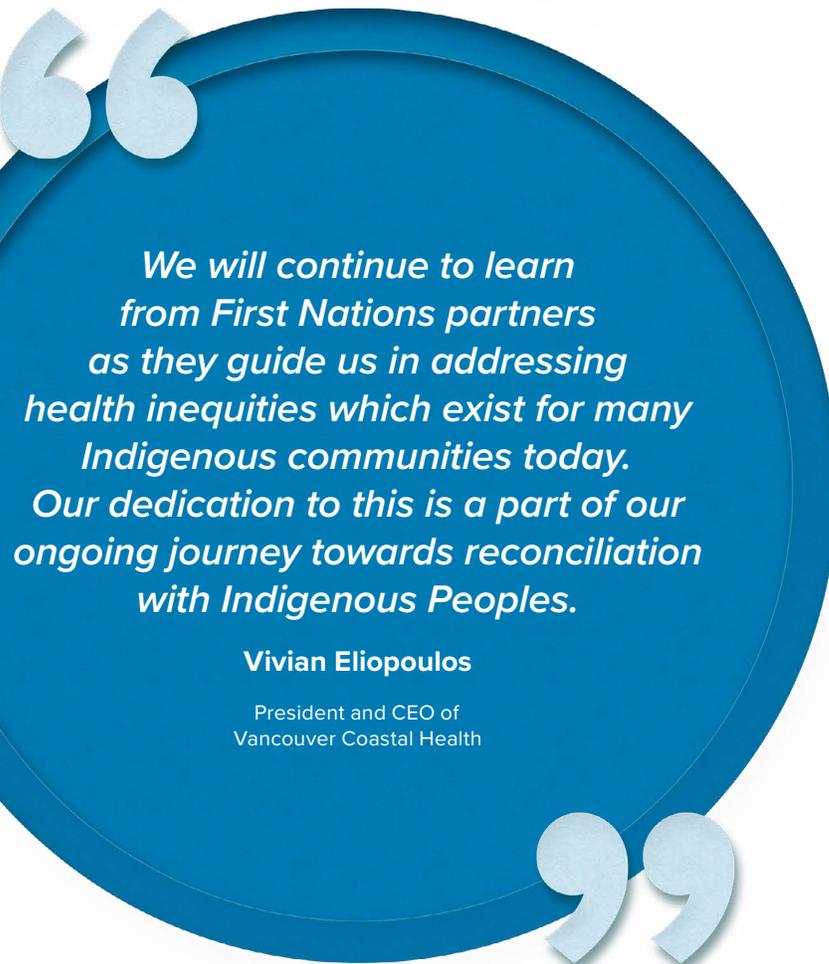
Indigenous Peoples have a rich history and culture of medicine and healing traditions. We value and strive to integrate them into health systems to meet the specific needs of each Nation or community. We are excited to work together with Indigenous communities and partner organizations to help build more inclusive and impactful care.

With great honour and humility, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Tla'amin First Nation. At least seven Nations within the VCH region have expressed interest in doing the same. We also celebrated the signing of a Letter of Understanding (LOU) with the Métis Nation of British Columbia, a significant milestone in our journey to providing a distinctions-based approach to health services for Métis people in our region.

Our LOU and MOUs reflect the natural progression of our existing connections with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, and our commitment to reconciliation and upholding the rights of Indigenous Peoples. They ground us with guiding principles and identify mutual priorities, defining our approach to advancing health care in each community. This establishes a consistent, coordinated and deliberate approach to our partnerships. As our partnerships evolve with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities we serve, opportunities for meaningful collaboration and shared decision-making will further enable Indigenous Peoples to perform critical roles regarding the design and delivery of health services for their communities.

We are also growing our diverse network of partners to increase culturally safe care options for Indigenous clients. Last year, we established a partnership with Sheway to help provide anti-racist, trauma-informed, culturally safe care for Indigenous people who are pregnant that use substances and live in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

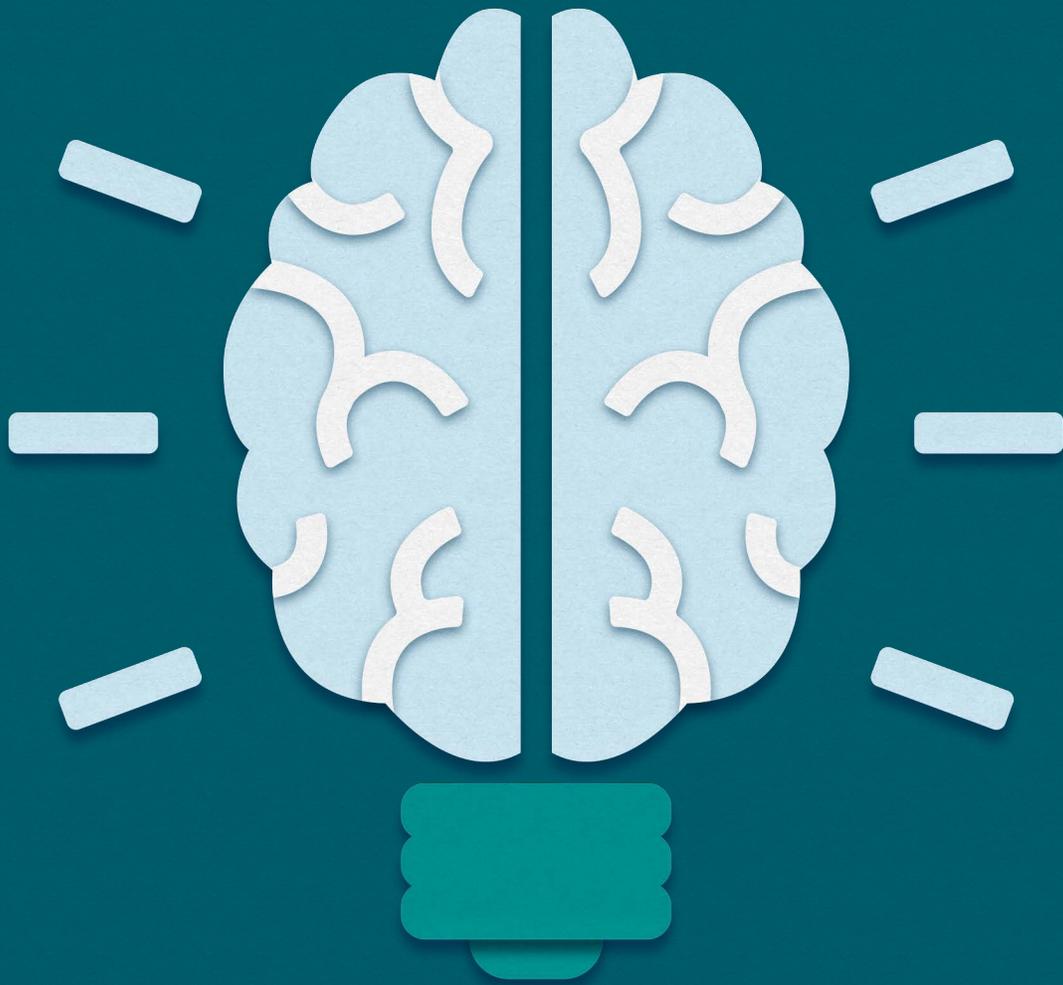
More than two-thirds of the clients accessing services at Sheway identify as Indigenous. We will continue to collaborate with Sheway to add Indigenous art and culture, Indigenous-informed programming and team members to enhance the experiences and support available to children and families. To us, it is essential that every Indigenous community member feels safe and welcome when they seek care or support.



*We will continue to learn from First Nations partners as they guide us in addressing health inequities which exist for many Indigenous communities today. Our dedication to this is a part of our ongoing journey towards reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.*

**Vivian Eliopoulos**

President and CEO of  
Vancouver Coastal Health

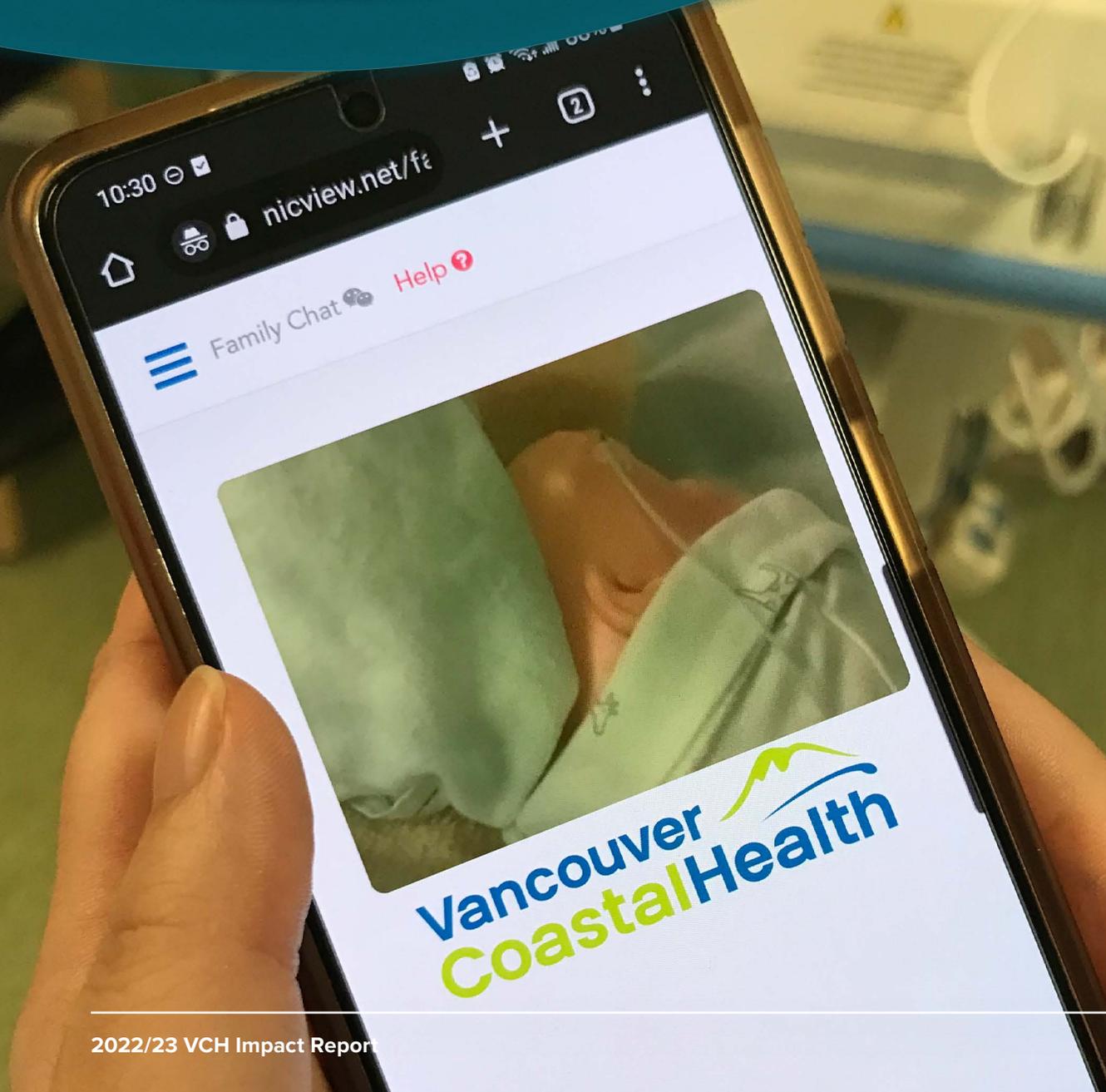


# Always Learning

We believe in staying curious, always open to innovative ideas and ways to improve health care.

ALWAYS LEARNING

# Parents of Richmond Hospital's smallest patients gain new connections





Being the parents of a premature or sick newborn is a very stressful experience, especially when an infant needs to be admitted to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) after the parent is discharged. Physical separation adds to the anxiety that parents go through in this difficult time.

To better connect families with their premature infants, Richmond Hospital announced the launch of the first initiative of its kind in B.C. Parents can now monitor and virtually visit their premature infant 24 hours a day, seven days a week through a private and secure live-streaming camera. The hospital's NICU first installed the cameras at the infant bedsides as part of a pilot project in June 2022.

Since the pilot first began, the NICU has virtually connected over 40 babies and their families, facilitating over 2,500 unique visits from across the world including Colombia, the Philippines and Ireland. In a survey of families who used the technology, 100 per cent of participants stated it decreased their level of anxiety and helped them to bond with their baby.

Based on positive feedback from families, the secure camera system will remain a permanent fixture at the hospital's NICU. As the average length of stay in the Richmond Hospital NICU stands at two weeks, many families who cannot stay with their infant continuously have this alternative option to connect with them.

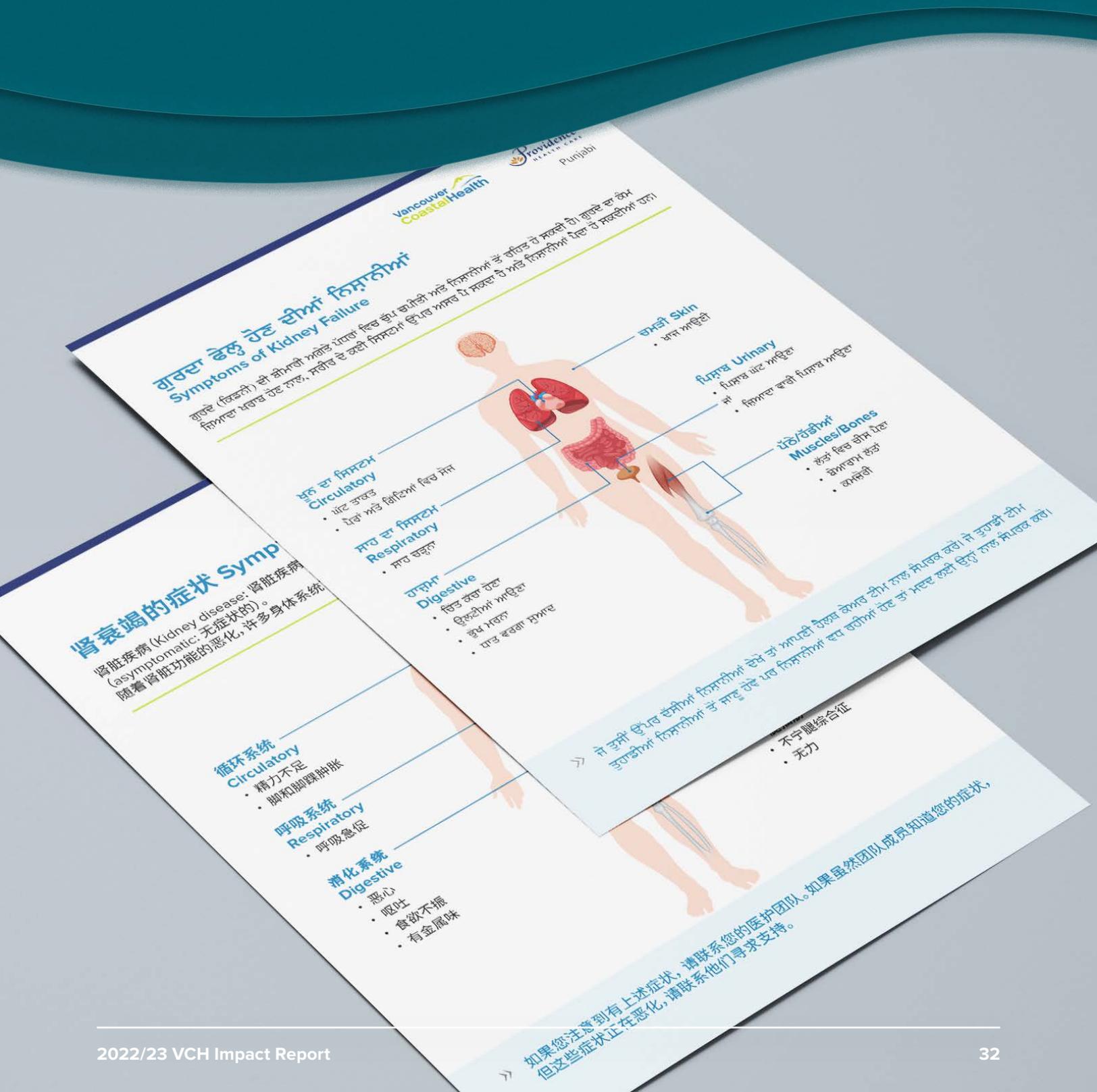
Speaking about the initiative, Jill Schulmeister, Women's and Children's Program Manager at Richmond Hospital said, "No parent expects to have to leave the hospital without their baby and, sadly, this is the reality for those with babies who need specialized care after birth. Seeing the emotional toll this separation has on parents, the NICU team wanted to find a way to keep families and babies connected, even when they are not physically together."

*As a parent, it gave our family significant comfort and reassurance to be able to check in on our babies while we were not by their bedsides. I am so grateful that this option was available to us and will be an option for other families with premature babies.*

**Preethi Krishan**

Parent of twin babies who received care at Richmond Hospital's NICU

# Language services reduce barriers for patients



## ਗੁਰਦਾ ਫੇਲ੍ਹ ਹੋਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀਆਂ Symptoms of Kidney Failure

ਗੁਰਦਾ (ਕਿਡਨੀ) ਦੀ ਬੀਮਾਰੀ ਅਕਸਰ ਪੱਛਾ ਵਿਚ ਡੂੰਘੇ ਢਾਂਡੀ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਰਹਿਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਦਾ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਖਰਾਬ ਹੋਣ ਨਾਲ, ਸਰੀਰ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਸਿਸਟਮਾਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਅਸਰ ਪੈ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀਆਂ ਪੈਣਾ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

### ਖੂਨ ਦਾ ਸਿਸਟਮ Circulatory

- ਘੱਟ ਊਰਜਾ
- ਪੈਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹਿੱਦਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੋਜ

### ਸਾਹ ਦਾ ਸਿਸਟਮ Respiratory

- ਸਾਹ ਚੜ੍ਹਨਾ

### ਹਾਜ਼ਮਾ Digestive

- ਚਿੱਤ ਕਰਾ ਹੋਣਾ
- ਉਲਟੀਆਂ ਆਉਣਾ
- ਡੂੰਘੇ ਮਰਨਾ
- ਧਾਤ ਵਰਗਾ ਸੁਆਦ

### ਚਮੜੀ Skin

- ਖਾਸ ਆਉਣੀ

### ਪਿਸ਼ਾਬ Urinary

- ਪਿਸ਼ਾਬ ਘੱਟ ਆਉਣਾ
- ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਵਾਰੀ ਪਿਸ਼ਾਬ ਆਉਣਾ

### ਹੱਡੀਆਂ/ਕੱਡੀਆਂ Muscles/Bones

- ਲੱਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਚੀਸ ਪੈਣਾ
- ਬੇਮਾਨਸ ਲੱਤਾਂ
- ਕਮਜ਼ੋਰੀ

➤ ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਦੱਸੀਆਂ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀਆਂ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਪੈਲਬ ਕੋਆਰ ਟੀਮ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ਜੋ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਟੀਮ ਤੁਹਾਡੀਆਂ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਹੂ ਹੋਏ ਪਰ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨੀਆਂ ਵਧ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਕਰਨੀ ਉੱਚੇ ਹਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

- 不宁腿综合征
- 无力

➤ 如果您注意到有上述症状，请联系您的医护团队。如果虽然团队成员知道您的症状，但这些症状正在恶化，请联系他们寻求支持。

Language and cultural barriers can pose challenges for patients navigating and accessing health care. In January 2022, the Language Services program was launched with an aim to reduce barriers for patients accessing and navigating the health care system by translating health information.

To guide the development of the program, VCH worked with partners from neighbourhood houses, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., MOSAIC, Immigrant Services Society of BC and the Provincial Health Services Authority to review the translation and interpretation practices throughout our region. The process resulted in the standardization of translation practices across VCH and informed the creation of a VCH interpretation and translation framework.

In its first year, the program translated materials such as instructions on how, and when, to access emergency or urgent primary care, how to find a family physician or nurse practitioner, public health information (including heat warnings and other health alerts), pre-and post-surgery information, self-care and home support for seniors as well as an overview of health care services available to patients who are new to VCH.

Initial feedback has indicated that patients feel more informed when attending health care appointments and they have a stronger understanding of the resources and care options available to them. Translated health care information can save time and reduce stress as well as enhance the patient experience.



**The top five requested translated languages by patients/clients at VCH are:**

- 1. Traditional Chinese**
- 2. Simplified Chinese**
- 3. Punjabi**
- 4. Spanish**
- 5. Vietnamese**

**In the program's first year, the Language Services team completed over 495 translations into 11 main languages including Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Punjabi, Spanish, Vietnamese, Farsi, Arabic, Korean, Russian, Tagalog and Japanese.**

ALWAYS LEARNING

# Addressing reconciliation through truth and training



**We are continuously improving how we interact with Indigenous clients at every step of their health care journey. Each contact, from the first click online to in-facility patient care, contributes to the experience of Indigenous patients, with communications and staff cultural competency playing crucial roles.**

The Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) team continues to teach the ICS Hummingbird education program, providing it to our staff, medical staff and frontline workers. The Hummingbird program is the first of four levels of the ICS curriculum, consisting of four hours of online study and six hours of intensive in-person training. Last year, the ICS team and the Indigenous Health Research team worked closely with the VGH Emergency Department to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the Hummingbird program, which was provided to the majority of nurses, registration clerks and allied health professionals. Preliminary results demonstrate an improvement in understanding, attitudes and behaviours of our care providers.

In 2022, we expanded accessibility to the online self-study module of the Hummingbird program, resulting in more than 5,000 VCH employees having completed this training and this number continues to grow. Through ICS training, we believe that we are enhancing the cultural competency of our care providers and enabling us to improve care and outcomes for Indigenous patients and families.

We are adjusting our language to be more inclusive and respectful of Indigenous patients and their culture. This includes replacing the term "Aboriginal" with "Indigenous" to align with the global standard for terminology and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Improving Indigenous cultural safety is not limited to just services. In acknowledging and honouring words that matter, we worked closely with the Tla'amin Nation to rename the former Powell River General Hospital. The Tla'amin Nation generously gifted to VCH the name qathet, which means "working together". On July 25, 2022, qathet General Hospital was unveiled.



*We are committed to providing opportunities to learn about colonization and the impacts on the health and wellness of the Indigenous population.*

**Brittany Bingham**

Director of Research, Vancouver Coastal Health

ALWAYS LEARNING

# Your voice matters: opportunities to engage in health care

At VCH, patient and public participation is an important part of developing an accessible and equitable health care system. VCH's Community Engagement team works across our health region and all areas of care, supporting and facilitating dialogue between VCH and our communities.

A strong connection to community voices helps improve our health care programs, projects and supports, and reflects the unique needs of local communities.

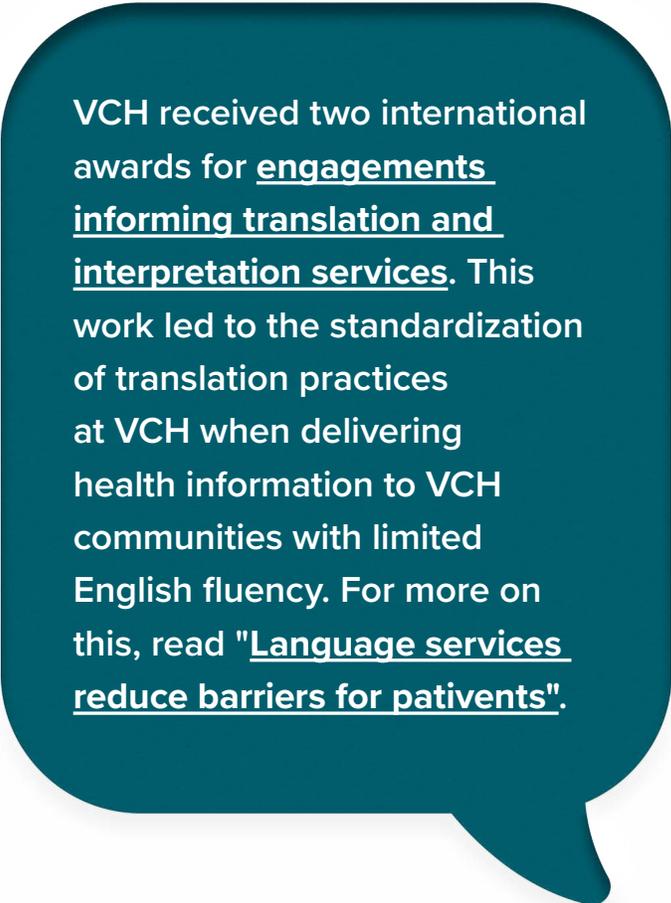


In 2022, we engaged with communities on numerous programs and services including:

- 1. Connecting with patients and their families to review the mandate of the Tertiary Mental Health and Substance Use program.**
- 2. Collaborating with George Pearson Centre residents and community partners to identify a new, culturally appropriate name.**
- 3. Inviting patient advisors to provide input into redevelopment projects at Richmond Hospital and Lions Gate Hospital.**
- 4. Providing input on the redesign of our website, [vch.ca](http://vch.ca), that resulted in increased accessibility, Indigenous representation, as well as making it easier to find and understand content.**
- 5. Working with Indigenous communities to seek input on several art projects, helping infuse Indigenous art and culture into our care facilities.**

In total, community members supported 45 health care projects and we received input from more than 2,000 individuals through digital surveys, interviews, focus groups and advisory recruitments.

Interested in getting involved? Learn more about community engagement opportunities at [engage.vch.ca](http://engage.vch.ca)



VCH received two international awards for engagements informing translation and interpretation services. This work led to the standardization of translation practices at VCH when delivering health information to VCH communities with limited English fluency. For more on this, read "Language services reduce barriers for patients".

# Healthy environments and climate change

Good health depends on much more than health care. Environmental and social factors beyond health care and biology significantly affect our health and well-being. VCH Public Health works to prevent illness by reducing the extent to which these factors—known as determinants of health—impact the health of our communities.

In 2022, a new Public Health team was formed to focus specifically on physical and environmental determinants of health. Our Healthy Environments and Climate Change (HECC) team works to improve health outcomes linked to factors such as climate change, noise and air pollution, community design and more, through research, policy input and review and education.

Comprising a Medical Health Officer, climate change and health lead, environmental health scientists, planners, Environmental Health Officers and others, this team works closely with regional, municipal and non-governmental partners on plans, projects and policy proposals, incorporating lenses of environmental determinants of health and equity.

A major focus is to support the implementation of recommendations from the HealthADAPT project, a Health Canada-funded three-year project that seeks to advance health-focused climate change adaptation in our region.

## In 2022, the HECC team:



Collaborated with the City of Vancouver and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to conduct an indoor temperature survey during heat events



Worked with the City of Vancouver to implement new recommendations for air conditioning, air filtration and decreased carbon emissions for new medium-large residential buildings



Created a **Heat Check-in Support Framework for NGOs** to guide check-in planning for people vulnerable to extreme heat



Supported VCH in seasonal readiness planning for future heat, smoke and weather events



Led or collaborated on air quality monitoring projects throughout our region

### Contributed to:

- TransLink's *Transport 2050* regional transportation plan
- Metro Vancouver's *Regional Growth Strategy (2050)*
- Metro Vancouver's *Clean Air Plan*
- Metro Vancouver's *Climate 2050*

### Provided input to:

- City of Vancouver's *Climate Emergency Action Plan*
- City of Vancouver's *Climate Emergency Parking Program*
- The proposed expansion of the Metro Vancouver Non-Road Diesel Engine Emission Regulation

### Provided feedback to:

- The province's *Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy*
- The Northwest Ports *Clean Air Strategy*



# Striving For Better Results

We believe in achieving better results across all functions of health care leading to better patient outcomes and improving health care.

# Creating an environmentally sustainable and climate resilient VCH

Did you know that the health care system is a significant contributor to climate change? Our care-providing activities are responsible for five per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada—that’s equivalent to the airline industry.

*“If we were to decarbonize health care, it would actually be equivalent to eliminating air travel.”*

**Dr. Andrea MacNeill**

VCH’s Regional Medical Director  
of Planetary Health

VCH is leaning into the opportunity to take a leadership role in reducing the impact of our work on the planet, from personal actions like taking public transit or biking to work, to organization-wide choices like reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions across VCH facilities, and bringing more reusable products into our supply chain.

Our planetary health response has two main goals: environmental sustainability and climate resilience. Working to meet these goals will lead to improved health and well-being in the broader communities we serve, and the planet as a whole.

**Here is what we are doing to get there.**



FEATURE STORY 1:

# Transforming food systems for improved patient care and planetary health

In Canada, food-related emissions are about ten per cent of health care emissions, and about 50 per cent of the food served to hospital patients is thrown out.

To begin to transform food systems for improved patient care and planetary health, VCH is studying food-related emissions and waste, along with patient satisfaction, nutritional status, and clinical outcomes and using food as a therapeutic intervention.

Almost half of patient bedside food is thrown away, filling our landfills and wasting dollars. Dr. Eileen Wong wanted to look at this through the lens of long-term care residents' perspectives. Eileen found that much of the food waste was because residents found the taste, temperature or texture of the food unappealing. Meals were also served too close together, so residents were not hungry enough by their next meal. Working together to address these issues, Eileen and her team made some simple changes, such as reducing portion sizes while retaining needed calories. Food waste from participating residents dropped by half.

The idea of food as medicine comes from the understanding that good nutrition can protect our overall health. Dr. Annie Lalande, a fourth-year UBC general surgery resident, has been working with a team at Vancouver General Hospital to study the ways that food can be used as a therapeutic intervention. The team is looking at developing new menus to nourish and treat patients, and ways to share these lessons with other health care sites. For the next phase of this study, VCH is partnering with Ned Bell, the former executive chef of Ocean Wise, to design a planetary health diet for inpatients, which is optimized for both human and environmental health.



**10%**

**of health care emissions are food related**



**50%**

**of food served to patients is thrown out**



## FEATURE STORY 2:

# Integrating planetary health principles into Richmond Hospital redevelopment

As the Richmond Hospital redevelopment team prepares for phase two construction of the Yurkovich Family Pavilion, planetary health principles are being integrated into all aspects of the build. Here are areas where we plan to achieve a climate positive impact.

### Sustainable and climate resilient building

- Aiming for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification
- Earthquake-safe and built above the flood line
- Low carbon design (with an 87 per cent reduction in emissions compared to an average new hospital)
- Energy efficient and electrified design (100 per cent is from low carbon electricity and 100 per cent carbon neutral)

### Green-focused clinical spaces

- Built-in virtual/telehealth care options
- Circular economy/reusables first principles

### Active and clean transportation

- Easy connection to public transportation
- Bike storage and showering facilities
- Car-share parking and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations (Richmond Hospital has the largest EV charging installation in B.C. with 30 charging stations in our parkade)



### FEATURE STORY 3:

## Gibsons nurse champions eco-conscious caregiving

For the last 12 years, Emily Doyle, a Public Health Nurse at the Gibsons Health Unit, has been in her community talking to people of all ages and backgrounds about their health. Increasingly, climate change and sustainability are coming up more often in her conversations with patients and clients.

Witnessing a warming planet, increased pollution, the pandemic and extreme weather events, as well as becoming a parent, encouraged Emily to become a change-maker at work.

From supporting families to adapt to the weather-related impacts of climate change to implementing sustainability practices in her office, Emily has taken actions like switching from paper printing to electronic resources, recycling vaccine packaging, and promoting carpooling, walking or cycling to work.

Her passion for sustainability eventually took Emily to the Public Health Association of B.C.'s 2022 Conference, "Our Planet, Our Health: Creating Well-Being Societies and Making Peace with Nature."

During the conference, a session on the importance of Indigenous knowledge and the need to integrate an eco-social approach into public health practice resonated with Emily: "There's so much to learn from Indigenous people with regards to how to be in relationship with the earth."

As a result of Emily's passion and advocacy, climate change and sustainability are standing agenda items in the Sunshine Coast Public Health Nursing meetings to keep planetary health top of mind and support frontline staff in taking action toward a sustainable future.

STRIVING FOR BETTER RESULTS

# Transforming our hospitals to improve care closer to home

Throughout the Vancouver Coastal Health region, we are making significant investments to upgrade, expand and enhance our health care infrastructure. Numerous development projects are underway to build new and

improved long-term care facilities and modernize our hospitals to deliver quality care for patients, clients and residents closer to home.



## **Richmond Hospital Redevelopment Project— the Yurkovich Family Pavilion**

Richmond Hospital is expanding through the addition of a new patient care tower named the Yurkovich Family Pavilion. The new nine-floor tower will have an expanded emergency department, more operating rooms and additional pre- and post-surgical care spaces. The tower will also include an intensive care unit, a fully equipped medical imaging department with four CT scanners and two MRIs, a pharmacy and short-stay pediatrics.

This project will add 113 new beds to the hospital, bringing the total to 353 patient care beds. Renovations to the South Tower will create new inpatient psychiatry and psychiatric emergency units and the Milan Ilich Pavilion will be renovated and become home to the Cancer Care Clinic.



## **Lions Gate Hospital Redevelopment Project — the Paul Myers Tower**

The Paul Myers Tower at Lions Gate Hospital will be a six-floor state-of-the-art facility to serve as the hub for acute care services for Coastal communities. This high-tech facility will include a Perioperative Care Unit with eight large rooms and 39 stretcher bays, along with a Medical Device Reprocessing department. Every department and room will be fitted with the latest equipment and technology to improve patient experience and support patient and staff safety.

The new Tower will expand capacity to 108 inpatient beds and additional outdoor space including a rooftop garden and group exercise area will promote healing and wellness. There will also be a dedicated space for ceremonies, small gatherings and meditation at the Two Sisters Garden.

# New program reduces wait for hip and knee surgery

A new program called Hip and Knee ASAP, developed by the Regional Surgery Program at VCH is aimed at reducing wait times for those who need hip and knee surgery by directing those who don't, or aren't ready, to care alternatives.

Not every person who has been identified as potentially requiring hip or knee surgery is ready, or actually in need of the surgery.

**By creating a new workflow, that uses the skills and experience of Advanced Practice Physiotherapists (APP), the program expedites a surgical triage assessment and moves people at the highest levels of need and readiness into the queue for surgical consult.**

This model for hip and knee osteoarthritis is new in B.C. but is well-established in Ontario and the United Kingdom.

Surgeons provided a 12-week mentorship to the physiotherapists around surgery-readiness, including time in the operating room to better understand the surgical procedures. Now, instead of having to wait three to eight months to see a surgeon, patients in the program can see an APP within a month. The APPs also give options and information to those who are either uninterested in surgery or are not in significant pain.

Patients who are candidates for surgery receive useful information before their surgical consult, which helps them to decide more quickly if it is the right choice for them. As a result, surgeons are seeing more people that feel educated at the consultation, and feel informed enough to sign the surgical consent. We are already seeing improvements to the quality of life for participants.

# Reducing wait times to zero: PUSH days at Lions Gate Hospital

It was charge nurse Sherry Barbosa's own experience with chronic shoulder pain that inspired an innovative way to reduce wait times for other patients.

Lions Gate Hospital was dealing with a backlog of requests for pain management injections that had been long even before the COVID-19 pandemic began. While observing the team and physicians who provide treatment, she realized that by identifying specific patients with simple needs at the same time, the process could be greatly streamlined.

Sherry developed a system for injection preparation and patient flow and proposed it to the staff and physicians in Medical Imaging. The team decided to designate one day a week as a pilot, focusing on patients who had unilateral pain management issues in the upper and lower extremities. Sherry decided to call it a 'PUSH' day because they were pushing to get more patients treated safely and efficiently.

Normally, the team would see 11 to 16 patients per day.

**38** patients treated during the first PUSH day on September 16, 2021



Up to **72** patients treated each PUSH day by the time PUSH days had been running for three months

By using the morning huddle each morning, specific assignments for each person, and a clear plan, the team was able to see more than triple the number of regular patients.

The goal with PUSH days was to reduce the waitlist from over a year to two months, and the team is proud to share that they have been able to eliminate the waitlist by treating around 20 patients during each PUSH day.

STRIVING FOR BETTER RESULTS

# Seamless access to patient information improves patient care





In November 2022, Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) and campus, including the Joseph and Rosalie Segal and Family Health Centre, Willow Pavilion and more than 50 priority clinics transitioned to a new electronic health records system, called CST Cerner.

The Clinical and Systems Transformation (CST) is a multi-year project designed to improve the safety, quality and consistency of patient care across VCH and its partner organizations, Providence Health Care and Provincial Health Services Authority, by transitioning from mostly paper-based records to one electronic health records system. It marked one of the largest health care projects in B.C.'s history and will allow for timely access to electronic patient health records across facilities and organizations, creating more efficient pathways for care.

The training and preparation to transition to CST at VGH required intense preparation and planning:

**More than 10,000 staff and medical staff completed online and in-person training, hundreds of new workstations on wheels and supporting technology devices were rolled-out and thousands of patient charts were transitioned to prepare for the electronic activation.**

VGH's implementation was the largest scope of any CST Cerner activation in B.C. and, in fact, across North America. The benefits for patients include enhanced medication safety, an integrated approach, which facilitates greater consistency of care, faster access to results and medication therapies and less time spent repeating themselves during consultations or undergoing duplicate tests.

VGH joined several VCH sites that have already transitioned to CST Cerner, including Lions Gate Hospital, Squamish General Hospital, Whistler Health Care Centre and Pemberton Health and Sechelt Hospital, Totem Lodge, Shorncliffe Intermediate Care Home and Sumac Place.

STRIVING FOR BETTER RESULTS

# Safely stewarding donated blood at Vancouver General Hospital



In August 2022, Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) became VCH’s first Using Blood Wisely site. With this designation, VGH joins a select group of Canadian hospitals recognized by Choosing Wisely Canada and Canadian Blood Services for their commitment to responsible red blood cell stewardship and the continuous pursuit of quality improvement.

Achieving the Using Blood Wisely designation validates the work of VGH’s Transfusion Medicine team. They have dedicated the last five years to updating their red blood cell transfusion program to enhance patient safety while responsibly managing the donated blood supply, a precious resource in great demand.

As part of the Using Blood Wisely designation process, the Transfusion Medicine team measured the initiative’s effectiveness against national benchmarks. Results showed that VGH’s red blood cell transfusion program meets and often exceeds these standards.

The program’s success is the result of a team effort: health care staff and medical staff played an important role by adopting updated workflows and practices. VGH’s Using Blood Wisely designation symbolizes a combined dedication to patient safety and the appropriate use of red blood cell transfusions.

VGH’s red blood cell transfusion program model is now expanding to other VCH hospitals.



*This designation validates the effectiveness of blood transfusion quality improvement initiatives we have designed and implemented. It gives us confidence that as a hospital, we are committed to appropriate and responsible blood transfusion practice.*

**Dr. Krista Marcon**

Hematopathologist and VGH’s Using  
Blood Wisely Physician Champion

# Finding solutions for health care's environmental impact

Health care is responsible for almost five per cent of Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions. As one of the largest health care organizations in B.C., we recognize our impact on the environment is great. We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment and restoring health to our health care system and planet.

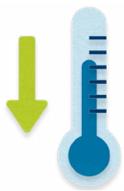
Our work ahead is purposeful and in alignment with B.C.'s Ministry of Health Mandate Letter and the CleanBC Roadmap 2030. It will require the collective efforts of all of our teams, and working with partners to identify meaningful solutions and innovative ideas to help us move towards environmental sustainability and climate resilience.

## 2022 highlights:

- Embedded climate risk and resilience into major capital projects including the Richmond Hospital Redevelopment Project.
- Designed the VGH Operating Room Renewal to enable us to reduce emissions by 1,411 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e.
- Participated in the Nourish Anchor Cohort to increase sustainable food opportunities for staff and on in-patient food trays, including traditional food options.
- Increased waste diversion in non-acute care (long-term care home) settings from 36 per cent to 42 per cent. Reduced overall waste generation in acute care (hospital) settings by almost 13 per cent.

Learn more about how we are reducing our environmental footprint at [\*\*GreenCare.\*\*](#)

**Our priority work will focus on advancing sustainability in these areas:**



### **Climate change**

Move toward a climate-resilient health system through purposeful, sustainable facility design and operations.



### **Energy and carbon**

Reduce our carbon footprint by increasing energy efficiency and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.



### **Food**

Develop plant-based, local, culturally relevant and equitable food service options to advance food as medicine.



### **Materials**

Choose sustainable materials and products that contribute to human and environmental health, while avoiding waste and unnecessary chemicals.



### **Water**

Minimize water consumption to reduce demand on natural resources and impact on our living environments.



### **Transportation**

Increase access to and use of transportation alternatives that reduce negative environmental impact and benefit human health and wellness.

# Foundations

Make a lasting impact by contributing to the vital work of VCH through a donation to a hospital foundation. Donations help pay for specialized equipment, support medical research and improve patient care. Every donation makes a difference in the lives of our patients, their families and in our communities.

**To learn more about how hospital foundations are transforming health care, visit [vch.ca/donate](https://vch.ca/donate)**

