

June 2022

MESSAGE FROM VCH LEADERSHIP

Everyone matters at Vancouver Coastal Health

When I look around and see the 26,000 staff and medical staff at oneVCH, I am humbled by and in awe of the breadth of diversity in our backgrounds, our abilities and our experiences. When I think about the future of VCH, I feel inspired and hopeful for what we can achieve when we come together to deliver exceptional care in an environment that is safe, equitable and free from barriers for our people and the people we serve.

Our differences make us who we are as individuals, and the unique and valuable contributions of each individual make us stronger as a team.

Last month we launched a self-identification and workplace experience survey so we can better understand the state and needs of our current workforce and identify opportunities to improve the workplace. By sharing your voice, you are helping us make better decisions that impact you and make our workplace a safe, equitable and inclusive environment where we all feel empowered to bring our whole and best selves.

My sincerest gratitude to the medical staff who have embraced VCH's efforts to effect change. All of us are accountable, and we need to move forward together on this journey to create a culturally safe health care system where everyone feels safe and respected and where we all have an opportunity to thrive.



Vivian Eliopoulos, President and Chief Executive Officer

Everyone deserves to belong



Dr. Dean Chittock
Vice President, Medicine,
Quality and Safety

Being inclusive and representative is about how we treat people --each other and our patients-- in every day conversations and interactions.

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is more than initiative and goes beyond intelligence; it is a way to live kindly and compassionately so that those around us can live authentically and feel a sense of belonging.

As medical staff, we work as part of collaborative teams to care for patients and clients who we can relate to and understand as well as those who are different from us. It is the unique people that truly help us to grow and teach us to be better care providers and humans.

An inclusive, respectful workplace in health care is contagious. When we acknowledge and recognize our colleagues for who they authentically are, we foster stronger relationships and a culture of safety and trust. This can improve job satisfaction and morale, and this joy can spread infinitely. When our care teams feel good and reflect the populations we serve, our patients can see themselves and feel understood. Providing culturally safe and appropriate care is quality care.

We are on this journey with you.

Every day, we work to bring an inclusive lens to our clinical and administrative roles by actively listening with open minds and hearts --not listening to simply respond. This can be hard sometimes when there is a lot to do, but we value that this is building stronger relationships and connections.

Embedding DEI into our culture at VCH is priority and it is going to take time to do it right and authentically. As leaders, we recognize and acknowledge that we are on this journey together. We are deeply committed to listening to you without judgement, being introspective and mindful of bias and nurturing an environment where you feel safe and supported to learn.



Dr. Chad Kim Sing
Associate Vice President,
Medicine, Quality and Safety

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

There are few people with a resume as extensive as that of Dr. Joy Masuhara when it comes to advocating for the underrepresented.

The family physician and inaugural Regional Medical Director for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) at Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) has a long and storied history of breaking down social and cultural barriers. Now, in her newly-appointed role, Joy hopes to draw upon her past experiences to establish a unified approach to DEI initiatives at VCH.

"I'm absolutely thrilled about this new role, and I look forward to mobilizing all the different areas within the organization where a lot of this great work is already taking place," says Joy. "One of my key tasks will be to identify and support these existing activities, and coordinate them as efficiently as possible."

The VCH Medical Staff Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, which Joy co-chairs, has already defined many of these areas, but she says more data is needed to further identify opportunities and measure progress.

"We know that wellness intersects with DEI a great deal, and that psychological safety contributes to well-being," says Joy. "So we'll need to learn more about these areas within VCH and strategize around how to build on our successes."



Dr. Joy Masuhara
Regional Medical Director,
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

[Read more about Dr. Joy Masuhara](#)

OP-ED: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY



Dr. Don Wilson
Regional Medical Director,
Indigenous Health

In the era of increased awareness of the colonial experiment that is Canada, it is time for a reckoning on the question of Canadian-Indigenous reconciliation.

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people have been asking for this for a very long time. We will continue to ask, demand, and require that Canada meet us in the Circle of Reconciliation. We all need to understand it is that this is not just for the benefit of Indigenous peoples. The process of reconciliation is beneficial for the entire country.

The blood of Indigenous people is a stain on this country. Ignoring this simply places Canada in the untenable position where any claim to moral or legal authority is greatly diminished, and attempts to move forward in a meaningful way on common societal goals simply become exercises in political theatrics.

As Indigenous people continue to find ways to be heard, the message will continue to be the same. We want real, tangible steps to be taken in the reconciliation process. We are not asking for nebulous, performative responses. We have guidance from processes which have set the stage for participation by every member of Canadian society.

[Read more from Dr. Don Wilson](#)

NEWS

Equitable access to prescription medication

No patient should have to decide between filling their prescription or buying food. This principle guides VCH's Medication Affordability Initiative.

Established in 2015, and led by Kim Manhas, Dr. Lynn Straatman and Dr. Kenneth Gin, the goal of the Medication Affordability Initiative is to create actionable strategies that support patients and care providers address nonadherence (CRNA).

CRNA is when a patient cannot afford and therefore does not take their prescribed medication. Cost-related nonadherence can include cutting pills, taking lower than prescribed doses, delaying refills and skipping doses. It can also include cutting back on other spending, such as food, bills or rent.

Through collaboration between policymakers, health-care providers, researchers and internal and external stakeholders, the initiative aims to support equitable access to prescription medication using education and engagement strategies.

[Read the full story.](#)

Meeting translation needs with an in-house team

Communication is key. Nowhere is that more apparent than in a health-care setting.

Health-care providers need to be able to share detailed information, such as post-operative instructions, and know that their patients understand the information.

In 2020 and 2021, the VCH Community Engagement team worked with stakeholders including, SUCCESS, Immigrant Services Society of BC, the South Vancouver Neighbourhood Health Network, Collingwood Neighbourhood Health Network, and VCH medical staff, on an outreach project to determine what interpreting and translation services would benefit patients.

They heard from stakeholders that to best meet the translation needs of the community, an in-house translation team was needed. Currently, the Language Services Team consists of a program leader, program coordinator and contract translators. The team's goal is to provide a centralized system to ensure translation accuracy and cultural appropriateness across the health authority.



Rose Jen, Program Leader,
Language Services

[Read the full story](#)

VCH diversity, equity & inclusion survey extended to June 30

Thank you to everyone who has already completed the anonymous DEI-focused Self Identification & Workplace Experience Survey. Your voice matters and the more staff we hear from, the better we can provide a safe, supportive workplace environment that celebrates a diverse workforce in the delivery of care.

Enter to win the e-bike by completing the survey. Search your email for your unique survey link from WorkTango (pulse@worktango.io) or use WorkTango's VCH Listens secure link or QR code. If you use the secure link or QR code, WorkTango will ask for your employee ID or MSP billing number only to validate your access as VCH staff or medical staff -- your responses will not be associated with the number. Staff who have already completed the survey are automatically entered into the prize draw, which will be administered by the external survey vendor, WorkTango, after the survey closes.

[Read more about the survey on oneVCH.](#)

Search and selection process: Using a diversity, equity and inclusion lens

It is important that medical staff feel a sense of belonging and reflect the populations they serve. Research shows that culturally safe and appropriate care improves patient health outcomes and the quality of care; it can also enrich provider experiences.

At VCH, having an inclusive and representative team of medical staff is a priority. It is also important to medical leaders that all medical staff feel welcome in their place of work and do not encounter barriers or stigma as they serve our population.

This starts with recruitment and hiring. Though VCH is starting to use a DEI lens in search and selection for medical staff appointments, medical leaders shared barriers and challenges with the VCH Health Authority Medical Advisory Committee (HAMAC) at its meeting in May. Feedback centered on HR supports, adequate skills and training requirements, inclusive job posting language, equitable access to posting platforms and alignment with UBC recruitment processes, when required.

HAMAC is working with Medical Affairs to revise the current standard operating procedure for search and selection to encourage a stronger focus on DEI, reconciliation and cultural sensitivity. While this is underway, medical leaders and staff are encouraged to contact [VCH Medical Affairs](#) or a [HAMAC member in your community of care](#) with questions or for support in medical staff search and selection.

[Read the May 2022 HAMAC Highlights.](#)

Indigenous birth work is a form of resurgence

Indigenous midwives are working to restore Indigenous birthing practices and contributing to health-related calls to action from Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Not only are Indigenous midwives providing culturally safe care and filling gaps in primary health care services, they are also rebuilding capacity in Indigenous communities to bring birth closer to home and to reclaim the traditional roles of midwives. As part of VCH's Indigenous Health team, midwife members are strategically identifying and fixing gaps in the perinatal health care system.

[Read the full story on oneVCH.](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Medical Practitioners Occupational Safety and Health (mPOSH): Evolving services

Based on its success since it launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020, the Physician Occupational Safety and Health (POSH) service is making some exciting changes. This includes expanding services to medical staff, taking on more occupational health concerns and refreshing its name to reflect the professionally diverse community it serves. The new program name is Medical Practitioners Occupational Safety and Health (mPOSH) service. mPOSH's new email address is mposh.vch@ubc.ca. Get the details in the [April mPOSH Update](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

June 21, 2022 | Outdoor Screen: Stories from Musqueam

In recognition of National Indigenous Peoples' Day on June 21, the Belkin's Outdoor Screen will present a selection of videos that feature the work and words of Musqueam artists, cultural knowledge keepers and community members. Screenings begin at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m., as well as a 6 p.m. one-time screening of *casnaʔam: the city before the city*. [Learn more.](#)

June 23, 2022 | Ceremonial fire at xwé lo' esəm Garden, UBC Farm

The importance of community safety, wellbeing, and support has been on our hearts and minds during this time. In that spirit, and to honour the xwé lo' esəm lands we share, The First Nations House of Learning and wicácasəm Garden at UBC Farm invite BIPOC/Indigenous students, faculty, staff and community members to the monthly ceremonial fire supported by local Elders. Fire offerings, tea and bannock provided at 3461 Ross Drive, Vancouver, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. [Learn more.](#)

June 27, 2022 | Pride Event: Virtual Talk by Dr. James Makokis

In this talk from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m., Dr. Makokis, a Nehiyó (Plains Cree) family physician in Alberta, will share his experience as a two-spirit physician and with treating 2SLGBTQIA+ patients focusing on both provider and patient perspective. This event is presented by the VCH Medical Staff Culture and Environment Working Group, and the Vancouver Physician Staff Association is offering DoorDash gift cards for the first 50 registrants. [Register.](#)

July 23, 2022 | Hello My Name Is (HMNI)

The [HMNI campaign](#) will celebrate the importance of introductions in care. This campaign was started by Dr. Kate Granger in the UK, a physician battling terminal cancer who noticed what a huge difference introductions by health care providers had on her experience. Growing human connections in care really can start with a simple introduction.

With the diversity of the communities we care for, the way we introduce ourselves and the way our patients introduce themselves can look different to honour individual preferences, cultures and communities. HMNI has become more than just a simple introduction: it is the recognition of a whole person.

[Learn more](#) about the HMNI campaign and how to involve your team or department this year!

[Find more events and conferences.](#)

UPCOMING COURSES & TRAINING

VCH Intro to Transgender Cultural Safety in Healthcare

June 28, September 27, October 25, and November 29; 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
Online, Facilitated; at no cost

Develop skills to welcome and support trans, two-spirit and gender diverse individuals who receive our care; in order to increase safety and access for folks, and promote health and wellness. [Register on the Learning Hub.](#)

VCH/PHC Physician Led Quality Improvement Level 2 Training

July 7 - 8, 2022; 12:30 - 4:00 p.m.
Online, facilitated; at no cost.

A custom built training introduction to fundamental quality improvement (QI) skills and concepts. For those interested in leading a QI project, our funding model and program supports will be discussed. [Register.](#)

VCH Influential Leadership: The Power of Power - Using It Responsibly

July 13, 2022; 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Online, Facilitated; at no cost.

Identify the power factors that all leaders successful influencing skills: viewed through psychological safety and the DEI lenses of power and positionality. To ensure that all depend understand how they wield power and to use it wisely. [Register on the Learning Hub.](#)

VCH Communicating Unexpected Outcomes Disclosure Training

July 15 & 16; 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Online, Facilitated; at no cost.

Enhance your communication skills for disclosing clinical errors with honesty, empathy and respect; learn to improve your support of other team members in difficult circumstances. [Register on the Learning Hub.](#)

[Find more courses and training.](#)

THANK YOU

Our gratitude to the members of the VCH Medical Staff Editorial Board and staff including Allison Chiu and Brian Lane from the Medical Quality Leadership and Practice Team for their support and contributions to this issue of the newsletter.

[Meet the VCH Medical Staff Editorial Board.](#)

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VCH is strongly committed to diversity within its community and especially welcomes input from racialized persons / persons of colour, women, Indigenous / Aboriginal People of North America, persons with disabilities, LGTBQIA2S+, and others who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas.