

ANNUAL REPORT



**BCHealth
Coalition**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Land Acknowledgement	3
About the BC Health Coalition	3
A Message from our Co-Chairs	4
Mission and Values	5
We believe	5
Become a Member	5
Steering committee members 2023-2024	6
Our Staff	7
Campaign Highlights	9
BCHC in the media	16
2024 Organizational members	19



Elder Tom Oleman providing an opening address and welcoming attendees at the Sticking Up for Public Health Care Townhall

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The BCHC acknowledges our office is based on the unceded and stolen territories of the Coast Salish Nations of xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliiwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh). We also acknowledge the many territories and lands across so-called British Columbia that our members come from.

We are honoured to be here as guests on this land that Indigenous peoples have cared for and continue to care for.

We invite you to take a moment to think about where you presently live and honour the people of the land. Think about your relation to the place you live, work and interact. This is our inquiry to honour the past and present and to stay connected to decolonization practices.

ABOUT THE BC HEALTH COALITION

The BC Health Coalition champions a strong public health care system that is there for all of us when we need it.

We are a democratic, inclusive and consensus-based community of individuals and organizations that span the province of British Columbia. Together we advocate for evidence-based improvements to our public health care system, stimulate public education on health care issues, and drive positive change to our health care system through campaigns across the province.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS



For the last 4 years, our Director of Operations, Usman Mushtaq, has been an essential part of the BC Health Coalition – from organizing to operations there is no part of the coalition’s work in recent years that does not carry his imprint. We learned last month that Usman will not be returning to the BC Health Coalition. As we shared the news of Usman’s departure with our members, a consistent message that many wanted to relay to Usman was to thank him for his dedication in bringing all of our coalition’s members together to fight for public health care. Usman brought a personal touch to the position, and his attention to detail was appreciated by staff and steering committee members alike. We will miss working with Usman dearly and wish him well in the next phase of his career.

Moving forward, we are delighted to have two new staff join us, Angus Wong and Cheryl Cameron. Angus brings over a decade of experience fighting corporate power and privatization – he will be taking over Usman’s role as Director of Operations. Cheryl was previously the Director of Organizing at a provincial environmental organization – she will be covering for Audrey Guay as she is on leave for the next year.

One of BC Health Coalition’s core priorities is to advocate for moving private health care services back into the public health care system. In his first term as Minister of Health, Adrian Dix brought private home support workers back into the public system and invested in recruitment and retention of the home support work force. This act represented the largest repatriation effort in BC’s history, and thousands of workers and the services they provided were brought back into the

public healthcare sector. In an effort to decrease the dependence on for-profit surgical clinics that funnel resources out of the public system, Minister Dix has ensured that BC’s healthcare system is fully utilizing public resources and has expanded operating room capacity in public hospitals.

Another of the BC Health Coalition’s priorities is to advocate for the creation of a universal pharmacare system in BC. This year, under Minister Dix, British Columbia became the first province in Canada to sign a pharmacare agreement with the federal government that would help the province fund hormone replacement therapy and diabetes expenses. This precedent setting agreement also made BC the first jurisdiction in Canada to provide free birth control – over 250,000 British Columbians have been able to get free contraception in the last 18 months since the introduction of the program.

As we march forward towards 2025, we are excited to build a relationship with our new Health Minister, Josie Osborne. As Adrian Dix moves on from his role as Minister of Health, we’d like to thank him for his vital investments in public health care that have resulted in private healthcare services in BC being moved into the public system, as well as gains in the fight for a universal pharmacare system.

In Solidarity,

Tuesday Andrich
Labour Co-Chair

Scott De Long
Labour Co-Chair

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS

MISSION AND VALUES



THE BCHC AIMS TO BE THE VOICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH CARE IN BC AND CHAMPION THE PROTECTION AND EXPANSION OF A QUALITY PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

WE BELIEVE



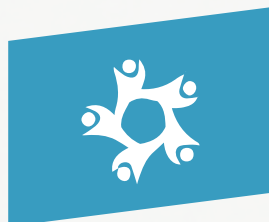
Health care is a human right and access to health care must be equitable



The health care system must cover comprehensive care for all stages of life



Social determinants of health are foundational to a functioning health care system



Health care is delivered best when it is public and accountable to communities, not-for-profit and evidence based

BECOME A MEMBER

Organizational and individual members can influence the direction of the Coalition's campaigns, help build broad public support provincially, and amplify our power to defend and strengthen public health care.

Membership in the BC Health Coalition is open to all organizations and individuals who support the principles of the Canada Health Act, oppose privatization of health care, and support the principles of the Canadian Health Coalition's [Call to Care Statement](#).

To learn more about annual membership visit: www.bchealthcoalition.ca.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2023-2024

We thank the following Steering Committee members for their hard work and commitment to guiding the Coalition this year. The Steering Committee oversees the Coalition's work and directs the campaign and governance priorities of the Coalition while reporting to the wider membership of the BC Health Coalition.

2024+
ANNUAL REPORT



Mei-ling Wiedmeyer
Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op



David Ravensbergen
Barbara Mitchell-Pollock
Council of Canadians-BC



Sheila Moir
BC Federation of Labour



Leslie Gaudette
Agnes Jackman
Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of BC



Phoebe Lo Patigdas
BC Federation of Students



Nicole Seguin
Health Sciences Association



Scott De Long
MJ Colquhoun
BC General Employees' Union



Neil Monckton
Hospital Employees Union
Labour Co-Chair



Lisa Akinyi May
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC



Linda Wilson
Eleanor Smith
United Food and Commercial Workers 1518



Tuesday Andrich *Labour Co-chair*
Andrew Ledger
CUPE BC



Daniel Harper
REACH Community Health Centre
Community Co-chair

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

OUR STAFF



AYENDRI RIDDELL
DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS

Ayendri is a Sri Lankan born community educator, organizer and campaign strategist. She has worked in a variety of research-based organizations, including Amnesty International, UBC Centre for Community Engaged Learning and Ontario Public Interest Research Group. In her time at the BC Health Coalition she has witnessed the power of coalition building from intervening on the Cambie Surgical Case to stopping BC Crisis Lines from being privatized, the most inspiring victories have come from members coming together in solidarity with each other. Ayendri spends her personal time trying to participate in grassroots organizing and movement building while chasing her two young children.



ANGUS WONG
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Angus has been fighting corporate power and privatization in the non-profit space for the last 11 years. Working with BCHC, he helped spread the word about the Cambie Surgery case to Ekō's (then called SumOfUs) 200,000 Canadian members, delivered a petition with tens of thousands of signatures on the first day of the court case, helped fundraise, and worked with BCHC to announce the massive win against Dr. Brian Day in 2020. Previous to working at Ekō, Angus spent 5 years as policy and assessment specialist at a Social Corporate Responsibility consultancy. He has two adorable kids and he spends most of his spare time hanging out with them.

OUR STAFF



AUDREY GUAY

LEAD ORGANIZER - *on leave until 2026*

Audrey completed her Masters in Urban Studies at Simon Fraser University, where she was awarded the 2019 Alumni Award for Community Engagement and holds an undergraduate degree from Queen's University in Health Studies. Her role with the BC Health Coalition has allowed her to combine her passion and experience in organizing (Metro Vancouver Alliance) with her educational expertise. Born in Montreal to a French-speaking family, Audrey spent most of her childhood in Bamako, Mali, and has traveled extensively across five continents.



CHERYL CAMERON

LEAD ORGANIZER

With ten years of experience in community organizing, campaigning and strategic direction, Cheryl is very excited to join the BCHC team, and looks forward to meeting with and working for the membership. She understands the mechanisms for dismantling barriers to positive policy change posed by corporate and political influence. Having spent the last year in the North teaching school in a reserve community, Cheryl hopes to find additional ways to support rural and Indigenous health initiatives across the province.

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

LISTENING CAMPAIGN HOUSE MEETING TRAININGS

In February BC Health Coalition members gathered virtually to launch our 2024 Organizing Strategy and Listening Campaign. We called on supporters of public health care across the province to build a network of relationships by organizing “house meetings” with people in their communities.

We held multiple “How to Lead a House Meeting Trainings” online, providing facilitators with a house meeting leader’s guide and resources to facilitate meetings in their communities. These meetings allowed us to build relationships, unearth stories that call for change and understand the priorities of our members.

Listening Campaign Kick-off
Building power for public health care

General Meeting
7 February
1:00-2:30 pm PST
[REGISTER HERE](#)

BC Health Coalition

Listening Campaign Kick-off
Building power for public health care

Join a BCHC
General Meeting
7 February
1:00-2:30 pm PST
bchealthcoalition.ca/kickoff

BC Health Coalition

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

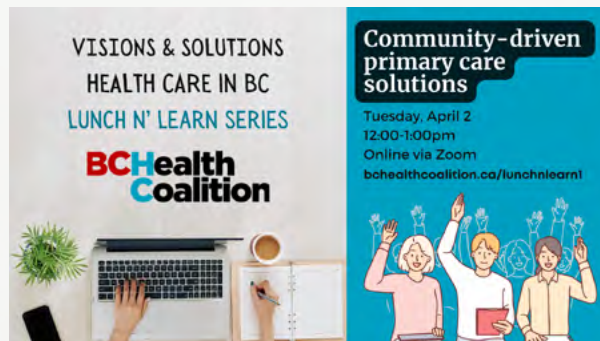
LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES

This year the BC Health Coalition launched its Lunch 'N Learn series where we invited experts to discuss the complex issues facing our healthcare system. Hundreds of members tuned in over their lunch breaks to the compelling discussions on a variety of topics that included:

Community-driven primary care solutions

Many of us struggle to find timely access to a family doctor, nurse practitioner, or a primary care team. We also lack opportunities to improve care for our broader communities. In this session we discussed why community accountability is a priority in primary health care and explored examples of community participation.

Speakers included: Tara Kiran from the OurCare project, Catherine Aw at the BC Association of Community Health Centres, Barbara Wood from REACH Community Health Centre, and Masoud Rahmani from the Umbrella Multicultural Health Co-op



It's time to end extra-billing

For-profit health care companies are on the rise and continue unlawful extra-billing practices. Recent numbers reported by Health Canada show that in 2021-22, BC saw \$18 million in out of pocket charges to patients for medically necessary services that should be accessible at no costs. In this session we discussed the impact and opposition to extra billing.

Speakers included: Dr. Saad Ahmed, board member of Canadian Doctors for Medicare, Health Policy Researcher Andrew Longhurst



CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES

Barriers to access for equity-deserving groups

As public health care advocates, we often take pride in the fact that the Canada Health Act guarantees access “based on need and not the ability to pay”. However, many of our neighbours and community members are excluded from that guarantee and the ability to pay is not the only barrier to equitable access. In this session we heard what health care access is like for people with precarious immigration status, newcomers and immigrants with language barriers, and seniors in the Queer community.

Speakers included: Ingrid Mendez and Omar Chu from Sanctuary Health, Beverly Ho from Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice, Cyndia Cole from Queer Imaging and Riting Collective for Elders (Quirk-e)



A Vision for BC Drug Policy

Toxic drugs kill an average of 7 British Columbians each day. Eight years into this public health emergency, we see dramatically diverging ideas about how to stop these deaths in public discourse. Which of these ideas are based in evidence? And which are based on fear and stigma? In this session we learned about the current context of drug policy in BC and dive into four recommendations for reform: drug regulation, decriminalization, addressing substantive equity, and detox, recovery, and treatment.

Speaker: Shane Calder from the Canadian Drug Policy Coalition



CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

SENIORS CARE

The Seniors Advisory group and staff have been tracking important developments in Seniors care. Different government bodies including the Seniors Advocate and the Deputy Minister of Health have presented our findings on long-term care and home support.

- **Long-Term Care** - An FOI request filed through the BC Health Coalition revealed that the development of the Long-Term Care funding model has been contracted to PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. The long-term care funding model has the potential to implement the necessary mechanisms that would hold for-profit long-term care facilities accountable to the public funding they receive. However, predictably, PwC has engaged the lobby group representing for-profit long term care providers before any other groups. This is a fox guarding the hen house situation, for-profit interests are now shaping the funding model meant to hold them accountable. We have met with multiple ministry representatives who seemed open to bringing more voices to the table.

- **Home Support** - In addition to large investments by the federal government, the province announced 227 million to be invested in Home Support. The funding has been directed towards recruitment and retention including investments in the HCAP (Health Career Access) program. Funding has also been allocated to a new Social Prescribers program being delivered through the United Way that targets seniors isolation. Additionally, we're hoping to see the removal of the current regulated daily rate co-payments.

ANTI-PRIVATIZATION

The anti-privatization advisory group was active in investigating and raising awareness of the impacts of privatization including:

- BC will be deducting \$18 million in federal health transfers due to unlawful extra billing for medically necessary surgical services (\$6.8 mil) and diagnostic services (\$11.2 mil).

- Work with the Vancouver Island Voices for Eating Disorders to follow-up on their statement concerning Telus Health being given a contract to deliver virtual eating disorder services. See full statement form VIVED [here](#).

- The Ministry of Health/PHSA has put out a call to market for 150k episodic virtual doctors visits. The size of this contract will necessarily mean it goes to a large corporate provider.

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

PROVINCIAL ELECTION - HIGHLIGHTS

Improving our health care system is a life or death issue for people across the province - and one that shaped the outcome of the 2024 provincial election.



In the months leading up to the election we tabled and did outreach in communities across BC including Nanaimo, Vernon and Kamloops.

We asked our members to sign a pledge to vote for the candidates and party that was best for public health care.

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS



PLATFORM FOR PUBLIC HEALTH CARE

Public health care not only offers fairest provision of services, it also provides better quality care and is the most cost effective. The evidence consistently shows that public sector innovations are the best way to heal our health care system. This provincial election, the BC Health Coalition launched a platform that puts public health care and the people who rely on it first. These platform commitments are proven solutions that are well-documented by experts to address the core systemic issues facing our health care system. The full platform is comprehensive of the entire public health care system with 15 areas. We chose six priority solutions that would address the most pressing issues facing people across BC and heal the underlying strains on our system.

6

SOLUTIONS TO HEAL PUBLIC HEALTH CARE

- 1

GUARANTEE ACCESS TO ON-GOING PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Develop a global funding model and invest in new and current Community Health Centres, First Nations Health Centres, and Foundry Centre and establish one new centre per year in each health authority until every community has access to one.
- 2

PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR MEDICINES THAT PEOPLE RELY ON

Fully implement a universal, single-payer pharmacare program at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 3

RAPIDLY REDUCE SURGICAL WAIT-TIMES

Create more public capacity and efficiently manage wait-lists through a "first available surgeon" model.
- 4

IMPROVE ACCESS AND QUALITY OF SENIORS CARE

Expand access to home support by eliminating co-payment barriers, and improve long-term care by requiring facilities that receive public funding to be a part of a public sector master collective agreement.
- 5

CREATE SUSTAINABLE WORKING CONDITIONS FOR ALL HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Increase opportunities to work in salaried multi-disciplinary team-based care and implement a bottom-up workforce plan that starts with the lowest paid workers and moves up the system.
- 6

PROTECT PUBLIC FUNDS FROM BEING USED AS PROFITS

Fully enforce the Medicare Protection Act and phase out for-profit and corporate providers that are draining public funding away from public health services.

TOGETHER, WE GET OUT THE VOTE ON HEALTH CARE!
BCHEALTHCOALITION.CA/VOTE

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

SIX SOLUTION ASK YOUR CANDIDATES QUESTION GUIDE

We then called on all candidates and parties to commit to the six solutions to heal and improve public health care in BC.

We created a toolkit, offered training and other resources to support our members in approaching their local candidates and asking them where they stood on the six solutions. We also sent the six solutions directly to the party for answers. Unfortunately, despite requests John Rustad and the Conservatives Party of BC has refused to answer questions and failed to provide a credible health care plan. In contrast, both the BC NDP and BC Greens provided detailed responses to the priority solutions put forward by the BC Health Coalition.

BC ELECTIONS 2024

I VOTE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH CARE

Health care solutions platform
-
"Ask your candidates" Question Guide
-
Voter education & mobilization strategy

GENERAL MEETING
TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 24
1:00PM - 3:00PM

To attend on Zoom, register at:
bchealthcoalition.ca/votepublichealthcare

And our very own quiz show!

GENERAL MEETING PLATFORM QUIZ SHOW

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

BCHC IN THE MEDIA

As health care issues have more frequently been brought to the forefront of news, the BC Health Coalition has spent more time not only providing comments and analysis for interviews but also supporting journalists with background research and explainers. We spoke on a wide range of issues such as the poisoned drug supply crisis, contracting out to for-profit surgical clinics, extra-billing, and federal health funding to provinces. Our spokespeople appeared on radio, TV, and print in media outlets such as CBC, CKNW, CTV, Global News, and the Vancouver Sun. A more complete list of BCHC appearances in the media (along with links) is available on our website.

Kelowna medical clinic’s paid memberships could be a ‘legal grey zone’, October 25, 2024

[iNFOnews.ca](https://www.infonews.ca)

“I would want people to be cautious on the personal level so that they know that they’re not entering into any illegal situations where they’re being taken advantage of,” she said. “Be aware that the growth of these private clinics is actually hindering our access to primary care overall as a province.”

Audrey Guay with the BC Health Coalition

B.C. election: Critics see lots of promises but little structural change for health care, October 18, 2024

[Times Colonist](https://www.timescolonist.com)

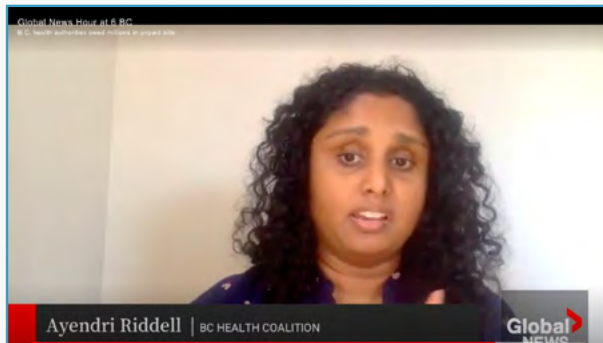


“Under the Conservatives’ capital plan, there is “no way” to fund major new health-care infrastructure such as the party’s promised Surrey children’s hospital, two new patient towers — including one in Nanaimo — and 5,000 new long-term care beds by 2030.” “Their plan includes a \$400-million capital funding cut in 2026-27,”

Ayendri Riddell, Director of Policy and Campaigns with the BC Health Coalition

BCHC IN THE MEDIA

Health issues in the BC election, September 27, 2024 The Mike Smyth Show Global



Ayendri Riddell - BC Health Coalition: "... Alberta, Ontario, BC, Quebec have tried this strategy of increasing the use of for-profit surgical clinics. Alberta [launched a new strategy to increase use of private surgical clinics] in 2020, they're four years out, and their wait times have only increased, and they're rapidly increasing, more so than any part of the country. Whereas [in 2014] Saskatchewan implemented a public sector innovation, and introduced a centralized wait-list, they saw a reduction in wait-times by 89% in the first year. This is why we need public health care improved, and not dismantled.

Campaigning B.C. party leaders speak on trades, energy, health, September 27, 2024 CBC

The BC Health Coalition wants improved access to care for seniors, universal access to essential medicine, better access to primary care, reduced surgery wait times, and sustainable working conditions for health-care workers.

Ayendri Riddell, the group's director of policy and campaigns, said in a statement Thursday that British Columbians need to know if parties will commit to solutions "beyond the political slogans" in campaigning for the Oct. 19 election.

Advocates say fate of B.C. public health hangs on election, 26 September, 2024 CTV News



A health-care advocacy group wants to know where British Columbia politicians stand on six key issues ahead of an election it says will decide the future of public health in the province.

It also wants pledges to protect funding for public health care, asking candidates to phase out contracts to profit-driven corporate providers it says are draining funds from public services.

BCHC IN THE MEDIA

BC Budget Hands Cash to Families and Posts a Record Deficit, Andrew MacLeod, February 22, 2024 [The Tyee](#)

The one-time payments are welcome, said Ayendri Riddell, a campaigner with the BC Health Coalition, but there needs to be focus on housing and other social services that are key to people's health. "Injections are great, but what we do need are the structural changes that not just revitalize but build the health-care system we need."

Fil-Canadians welcome gov't proposal to make prescription medicine free, February 29, 2024 [TFC News British Columbia](#)



Will BC's Long-Term Care Funding Review Prioritize Residents' Needs?, Andrew MacLeod, March 22, 2024 [The Tyee](#)

"The worst-case scenario is that the lobbyist group that represents the private long-term care providers, which is the BC Care Providers, would hijack this process and would be in charge of shaping these mechanisms that were supposed to be implemented to hold them accountable. This scenario would represent "the fox guarding the hen house," Riddell said.

2024 ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

The following organizations in addition to our Steering Committee members represent the collective voice of the Health Coalition. Together, these organizations and their members came together this year to demand a better public health care system.

2024
ANNUAL REPORT

BC Building Trades
BC Chiropractic Association
BC Federation of Labour
BC Federation of Retired Union Members (BC FORUM)
BC Federation of Students
BC Hospice & Palliative Care Association
BC Poverty Reduction Coalition
BC Retired Teachers' Association
BC Rural Health Network
BCGEU
BCGREA Branch 2100 - Surrey
BCGREA Branch 800 - New Westminster
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC
Community First Health Co-op
Council of Canadians
Council of Senior Citizens Organizations BC
Crisis Centre BC
CUPE BC
CUPE 1004
Independent Long-Term Care Councils Association of BC (ILTCCABC)
Fraser Association of Family Councils
Interior Association of Family Councils
Northern Association of Family Councils
Vancouver Coastal Association of Family Councils
Vancouver Island Association of Family Councils
Health Sciences Association
Hospital Employees' Union
HEU - BCG Local
HEU - Kamloops-Thompson Local

HEU - PHSA
HEU - Port Alberni Local
ILWU 400
International Union of Operating Engineers - Local 963
Java Group Programs
Jewish Seniors Alliance of Greater Vancouver
Kitimat Health Advocacy Group
Metro Vancouver Cross Cultural Seniors Network
MOSAIC
New Westminster & District Labour Council
Pivot Legal Society
Powell River Voices
Professional Employees Association
Professional Employees Association - Health Science Professionals
Public Service Alliance BC
REACH Centre Association
Save Our Northern Seniors
Society for the Protection & Care of Seniors
South Okanagan Boundary Labour Council
South Vancouver Seniors Hub Council
Surrey 4 Future
Time for Change Working Group
Century House New Westminster
UFCW 1518
Umbrella Multicultural Health Cooperative
Vancouver and District Labour Council
Vancouver Municipal & Regional Retirees Association
Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association
West Coast Leaf
Yarrow Intergenerational Society for Justice

2024 ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

BCHealth Coalition

302-3102 Main Street Vancouver, BC V5T 3G7 bchealthcoalition.ca      [#bchealthcoalition](https://www.instagram.com/bchealthcoalition)

The BC Health Coalition is a B.C.-wide non-partisan, non-profit coalition of community members, health care workers, researchers, community service providers and grassroots groups. We base our policy positions on peer-reviewed research and on our mission to strengthen and defend the public health care system.