



**UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA**

Annual Report 2022-23 Highlights

Centre for Healthy Communities
June 2023



Centre for Healthy Communities
School of Public Health

Message from the Scientific Director

Each of us plays a role in the health of our communities – every day, and in many ways. This belief is at the core of our work at the Centre for Healthy Communities. I am privileged to share with you highlights from another impactful year of advancing the health, wellbeing, and sustainability of communities. Collaboration across our diverse membership of Scientists and Practice Affiliates, our vibrant partners from across Canada, and our exceptional team of staff and students have been instrumental to this work. Together, we have advanced the Centre for Healthy Communities as a leader and innovator in collaborative healthy communities' research and engagement in Canada and internationally.

Our 2022-2023 year was an exciting one marked by new projects across our five Research Thematic Areas, which target our four collective research priority areas. We released several new resources and publications, and worked closely with partners to generate evidence to inform intervention, program, and policy on a range of issues important for promoting and sustaining healthy communities. We were inspired by the dynamic conversations that took place at the three Healthy Communities Conversations this year, and look forward to engaging with all of you again in the year to come. When I look back, this past year was marked by a collective focus on synergy – our connections and projects emphasized equity, we continued to embrace diversity, we listened to our partners and members, and we collaborated to make a difference – working across disciplines and sectors to affect positive change.

In closing, I would like to thank all of our practice and research partners, Scientist and Practice Affiliate members, Practice and Scientific Advisory Committee members, Executive Committee members, staff and students, and the School of Public Health for their commitment to engaging with the Centre for Healthy Communities. Without their continual support, the work we do collectively to advance the health of communities would not be possible.



Candace Nykiforuk, PHD, CE

Scientific Director, Centre for Healthy Communities
Professor, School of Public Health
University of Alberta



Research Development Highlights

Goal: Partner with communities as well as practice and policy professionals across sectors to generate knowledge that supports healthy communities.

Our collaborative research advances bold and innovative ideas to support healthy communities science, practice, and policy. Our team of academics and practitioners develop research projects that address 'real-life' issues faced by communities locally, with global relevance and impact.

Centre for Healthy Communities Shared Research Priority Areas



Community Health, Livability, and Social Conditions

Promoting quality of life, physical health, mental wellbeing, social inclusion, and urban Indigenous health



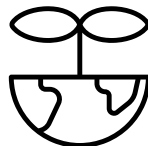
Health Equity in Healthy Community Approaches

Focusing on root causes and impacts of community design, policies, and programs on accessibility, inclusion and safety



Strengthening Public Health Systems

Multi-sectoral collaboration to build capacity for action



Intersections of Climate Change, Environmental Health, and Health Equity

Environmental stewardship and ecological sustainability

Centre for Healthy Communities Research Thematic Areas

Healthy Environments

Health Equity

Healthy Municipalities and Workplaces

Healthy School Communities

Supporting Healthy Indigenous Communities



Engaging our partners to work together to address critical societal questions.



Working in partnership across the Centre for Healthy Communities membership to advance the shared research priority areas. Example activities from 2022-2023:

- Development of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) Resource List that includes a compilation of EDI resources (e.g., toolkits, reports, websites, and other supporting materials) to help with EDI implementation in research, institutions, workplaces, and classrooms.
- CHC Scientist and Practice Affiliate members, along with two School of Public Health Masters students, are working in partnership to develop a policy brief (product forthcoming in fall 2023) on how to strengthen social cohesion in Alberta communities (including key targets, why these targets are important, and suggestions for action).

“What I appreciate most about being a part of the CHC is the highly collaborative research process that allows me to work with and learn from the Centre's extremely knowledgeable and supportive Practice Affiliates.”

Luc Sauze (Centre for Healthy Communities Graduate Research Assistant)

“Climate change, urbanization and water scarcity represent a trifecta of challenges for Alberta for providing safe and secure water to its population. Some municipalities estimate that they will reach 'peak-ecological-water' within the next decade, severely limiting urban growth and economic development, and increasing susceptibility to natural disaster (e.g., drought). As a society, we need a collective conversation about our thirsty demands for water - a conversation that looks at better ways of reusing and recycling this precious, but limited, resource. As we begin this difficult conversation, the Centre for Healthy Communities is poised to lead this dialogue across Alberta, helping to drive societal acceptance and social innovation in water stewardship (i.e., communities-of-practice), with the goal of creating more resilient and healthy communities in the face of this imposing trifecta of challenges. The conversation has already begun, and started through the Centre for Healthy Communities' Healthy Communities Conversation series in January 2023. Get ready for change.”

Dr. Norman Neumann (Centre for Healthy Communities Scientist; Professor, School of Public Health)

- Planning for this cross-sectoral group of stakeholders from the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors to come together in a Water Reuse Communities-of-Practice is underway. This work is part of a larger comprehensive project funded by Alberta Health to advance the management of Alberta's water resources.

Knowledge-to-Action Highlights

Goal: Work with communities and practice and policy professionals to enhance their use of knowledge to generate action.

*Working across our **five research thematic areas**, our team collaborates with intersectoral partners to build capacity to provide timely evidence-informed solutions to consistently guide practice and decision-making.*

Driving Community-Level Action and System-Level Change

- In March 2022, the Centre for Healthy Communities released the action-oriented Public Health Framework on Financial Wellbeing and Financial Strain and a companion Guidebook of Strategies and Indicators. Throughout 2022-2023, our work has focused on engaging with a broad range of stakeholders and organizations throughout Canada (e.g., webinar hosted by National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools; applied workshop with Bissell Centre: Edmonton) to support application of the resources to foster local and systems action on financial strain and financial wellbeing.

"The Financial Wellbeing Framework and Guidebook are valuable resources for readers interested in implementing interventions aimed at reducing financial strain and improving financial wellbeing. The Framework and Guidebook will be a crucial resource for our organization when designing new programs or improving existing ones focused on enhancing the financial wellbeing of our participants."

Jakob Koziel (Centre for Healthy Communities Practice Affiliate; Senior Research Analyst - Bissell Centre Edmonton)

- Over the last year, we continued working in partnership with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to provide multiple evidence-based summaries utilizing the academic and practice-based knowledge. These summaries inform applied research projects and programs on a range of topics being planned and implemented by AHS.

"The Centre for Healthy Communities is an important research partner for our Alberta Health Services (AHS) Provincial Population and Public Health (PPPH) innovation teams. In the past year we partnered with them to review and summarize existing research evidence to inform the design and evaluation of new interventions within health care and communities to prevent chronic diseases and cancers. We really appreciated their responsiveness to our needs, timeliness of the reports, and the academic rigor of the work."

Dr. Gary Teare (Scientific Director, AHS PPPH)

Project and Knowledge Translation Outputs



5 Journal Articles (Accepted)

6 Journal Articles (Submitted)



3 Research/Technical Reports

1 Knowledge Translation Product for Policy or Practice



3 Invited Presentations to Policy or Practice Audiences

2 Webinars/Workshops



5 Newsletters

Engagement Highlights

Goal: Foster authentic relationships that build trust and knowledge within communities, to enhance their ability to achieve their healthiest potential.

Engaging with a diverse network of stakeholders across sectors and research areas is central to our work; as is fostering ongoing opportunities for this network to create connections and build relationships with each other.

Creating Opportunities for Connections and Building Relationships

- Our Healthy Communities Conversation series is designed to spark insights, ideas, and dialogue about a critical topic facing our diverse communities. This series is open to all and has engaged professionals, students, community members, and academics from across Alberta. Over the last year, we engaged 168 stakeholders representing the general public, practice, and research across three Healthy Communities Conversations on the following topics:
 - Changes in people’s connections because of the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Building healthy communities through active transportation and active school travel
 - Storm and wastewater reuse – knowing that our fresh drinking water supply is a limited resource

“I appreciated the informal opportunity to learn and connect with multidisciplinary public health professionals at this conversation. I think it's important to be aware of diverse public health issues, and this provided a great platform for learning and discussion. Looking forward to future opportunities.”

Healthy Communities Conversation, January 31, 2023, Participant Comment [1]

“I do value the community, networking and connection opportunities; hearing others' stories has value, and there is opportunity for learning and inspiration.”

Healthy Communities Conversation, November 30, 2022, Participant Comment [1]

- Unique to the Centre for Healthy Communities is our interconnected cross-sectoral membership network (including 20 Scientist and 25 Practice Affiliate Members). This membership network helps us stay connected to both research and practice.

“The content and collaborators that the CHC has introduced me to has brought insight into key areas our community is working around healthy communities. This new network of opportunities has assisted in key research, relationships, and mutual projects. I am grateful to belong to this group and learn so much as well as contribute.”

Marc Boychuk (Centre for Healthy Communities Practice Affiliate; Peace River Councillor)



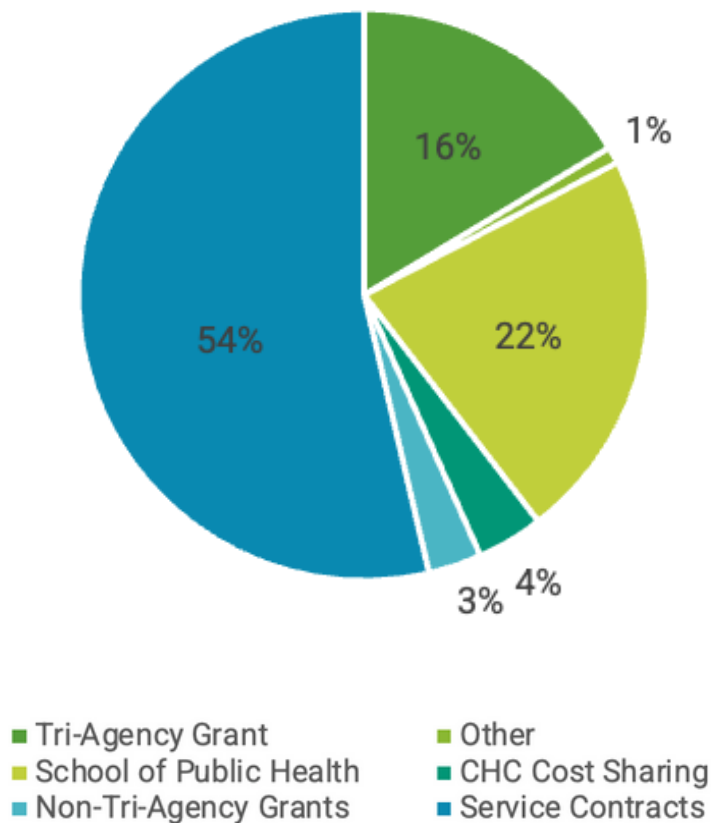
[1] Participant comments are from the Healthy Communities Conversation post-event evaluation form. People's names are not collected to protect anonymity.

Operational Sustainability Highlights

Goal: Secure resources to support the strategic goals and objectives of CHC.

Using the foundation of work from the previous three strategic goals allows our team to continue to secure financial resources to support the ongoing and new activation of diverse research, evidence, and engagement to help communities thrive.

2022 - 2023 Centre for Healthy Communities Financial Summary



Contact Information

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