



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
CENTRE FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



# INNOVATION FORUM

## Summary and Next Steps





*Working with community to generate and support knowledge that enables community action.*

## THANK YOU

Thank you for participating in the Centre for Healthy Communities Innovation Forum on November 4, 2019.

It was such an exciting opportunity for citizens, practitioners, industry professionals, community and Indigenous organizations, and researchers from across Alberta to come together.

Your brilliant ideas, thoughtful participation in discussions, and inspiring dedication to supporting healthy communities made for an incredible day of connection.

## LET'S CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

We are excited about fostering connections to support Alberta communities to reach their healthiest possible futures.

Stay connected with the Centre for Healthy Communities: check out our website to learn more, and discover the various ways to stay in the know and get involved.

[uab.ca/chc](http://uab.ca/chc)



# FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

## Sparking Ideas, Questions, and Connections

Dr. Candace Nykiforuk provided a welcome and introduction to the Centre for Healthy Communities (CHC) and its diverse network of members and partners.

Following Candace's opening remarks, CHC Scientist, Dr. Stephanie Montesanti, introduced the CHC focal area of *Supporting Healthy Indigenous Communities* and invited Elder Bert Auger to provide a welcome and opening prayer.

During his words of welcome, Elder Auger shared stories that spoke to the importance of community and forming connections. He emphasized that we must first understand where each other is coming from to build a strong foundation on which to form relationships.



### OUR COLLECTIVE GOALS FOR THE DAY:

- *Creating connections* to bridge knowledge and resource gaps in our work
- *Building relationships* to support the development of actionable steps in our work
- *Being inspired* by and understanding the unique needs and contexts of others working alongside us
- *Developing novel and synergistic approaches* to define, achieve, and sustain a healthy community



# COMMUNITY MARKETPLACE CONVERSATIONS



*“How do we tangibly support Alberta’s communities to reach their healthiest possible future?”*

The bulk of our day was spent exploring ideas, challenges, and questions from the group around “How we tangibly support Alberta’s communities to reach their healthiest possible future?”.

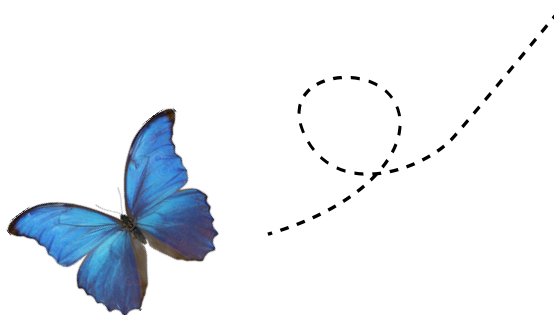




Below are some examples of the ideas and questions from throughout the day, and highlights of the engaging discussions.

## "Unity of Purpose" e.g., "Are we unified?"

- **Opportunities:** building relationships across sectors, building public support for prevention, bridging gaps by leveraging partners
- **Challenges:** securing sustainable funding, engaging with vulnerable people while coming from a place of privilege
- **Next Steps:** build awareness and public support, engage with political communications strategies to advance population health and "get public health elected"



We were able to move directly from one discussion to the next like a bee,  
or drift more casually between conversations like a butterfly.

"Creating gathering spaces for  
community use  
(accessible spaces and affordable)"

- **Opportunities:** reducing social isolation, forming school partnerships, leveraging community assets and resources (e.g., knowledge holders, fundraisers)
- **Challenges:** populations who feel isolated and risk averse, lack of trust, and policies for sharing spaces
- **Next Steps:** starting small and going for it, engaging all stakeholders, activating the space, taking a collaborative approach that is inclusive, welcoming, and non-judgmental



"How do we keep ourselves sustained  
and healthy in this work?"

- **Opportunities:** being present in the moment, embracing our imperfections and forgiving ourselves, finding pleasure and valuing our mental health
- **Challenges:** having really hard days (e.g., busy, no time to debrief, being highly self-critical)
- **Next Steps:** practicing acts of daily appreciation with friends, "let it absorb, but leave it at work", debrief with colleagues and circle of friends

**These community marketplace conversations allowed us all to  
renew relationships and make new connections, which will  
serve as the starting point for ongoing dialogue and action.**

# KEY REFLECTIONS

In one short day, we were able to come together to forge partnerships and craft ideas to tangibly supporting healthy communities. As our discussions drew to a close, we asked you to reflect on what you took from the day.

Here's what we heard:



"Look for **champions** and **support them**"

"**Retell the story;** listen to the needs and solutions at the grassroots"

"How much knowledge we share, **our keenness to move forward**"

"**Self-care** and **joy**"

"How to bring the **'unusual suspects'** to the table"

"Everyone wants the **same goal** and all of us are looking for ways to make that happen"

"Initiate events in communities to **foster community engagement**"





# NEXT STEPS

In the spirit of maintaining the momentum from the Forum, here is a summary of what's happening now:

- Since the Forum, we have been compiling, organizing, and documenting all of your questions and ideas. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you would like a copy of any of the notes from any of the ideas or questions.
- The contact list for Forum attendees was shared to allow you to follow-up on the connections that you made throughout the day.
- We encourage you to take the next steps that you need to continue moving forward with your idea or question!
- If you were able to attend the Forum, the Centre will be sending out a follow-up survey to find out if the connections formed are standing the test of time, and learn about your successes and challenges in further developing and implementing your ideas.
- We are exploring hosting a topic-specific Forum for 2020: let us know if you would like to volunteer for the planning committee.
- Reach out to the Centre for Healthy Communities if you want help getting your idea and question moving.



**We are so grateful that you were able to join us for the Centre for Healthy Communities' Innovation Forum! This Forum was an important step to continue building relationships and taking collective action to promoting healthy communities. We look forward to seeing you at our next event.**





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