

2020 – Looking back on a tough year

2020 has been a challenging year that has impacted our health, well-being, and the way we connect. While there have been struggles navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been many instances of community strength, resilience, connectedness, and support that have surfaced during this trying year. As a community, we have come so far since the beginning of the pandemic, and 2021 offers some hope: a COVID-19 vaccine, continued community strength, and valuable learnings from 2020.

We would like to thank all front line workers, including health care and health service providers, first responders, volunteers, farmers and food producers, grocery store workers, delivery personnel, drivers, sanitation services personnel, and many, many more people who have kept our communities safe and running during these unprecedented times. 2021 will no doubt bring its own set of challenges, but the communities in the Northern Health region have proven, and continue to prove, their willingness to come together and work hard to keep each other safe. Here's to a better year ahead.

Resources

Food-based learning: Tips for elementary schools during COVID-19

This [resource](#) supports elementary school educators with information and activity ideas for using food as a cross-curricular teaching tool, while following COVID-19 guidelines. It was developed by public and population health dietitians with input from school partners, and reviewed by the BC Center for Disease Control.

Housing Supply Panel Report

The bilateral Expert Panel on Housing Supply and Affordability has released an interim “What We Heard” [report](#) following initial stakeholder consultations. The Panel is now accepting [feedback](#) on the report until January 15, 2021 and will deliver a final report to Canada and BC in the Spring of 2021.

Regulating Short-term Rentals: A Toolkit for Local Governments

This [toolkit](#) offers a comprehensive guide to helping your community design effective, short-term rental regulations or improve existing approaches. The toolkit contains best practices, case studies, 17 individual regulatory tools, a sample regulatory program, advocacy options, and more. It is designed for a variety of community contexts and policy goals and includes a section on protecting housing availability and affordability.

Supporting Equity in Planning and Policy

Equity is foundational to the development of healthy communities, and local governments have an important role in implementing and championing equity across social, economic, environmental, and cultural domains. But what exactly is equity? BC Healthy Communities' new [Supporting Equity in Planning and Policy Action Guide](#) tackles this question, and explores why applying an equity lens to community planning is not as simple as 'ticking a box'.

WHO 2020 Guidelines on Physical Activity & Sedentary Behaviour

The [WHO guidelines](#) highlight that being active is good for our hearts, bodies and minds, and benefits everyone of all ages and abilities. Of particular importance is the removal of the recommendation to be active in bouts of 10 minutes or more, which truly recognizes that EVERY move counts.

8 Investments that Work for Physical Activity

A call to action for everyone, everywhere, to embed physical activity in national and subnational policies. The International Society for Physical Activity and Health (ISPAH) has developed a [suite of resources](#) including a full report in written or audiobook format, infographic, Youtube video summary, and podcast series exploring the #8Investments.

Beyond Hunger Report – The Hidden Impacts of Food Insecurity in Canada

This national [research report by Community Food Centres Canada](#) reveals the hidden and devastating impacts of household food insecurity in Canada. The report, which surveyed 561 people across the country, shares human stories, including coping strategies—from not celebrating holidays, to skipping medications because there's no food to take with them, to isolating to hide the issue from friends and family – and suggests key policy recommendations that can change lives.

COVID-19 Effects on the Mental Wellness of Vulnerable Populations

This [visual resource](#) from the Canadian Mental Health Association summarizes the effects of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations across Canada.

Online Courses, Programs, and Activities

2021 Local Government Virtual Leadership Forum

Date: February 3rd and 4th, 2021

The Local Government Annual Leadership Forum will be platform-sharing with the Electoral Area Directors' Forum to be held February 2-3. Delegates registering for both events receive a discount of \$25 to attend the LGLA Forum. Nora Young, CBC's Radio

Talk Show host, and author of the book, “The Virtual Self” will be the keynote speaker. Program Highlights have been posted on the [events page of the LGLA Website](#).

Drug Stigma Awareness for Law Enforcement

This [course](#) is designed for the law enforcement community and provides an opportunity to learn about substance use disorder and the impacts of stigma on those who suffer from this medical condition. Tips and examples from Canadian communities demonstrate how small changes can make a difference and how policing practices are changing in response to new knowledge. Course length: 0.5 hours

For Your Information

BC Alliance for Healthy Living (BCAHL) Podcast Series: The Balance

The Balance is BCAHL’s [podcast platform](#) that aims to promote and discuss chronic disease prevention research, campaigns, and programs with leading thinkers and researchers. It’s a space to ask questions, talk about policy and emerging issues and hear health promotion success stories.

Funding Opportunities

COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream

Deadline: Emergency Management BC’s (EMBC) funds: January 11, 2021. All other applications: January 27, 2021.

This [funding](#) supports projects that focus on retrofits, rehabilitation, and upgrades to existing local government and indigenous community buildings, COVID-19 response infrastructure, active transportation, and disaster mitigation. Currently accepting applications through two ministries:

- Up to \$80 million is available for projects administered by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs; and
- Up to \$56 million is available for flood mitigation and adaptation projects administered by EMBC.

New Flood Hazard Mitigation funding: Adaptation, Resilience, and Disaster Mitigation program

Deadline: January 11, 2021

This one-time [funding](#) program, funds structural and natural infrastructure projects that address the risk of flooding and flood-related hazards up to a value \$10 million. The fund targets shovel-ready projects that have a construction start date of no later than

September 30, 2021, and that can be completed by December 31, 2021, or by December 31, 2022 in remote communities.

Small and Medium Business Recovery Grant

Deadline: March 31, 2021 or until the funds are fully allocated

The province has launched a [grant program](#) which will invest up to \$300 million in targeted financial support for some of the hardest hit small and medium-sized businesses in BC. Grants of \$10,000 to \$30,000 are available.

Farm to School BC grants

Deadline: January 10, 2021

This [funding](#) aims to bring local foods into schools, provide students with positive food experiences, and build community-school connectedness. Previous projects include school gardens, food foraging and preserving projects, cooking programs, indoor growing, and much more. Grants are valued at up to \$3000 for new projects, and up to \$1000 for scaling up existing projects. Learn more and apply [here](#).

BC Housing Community Housing Fund

Deadline: Mid January, 2021

[BC Housing's Community Housing Fund](#) works with non-profit organizations, housing cooperatives and local governments to create affordable rental homes for middle and low-income families, independent seniors, and individuals in BC.

Rural, Remote, and Indigenous Overdose Grants

Deadline: January 22, 2021

In partnership with the Provincial Overdose Emergency Response Centre (OERC), Community Action Initiative (CAI) is offering [funding](#) for rural, remote & Indigenous overdose initiatives or projects. Applications must be in alignment with the OERC's core package of comprehensive interventions and applicants are encouraged to align with recommendations made during the October 2019 [Rural and Indigenous Overdose Action Exchange](#). Applicants can apply for up to \$50,000 in one-time-only funding.

New Poverty Reduction Funding Intake

Deadline: March 5, 2021

A new intake for the Poverty Reduction Planning and Action program is available. This program has [two funding streams](#): one to support the development or updating of plans that address poverty, and another that funds poverty reduction projects. Poverty reduction planning is eligible for up to \$25,000, and poverty reduction projects are eligible for up to \$50,000. Further program details can be found on UBCM's [website](#).

ParticipACTION Community Better Challenge Grants

Deadline: June 1-30, 2021

The 2021 challenge will be following public health protocols and recommendations across Canada as it aims to inspire, motivate and support recovery and connection through physical activity and sport (in-person or virtually) and crown Canada's Most Active Community. Registration begins in January! For more information visit [ParticipACTION](#), or check out this [webinar](#) for more details on the challenge.

Northern Health Stories

Northern Health administers first COVID-19 vaccinations in Prince George

The first doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered to a group of high-risk health care workers in Prince George today. The first person to receive the vaccine in the Northern Health region was Biserka Becker, a care aide at Jubilee Lodge in Prince George. Biserka was vaccinated along with a group of health care workers from University Hospital of Northern BC, and the nearby Jubilee Lodge long-term care facility... [continue reading](#)

International year of the Nurse and the Midwife

The World Health Organization has designated 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. As part of this year-long celebration, Northern Health has been highlighting a different nurse or midwife each month. For December, we close out the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife by interviewing Cathy Ulrich, the President and CEO of Northern Health...[continue reading](#).

Medical students supporting older adults: Combating isolation during COVID-19

The isolation that has come with the COVID-19 pandemic has been tough for people of all ages, but especially for older adults. Medical students across BC were inspired to help and, in Terrace, some residents are now signing up for regular phone visits with these students...[continue reading](#).

See the latest stories at stories.northernhealth.ca.

E-Brief Information

The Healthier Northern Communities [E-Brief](#) is produced by [Northern Health's regional Population and Preventive Public Health program](#).

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