

# Northern Health - Healthy Communities E-Brief

March 2026

## Welcome to the Healthy Communities E-Brief!

This monthly newsletter is prepared by the [Healthy Communities team](#) to help local governments and community organizations in Northern BC stay informed about resources, upcoming events, and funding opportunities that support community health and well-being.

## Surveys

### Healthy Communities E-Brief survey

#### What do you want from the E-Brief?

Tell us what would make the E-Brief more useful and engaging for you! Take our short **five minute survey** to share your ideas. Your feedback will shape future E-Briefs, and we will share a summary of what we heard in an upcoming edition.

**Survey closes March 31, 2026.**

[Take the survey](#)

## Resources

### Mental health resources - Tumbler Ridge and beyond

We wish to extend our heartfelt condolences and thoughts to the families, loved ones, and everyone impacted by the devastating events that occurred in Tumbler Ridge.

Visit the [Northern Health Get Help Now](#) site for resources.

Visit [Help Starts Here - Tumbler Ridge Response](#) for info on the response in Tumbler Ridge.

Read about [Tumbler Ridge Health Centre services and expanded hours | Stories](#).

For telephone support including 24/7 crisis support:

- **BC's Mental Health Line** at 310-6789
- **9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline** (call or text)
- **Bereavement and Grief Support Line:** 1-877-779-2223

- **Kid's Help Phone**, available by texting CONNECT to 686868
- **KUU-US Crisis Response Service** at 1-800-588-8717 for culturally aware support for Indigenous peoples
- **Canada wide Telus Health Community Crisis Support Line**: 1-844-751-2133
- **Homewood Health Support Center (open to anyone)**: 1-833-375-0269
- **Northern Health virtual and community mental health services**: 1-844-645-7811



## BC Food Web

BC Food Web is an online platform that shares research briefs, tools, webinars, and other resources that help strengthen sustainable and resilient food systems in BC. It turns new research into practical, useful knowledge for farmers, food processors, policy-makers, educators, and the public.

[Read more](#)



## March is Nutrition Month

Eating enough and a variety of food throughout the day helps support overall well-being. Northern Health (NH) dietitians share practical and budget friendly meal and snack ideas to support healthy eating. Follow NH social media for tips and tasty recipes! Learn more about [NH's nutrition and dietitian services](#).

## Events and learning

### Webinar: Wildfire Act Policy Engagement - Strengthening Wildfire Prevention through Bylaws

Date: March 4, 2026

1:00-3:00 pm Pacific Time

The BC Wildfire Service is hosting this webinar to engage with local governments on how local bylaws and provincial legislation work together to reduce human caused wildfires.

[Register for webinar](#)

### Webinar: Air Quality, Wildfire Smoke & Health - How to Engage-at-Risk-Populations

Date: March 5, 2026

9:30-12:30 am Pacific Time

Health Canada invites anyone interested in air quality, wildfire smoke, and human health to this webinar. They will share simple, real life examples of projects that support different at risk communities.

[Register for webinar](#)

### Webinar: Innovative Community Programs to Build Social Connection in Housing

Date: March 6, 2026

10:00-11:30 am Pacific Time

Hey Neighbour, Collective and United Way BC are hosting a webinar on building social connection in housing. They will share examples from community programs in BC, with a focus on what works, challenges, and key lessons learned.

[Register for webinar](#)

## Conference: Building a Future for All - Connecting Age-Friendly Strategies to Emerging Priorities

**Dates: March 10-12, 2026**

This free online event focuses on simple ways to help communities better support older adults as the population ages. Participants will learn how to connect age friendly work to broader planning and policy priorities using examples and experience.

[Register for conference](#)

## Eco-anxiety & climate distress course

**Self-paced online learning**

This course is for Disaster Psychosocial Services members, Emergency Support Services members, the public, students, and anyone else interested in learning more about eco-anxiety and how to manage it at home, with family, and in the community.

[Start course](#)



## Funding

### March 2026

#### Age-Friendly Community Grants (BC Healthy Communities)

**Deadline: March 12, 2026**

The 2026 Age-Friendly Communities Grant supports work that helps BC seniors live active, independent lives. Local and Indigenous governments can apply for up to \$25,000 for age-friendly plans and up to \$15,000 for projects that improve the health, safety, and engagement of older adults.

[Read more and apply](#)

#### Barrier Buster Grants Program (Royal Bank of Canada)

**Deadline: March 15, 2026**

Are you a school, municipality, community group, or non-profit organization in Canada ready to make your spaces more accessible? Apply for one of 40 accessibility grants of up to \$40,000 to complete an access-improvement project in your community.

[Read more and apply](#)

#### Net Good Grants (Canadian Internet Registration Authority)

**Deadline: March 18, 2026**

CIRA Net Good Grants offer funding for community projects that help make the internet work better for people in Canada. Grants of up to \$100,000 are available to support work that improves internet access, online safety, and internet policy.

[Read more and apply](#)

#### Funding to Collaborate (United Way British Columbia)

**Deadline: March 31, 2026**



Healthy Aging Community Collaboratives can apply for \$1,000 to \$5,000 to support seniors-focused collaboration, such as meeting costs, venue rentals, food, or facilitator fees. This funding helps cover expenses that strengthen partnerships within the region.

[Read more and apply](#)




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## April 2026

### **Kick-Start Projects (Pacific Blue Cross Health Foundation)**

**Deadline: April 7, 2026**

The Kick-Start Projects fund (up to \$10,000) is for one-time projects, new programs, or buying equipment and materials that help improve mental health and wellbeing or prevent and manage chronic diseases.

[Learn more and apply](#)

### **Urban Forestry Plans & Studies (Green Municipal Fund)**

**Deadline: April 15, 2026**

Up to \$175,000 is available for plans or studies that help communities grow healthy, resilient forests, such as urban forest management plans. These projects must also support future tree-planting efforts in your community.

[Read more and apply](#)

### **FireSmart Community Funding and Supports program (UBCM)**

**Deadline: April 30, 2026**

This program provides funding to local governments and First Nations in BC to increase community resiliency by undertaking community-based FireSmart planning and activities that reduce the community's risk from wildfire.

[Read more and apply](#)

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## Ongoing intake

### **Local Community Accessibility Grant Program (Sparc BC)**

**Deadline: Ongoing**

Up to \$25,000 is available for municipalities and regional districts in BC to help make things easier for people with disabilities. Projects

### **Education, health, and arts & humanities grants (The Molson Foundation)**

**Deadline: Ongoing**

The Molson Foundation gives money to support projects in education, health (like youth sports and activity programs), and arts

### **StrongerBC Future Skills Grant (Government of BC)**

**Deadline: Ongoing**

BC residents 19 and older can get up to \$3,500 for short-term training in high-demand fields like health care, clean energy, and construction. Starting September

must be chosen by local government Accessibility Committees or written in Accessibility Plans. Projects must be finished by March 31, 2026.

[Read more and apply](#)

### **Indigenous Stewardship Fund Climate Emergency Fund Program (Indigenous Stewart Fund and First National Fisheries Council of British Columbia)**

**Deadline: Ongoing**

This program gives fast help for urgent, environmental projects led by Indigenous communities. The projects must focus on protecting and restoring salmon and their habitats.

[Read more and apply](#)

and humanities. You can apply if your project helps people learn, stay healthy, or enjoy arts and culture.

[Read more and apply](#)

### **BC Community Climate Funding Finder (Clean BC)**

**Deadline: Ongoing**

Looking for climate action funding? By answering a few questions, you'll be on your way to learning which programs fit your project best. And if you're still looking for project ideas, the Funding Finder can show you a range of possibilities to help spark your imagination.

[Read more and apply](#)

2025, more than 300 programs at 24 public colleges and universities will help people gain job-ready skills and advance their careers.

[Read more and apply](#)

### **Carter's Project (BC Lung Foundation)**

**Deadline: Ongoing**

This program gives communities indoor and outdoor air quality monitors. It helps families get clear air quality information and offers simple tools to support lung health. You can apply on behalf of your community if you need help with air quality monitoring.

[Read more and apply](#)

## **Get to know us**

Our team is excited to share a new section in the E-Brief. This section will help you learn more about the people and teams that work to strengthen health in your community. We're starting off by introducing members of the Healthy Communities team.



**Lana Pestaluky** joined Healthy Communities in 2020 and is the Lead for the Northwest. She enjoys spending time outdoors hiking, foraging for mushrooms, and making the most of winter. She is also an animal lover and is pictured here with her two budgies, Ru and Paul. Connect with [Lana](#) about Healthy Communities work in the Northwest.

## **Northern Health Stories**



### Planetary Health Learning Garden: Nurturing seeds of workforce resilience

My time as Northern Health's (NH) Interim Climate Change and Health Lead brought so many highlights: collaborations with climate champions, innovative projects taking root, and the privilege of supporting communities preparing for and responding to environmental change. One initiative stands out: the [Planetary Health Learning Garden](#). It captures what this climate change work is really about....[continue reading](#).



### What do diverse BC families need to be active?

The BC Physical Activity for Health Collaborative has released the [Families Getting Active report](#). This report shares the experiences of diverse families across BC, including the barriers they face to being physically active, and their recommendations for change. It summarizes focus group discussions with parents, youth, and community leaders and finds that families want to be active—they just need support....[continue reading](#).

See the latest stories at [stories.northernhealth.ca](https://stories.northernhealth.ca)

## E-Brief information

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Not on the E-brief mailing list? Send an email to [healthycommunities@northernhealth.ca](mailto:healthycommunities@northernhealth.ca)

If you have any questions about our distribution list and your privacy, please phone 250-637-1615.

Northern Health acknowledges with gratitude that our work takes place on the territories of the Tlingit, Tahltan, Nisga'a, Gitksan, Tsimshian, Haisla, Haida, Wet'suwet'en, Carrier (Dakelh), Sekani (Tse'khene), Dane-zaa, Cree, Sauteau and Dene Peoples.



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