



## REPORT

# Year End Report 2020

Prepared by Cindy Lise



## TABLE *of* CONTENTS

Introduction	03
Executive Summary	04
The Network, Accomplishments and Significant Outcomes	05
Making A Difference	06
The Value of In Kind and Grants	12
Our Impact Beyond Data	13
Partnerships	15
2020 Financial Statement	16
Budget Moving Forward	17

# Our Cowichan -Facilitating Connections for Good Health

## Connected in Health

Our Cowichan Communities Health Network is a locally formed group of individuals and organizations representing the diverse peoples of the Cowichan Communities. Network members strive to optimize the health and wellbeing of all citizens in the Cowichan Region by:

- Exploring issues related to health
- Identifying concerns that can either improve or impede achieving optimum health
- Planning actions that enhance our quality of life through education, healthy living, health care and health services delivery
- Ensuring the community's voice is heard on matters related to health and wellness.

We are guided in our work by the World Health Organization's 12 Determinants of Health and research related to the determinants of health within the region.

For good health, people need more than good health care: they need adequate income, employment, education, social connections and healthy places to live. In fact, all 12 Determinants interact and affect health.

By considering the whole picture and working together, all citizens of the Cowichan communities can enjoy improved health.

## Our Cowichan Welcomes You

### Contact

Regional Facilitator Cindy Lise

[cindylisecchn@shaw.ca](mailto:cindylisecchn@shaw.ca) or call 250-709-5062

[www.ourcchn.ca](http://www.ourcchn.ca)

Co-Chair Denise Williams [denise.williams@cverd.bc.ca](mailto:denise.williams@cverd.bc.ca)

Co-Chair Rob Hutchins [rob.hutchins@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:rob.hutchins@sd68.bc.ca)

## Executive Summary

Our Cowichan experienced the impact of the COVID pandemic along with all of our community partners. In the midst of chaos, crisis and the unknown outcomes, OCCHN has much to celebrate with its 2020 accomplishments. The impact of years of relationship building and partnerships that are manifested throughout the region enabled our network to respond to the pandemic with little or no disruption.

Together in collaboration with partners we were able to:

- Collectively bring in over 14 million dollars in grant funding, services and resources.
- Through the COVID Response Task Force work with Cowichan Housing Association, Local Governments, Cowichan Tribes, Island Health and many community partners to get 107 unhoused people off the street and supported in the shelter sites and hotel where they began to thrive.
- Provide wrap around care, opiate agonist therapy and primary care to our region's most vulnerable citizens.
- Provide meals, information and support to frail and isolated seniors.
- Support efforts so front-line staff and health care providers could access child care.
- Bring together key leaders from critical response teams so everyone was on the same page.
- Disseminate information for grants and funding opportunities for community partners.
- Be the community liaison between Island Health leadership and the community in regards to the COVID response.
- Our Cowichan 3-year strategic plan has goals that include:
  - Recognize and responding to emerging issues in Cowichan
  - Promote health and wellness
  - Continue to focus on identified issues and opportunities
  - Foster the health, vitality and sustainability of the network
- Collective Impact Initiatives that align with OCCHN priorities continue to move forward. These initiatives now bring together over 350 community partners. They are:
  - Housing and Homeless Coalition including Housing First for Youth
  - Community Stream of EPIC (Eldercare Project in Cowichan)
  - Cowichan Regional Airshed Roundtable
  - Cowichan Community Action Team (CAT)
  - Physical Literacy
  - Cowichan Youth Vaping Task Force
- Active participants representing a community voice participate at the Collaborative Services Committee, Cowichan Primary Care Network Planning Table, Cowichan Regional Airshed Strategy Round Table, Hospice and Palliative Care Committee, Community Action Team, and Cowichan District Hospital Planning. Participating in this myriad of groups helps us build integral relationships and knowledge of our region.

## The Network

- We continue to grow, the Network consists of over 60 active members and 13 members at large.
- Meeting structure includes delegations, spotlight speakers, strategic dialogue and member input.
- 30 OCCHN meetings and sub committee meetings were held in 2020.
- 49 Community meetings related to COVID Response, homelessness, Opioid Crisis, Affordable Housing, Housing and Homeless Coalition, EPIC and Airshed Roundtable were held that were planned or supported by OCCHN.
- Our website experienced an increase in visits from 52,219 to 66,688 visits and an increase in hits from 164,837 hits in 2019 to 539,307 in 2020.
- 48 weekly newsletters were delivered to OCCHN members to keep them informed of meetings, events, granting opportunities and health related information. Current information from Island Health and Province were distributed in regards to COVID.

## Accomplishments

- OCCHN in collaboration with numerous community organizations supported efforts that brought over **\$14,707,110.00** in grants and leveraged resources to our region!
- OCCHN continues to move strategic plan priorities forward although some components were put on hold due to the pandemic.
- OCCHN was able to respond immediately to the many emerging issues related to the pandemic with well established relationships and foundational initiatives and plans in place.
- As one of the Community Leads, OCCHN supported the COVID Response Task Force that effectively housed 107 individuals living with homelessness in 2020. This included a full scope of wrap around care, meals and security. With this initiative homelessness in Cowichan was reduced by 75%.
- \$21,755.00 in small grants were allocated to 12 community projects.
- COVID impacted the hosting of the Airshed Roundtable but 3 Airshed Leadership sessions were held. A Recommendation went to the Medical Health Officer to stop open burning to conserve respiratory medications that resulted in a provincial hold on open burning in the spring of 2020.
- OCCHN continues to lead the community component of EPIC working to support frail and isolated seniors.
- OCCHN supported the development of Primary Care Networks with Island Health and Division of Family Practice that received its first round of funding in 2020.
- OCCHN was one of the community leads that supported the Regional Child Care Task Force that resulted in an in depth Regional Child Care Plan for child care needs, staffing and resources.
- Research and data collection were underway for the update in the Cowichan Communities Health Profile

## Our Cowichan has been making a difference in the health of our community

### Here's How

We are a conduit to Island Health, Local Governments, First Nations and Community. In 2020 with the pandemic raging around us our Network stepped into action.

Through the relationship building of our community partners and a deeper understanding of each other and we have become a platform where health and community work together to enrich the lives of our residents. OCCHN has grown to over 60 active members and 13 members at large who share meaningful relationships, friendships and comradery.



*(Pictured: Our Cowichan Regional virtual gathering celebrating the opening of the Hospice House, OCCHN bound and determined to come together meeting with COVID Protocols July 2020)*



## Cowichan Community Action Team (CAT)

The efforts of the CAT highlight the ongoing crisis in our region which has enabled \$66,980.00 in funding from the Overdose Emergency Response Centre to come to our community for 2020. Lives continue to be lost as the Cowichan Region grieved with the deaths of 26 individuals in 2020 due to suspected drug poisonings (an increase of 5 over 2019), and reported 348 ambulance attended overdoses (an increase of 142).

OCCHN facilitates the Community Action Team (CAT) in efforts to ensure the integrated and collaborative community response and ongoing communication between service providers across the social determinants of health. The relationship and collaboration between OCCHN, RCMP, first responders, local, provincial and federal governments, community agencies, individuals with lived experience and Island Health are

instrumental in improving health outcomes for this very vulnerable population and to mitigate the impact on community.



The integration of the Community Action Team and the Cowichan Homeless Coalition is also a key component to the work of OCCHN and collective impact in the Cowichan Region. Building on the momentum from 2019 and with the opportunity to receive COVID funding, our community implemented the plan for housing people without a home, addressing addictions and seeking treatment options. The outcome was far beyond anyone's expectations.

*(Pictured above: Cowichan CAT Peer reaching out to the public for pop up Naloxone Training. Pictured to the right: Cowichan MLA and Cowichan Tribes Chief come together with Cowichan CAT Peers for Naloxone Training.*

## Housing and Homelessness Coalition and Housing First For Youth

In 2020, the pandemic resulted in a shift from the Housing Coalition to a **COVID Response Task Force** to address the immediate requirements to mitigate the spread of COVID.

The Cowichan Region was more prepared for the COVID Pandemic than could have been imagined. Established relationships and the work completed in 2019 to create the "Vision for Community Wellness," was the foundational plan for the response for the under housed and underserved community when the Pandemic struck.

It is important to note that OCCHN supports co leadership and facilitation of the Housing and Homelessness Coalition in collaboration with Cowichan Housing Association and as a result stepped into the COVID Response Task Force. OCCHN is one of the COVID Response Task Force members that includes Community partners such as the leadership from of the Mayor of the City of Duncan and Cowichan Housing Association, Cowichan Green Community, Island Health and **so many more partners** who made this colossal effort possible.

Through the efforts of the COVID Response Task Force funding was acquired via BC Housing, Federal Designated Funding for Reaching Home, The Victoria Foundation and provincial emergency COVID funding to house 107 people living on the streets. This resulted in the reduction of homelessness in the region by 75%. Cowichan followed the lead of the engagement with peers and a human rights approach to create small communal villages that housed no more than 12 individuals. These temporary manageable shelter sites were collaborative efforts shared amongst

different jurisdictions with one in Ladysmith, one in the Municipality of North Cowichan, on in the City of Duncan and one on Cowichan Tribes land.

The temporary shelter sites were supplemented by 43 community members also being housed at a local hotel. Oversight, food, outreach services, safe supply for those who wanted it, primary care and security were provided. Immediately the effects of the housing first approach began to have an impact as individuals stabilized.

Residents were healthier, happier, used less substances and began to flourish. Some eliminated substance use and gained employment.

As the year progressed the tents began to deteriorate and were battered by the weather. More funding was acquired to transition the tents into locally made wooden sleeping pods that are safe, heated and free from the elements. This change further increased the health and wellbeing of the residents! Their impact statements from the initial housing are here:

Peer story from Ramada

Inn: <https://vimeo.com/440211760>

Duncan Bylaw Officer: <https://vimeo.com/438691675>

Anonymous from Women's Tenting

Site: <https://vimeo.com/431592932>

The impact on Lucas, one of the residents:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkQ\\_6X2tXHM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LkQ_6X2tXHM)

RCMP and bylaw officers reported a significant reduction in crime and public nuisance calls to the sites and with the individuals that the project were able to house.

Closing out 2020 Cowichan Tribes stepped forward and opened the first cold weather shelter for youth. The temporary shelter will allow for evaluation to determine the direction for youth services in 2021. OCCHN will continue to lead the Housing First for Youth initiative and will work with numerous community partners to align services and enhance support for vulnerable youth.

*(Photo above: Wooden sleeping huts replace weathered and worn tents; Photo right: residents of the COVID shelter site enjoy time together carving pumpkins)*



## Working with the Network of Health Networks on Vancouver Island

The pandemic prevented the annual in person learning day and connection of Health Networks on Vancouver Island. What continued to take place in 2020 were the virtual meetings with coordinators to share and learn about the role that health networks could play in regards to pandemic response. Being virtually connected was critical in providing the sounding board and emotional support with others doing similar work during very chaotic times.

## Small Grants Initiative

OCCHN gives back to the communities and the organizations who work at maximum capacity to provide the programs and services for the citizens of the Cowichan Region. Small grants of up to \$2,000.00 may not seem like a lot but in fact have created some of our most impactful initiatives. We have now allocated a total of \$137,500.00 in grants over the past number of years and in 2020 provided \$21,775.00 into 12 projects. The 2020 grants focused on priority areas identified in the OCCHN Strategic Plan such as:

- Cowichan Women's Health Collective- Cowichan Service Delivery Mapping Project
- Cowichan Valley Regional District- Sports Sampler for youth
- Sundrops Child Development Centre- Staff development and training for therapists
- Cowichan Family Life Association- Peer to Peer Counselling Training
- Volunteer Cowichan- Advanced Care Planning: Are You Ready for the Unexpected?
- Cowichan Valley Multicultural and Immigrant Aid Society- Child Care, Physical Play and Child Development
- Canadian Mental Health Association- Youth Community Action Project
- Chemainus Crofton Community Schools Association -ArtAbility for Seniors
- Cowichan Green Community- Community Food Access
- Ladysmith Resources Centre Association- Volunteer Counselling
- Literacy Now Cowichan- Project Next Steps
- Stz'uminus First Nation- Elders- Traditional Coast Salish Foods Initiative



Pictured above: 2020/2019 small grant initiatives include; Handmade socks, blankets, hats, slippers, toys and mittens distributed to underserved men women and children in the Cowichan Region. The multicultural play and program space to enhance physical literacy, English language development and inclusion for new immigrant children opens at the Cowichan Intercultural and Immigrant Aid Society.

## Cowichan Hospice House, Hospital and Health Care Services in Cowichan

For many years, OCCHN worked closely with community partners and Island Health in planning for the new hospice, hospital, Primary Care Network and Health and Care Planning that will take us into the future. OCCHN brings the voice of community partners and the social determinants of health into the dialogue. 2020 was a year for great celebration as the Cowichan Hospice House opened its doors and began providing dignity and excellence in care for those at the end of life. The approval of the Primary Care Network plan brought the first round of funding to hire the leadership and the beginnings of the support team, including nurse practitioner and social determinants of health workers. The impact of the Primary Care Network was immediately felt as patients began to be attached to primary care providers.



*(Left: The sacred space at the Cowichan Hospice House that welcomes all people of all denominations, cultures or religious beliefs)*

## The Air We Breath -Cowichan Regional Airshed Roundtable

The Cowichan Region by the nature of its topography is known to have some of the poorest air quality in BC as the smoke settles in the valley bottom. The pandemic impacted OCCHN's ability to bring the Roundtable together in 2020 but the recommendations from the Cowichan Airshed Roundtable to eliminate any open burning to prevent increased impact on health services and limited supply of critical medications was taken seriously. Outreach to the Cowichan Medical Health Officer and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy played a role in influencing a

province wide ban on open burning and the potential impact of wildfires on air quality. As a result, (prior to USA wildfire smoke), PM 2.5 exposure was significantly reduced and the skies cleared.

Pictured above: 2019 smoke lies in the Valley Floor when open burning occurs in the Cowichan Valley. In 2020 the skies were much clearer.



## EPIC (Eldercare Project in Cowichan)

The Community Stream of EPIC continues to meet and work together to find ways to address isolation and prevent frailty. The Pandemic had a profound impact on frail and isolated seniors throughout the region as it significantly reduced in person programs, services and access to health care. The EPIC team jumped into action and increased the frequency of meetings to ensure that no seniors were falling through the cracks. Most programs are run with the incredible support of volunteers, which are often seniors, so extensive efforts were



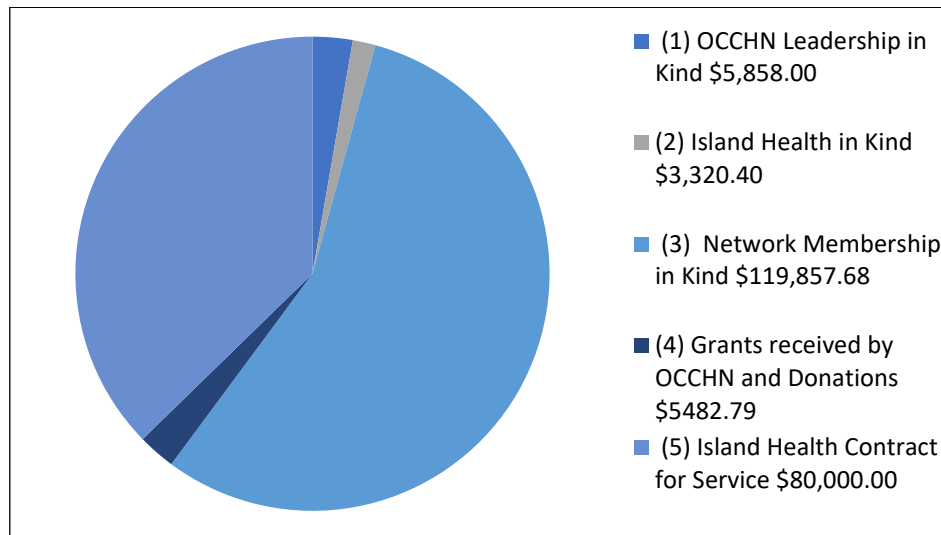
undertaken to find ways to grocery shop, pick up prescriptions and provide in reach to those isolating at home without the senior volunteer supports. Funds were found for senior's meal programs and community partners found ways to connect via friendly phone visits or providing access to I pads. Caregivers providing support for loved ones were now under incredible pressures so reaching out to caregivers to provide support also became a priority. It was a challenging year for seniors and for our partners that support seniors in our

region. There were some bright moments

including finding ways to meet with Cowichan Tribes elders to ensure that the cultural naming and stories were integrated into the new Hamlets Seniors Care home and that during the holiday season the "Cowichan Seniors Christmas Connect" initiative had people from across the region reaching out to seniors in their neighbourhoods to undertake acts of kindness to let them know they were not alone.

Pictured right above: Cowichan Elder Philomena Williams shares the cultural significance and names of the Somenos Marsh where the new Hamlets Care home will be located. Pictured above left: A young boy shovels the driveway and sidewalk of a senior to show he cares during the Cowichan Seniors Christmas Connect Initiative in December.

2020 Contributions of volunteers and in kind services have great value for Our Cowichan. By working together we are more effective.



1. \$2,752,000.00 Grants/funds received via Our Cowichan in preparing applications and supporting community organizations with granting opportunities for COVID relief Funding.
2. \$21,775.00 Collaborative Sponsorships – Community contribution to Small Grants Project. This amount may far exceed this number. Grant recipients provide 50% of funding from other sources.
3. \$11,995,110.00 Resources and grants to community for projects OCCHN has been a partner. (Cowichan Hospice House, Primary Care Network, City of Duncan Sharps Project, OERC Grant, Women's Health Collective)

Average wage per hour of members is \$29.28 per hour \* \$18.30 volunteer members; \$26.26 Managers; \$43.27 Directors, Executives, Physicians (based on "provincial averages" of indeed employment postings). Actual wages are higher than "in kind" wages.

## Our Impact Beyond Data

Each year community partners reflect on the impact that OCCHN has on their organization or work in the community. Here's what they have to say.

*"As the Member of Parliament for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford, I've been blessed to represent my constituents at the Our Cowichan table for the past several years.*

*Witnessing firsthand the devastating impact the opioid epidemic has had on our communities, I am perpetually grateful to have the Our Cowichan Network as an ally in our efforts to combat the substance use crisis.*

*I have been an active member of Our Cowichan's Community Action Team (CAT) for several years, and, through our continued collaboration, we have secured a multimillion-dollar safe drug supply pilot program through Health Canada. Moreover, the Our Cowichan Network and Cindy Lise are an invaluable resource in terms of keeping my office updated with the most up-to-date information regarding the opioid crisis and other health issues in our region, such as homelessness, seniors, end of life care, and racism.*

*Our community is especially privileged to have the Our Cowichan Communities Health Network as an advocate for our most vulnerable residents".*

Alistair MacGregor  
Member of Parliament  
Cowichan-Malahat-Langford

---

*"The Cowichan Valley School District values and respects the Cowichan Communities Health Network and coordinator, Cindy Lise, as an integral part of Cowichan leadership, moving everyone toward a healthy, sustainable and vibrant community.*

*The Network has gathered the key organizations together to assist in this work, drawing in multiple partners. Cowichan Valley School District is pleased to be a partner to contribute to this valuable work for our community."*

Candace Spilsbury  
Board Chair  
Cowichan Valley School District

---

*"Working in a high performing, dynamic and effective partnership with Our Cowichan Community Health Network has been; and still is a reality for the Island Health Cowichan Leadership team. We recognize fully that the health of our community requires more than what any one organization*

*can provide and this has been particularly evident this year as we have navigated the COVID-19 pandemic response. The challenges brought on by the pandemic have required extensive planning, coordination and cooperation across all areas and sectors of the Cowichan Valley. Our Cowichan Community Health Network has played a critical role in ensuring reliable connections and effective communication pathways between healthcare and community partners. The Facilitator role within the Community Health Network has been pivotal to ensuring the success of our joint community response and we have worked tirelessly together with the common goal to keep our community safe and healthy. Throughout the year we have been able to witness the power of community and collaboration and we have been so grateful for the way in which we have been able to work together to achieve that common purpose, recognizing that when we work together there are no limits to what we can accomplish.*

*In addition to the pandemic response, Our Cowichan Community Health Network has continued to contribute to quality improvement work throughout the year including the Eldercare Project in Cowichan (EPIC) where the working group have worked in collaboration with Island Health to use the opportunity of mass immunization to target and highlight frailty through providing information and communication to patients about how to access services and information. Our Cowichan has also been a fundamental support for the 'Right Care, Right place, Right time' campaign which has focused within Cowichan on ensuring that services are accessed appropriately and that the system is not overburdened. Other examples include the work associated with the Community Action Team (CAT) as well as linking Cowichan Green Community services to patients who may be isolating in co-horted sites. It is an absolute privilege to work with Cindy and the team. Cindy's infectious positivity and hopeful disposition has enabled some of the brightest smiles on some of the most difficult days."*

Emma James Cowichan Area Director  
and  
Dr Maki Ikemura Area Medical Director Island Health





## Budget January 2020 to December 31, 2020

Account Description	Year to Date	Budget Amount	Variance
<b>Our Cowichan Communities Health Network</b>			
<b>General Revenue</b>			
<b>Grants</b>			
Provincial Conditional	-80,000.00	-80,000.00	0
General	-6,482.79		0
<b>Total Grants</b>	-86,482.79		
<b>Donations</b>	0	0	0
<b>Surplus Deficit Current Year</b>	-106,758.87	-106,758.87	0
<b>Total Operating Revenue/Exp</b>	-193,241.66	-106,758.87	-86,482.79
<b>General Expenditures</b>			
Advertising	122.69	1,000.00	877.31
Consultants	25,582.55	15,000.00	-10,582.55
Training and Development	0	2,250.00	2,250.00
Contract Services Lead	81,737.83	80,000.00	-1,737.83
Contract Services Support	1,855.00	1,875.00	20.00
Alloc- General Government	9,364.00	9,364.00	0
Meeting Expenses	5,951.94	5,000.00	-951.94
Office Supplies	1,029.84	1,500.00	470.16
Airshed Strategy	0	4,000.00	4,000.00
Opioid Dialogues	0	2,500.00	2,500.00
Grant in Aid	21,775.00	20,000.00	-1,775.00
Contingency	0	37,270.00	37,270.00
<b>Community Forums</b>			
Advertising	0	1,000.00	1,000.00
Rentals/Building	81.57	1,000.00	828.14
Refreshments	171.86	2,000.00	1,828.14
<b>Communications</b>			
Community Information	0	2,000.00	2,000.00
Web Page	1,000.00	1,000.00	0
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	148,672.28	186,759.00	38,856.43
<b>Total Surplus Deficit</b>	-44,569.38	0	44,569.38
<b>Total General Revenue Fund</b>	-44,569.38	0	44,569.38

## Proposed Budget Moving Forward January 2021 to December 31, 2021

<b>Our Cowichan Budget Proposal</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	
Remaining from previous year	44,569.38
Remaining Contingency from 2020	80,000.00
Island Health Contract Services Grant	
Airshed revenue	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>124,569.38</b>
1 Advertising	0
2 Consultants	2,317.55
3 Training and Development	0
4 Contract Services- Lead	80,000.00
5 Contract Services (Admin support)	1,875.00
6 CVRD Administration (Allocation. - General government)	1,251.75
7 Meeting Expenses	4,000.00
8 Supplies -Office, insurance, cell phone stipend, materials	2,800.00
9 Airshed Strategy	0
10 Grants in Aid (Small Grants)	0
11. Contingency	0
12 Community Forums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising</li> <li>• Rentals- building</li> <li>• Audio visual</li> <li>• Refreshments</li> </ul>	0
13 Communication/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Awareness</li> <li>• Website</li> </ul>	1,000.00 1,000.00
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>92,244.30</b>
Estimated Remaining	30,325.08

***\*OCCHN is nearing the end of its 2015 capacity grant. Further funding will need to be acquired to maintain the great work that has been accomplished with capacity funding.***

1. Advertising- Calls for proposals, community gatherings,
2. Consultants- Research, services not provided by facilitator
3. Training and Development- Professional development for network members
4. Contract Services Lead- Facilitator
5. Contract Services- Occasional admin support
6. CVRD Administration- Fees for accounting services
7. Meeting Expenses-Food for network meetings, strategic planning
8. Supplies- Paper, ink, photocopying and resources for meetings
9. Airshed Roundtable
10. Grant in Aid – small grants projects providing grants up to \$2,000.00 each
11. Contingency
12. Forums- Advertising -rentals -audio visual- refreshments- facilitation
13. Communications- Community information- new brochures, potentially magazine inserts or news paper inserts and promotion of OCCHN- Website- ongoing support for updating website