



REPORT

Year End Report 2022

Prepared by Cindy Lise

TABLE *of* CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 03 |
| Executive Summary | 04 |
| The Network, Accomplishments and Significant Outcomes | 05 |
| Making A Difference | 06 |
| Our Impact Beyond Data | 12 |
| Contributions and In-Kind Services | 13 |
| Health Networks Increase Capacity | 14 |
| Partnerships | 15 |
| 2022 Financial Statement | 16 |

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 or call 250-709-5062

www.ourcchn.ca

Co-Chair Denise Williams denise.williams@cprd.bc.ca

Co-Chair Sheila Service sershe@shaw.ca

Executive Summary

Our Cowichan has much to celebrate with its 2022 accomplishments. As we slowly moved out of the COVID 19 pandemic we knew our world was different and now needed to keep the good that came out of the crisis and leave the difficult challenges behind us. The impact of years of relationship building and partnerships that are manifested throughout the region and our ability to be innovative and creative during the pandemic proved what could be accomplished when working together. This was our year to build on the momentum and sustain our efforts. Together, in collaboration with partners we were able to:

- Collectively bring in over 1.3 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, the Village at 610 Trunk opened where many residents continue to thrive. Sq'uamal Supported Housing has also opened serving 50 residents.
- EPIC (Eldercare Project in Cowichan) focused on reconnecting and engaging seniors in preventative care which included the development of an advanced care brochure called, "Are you Prepared for the Unexpected?"
- The 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
- Leading or supporting Collective Impact Initiatives that align with OCCHN priorities. These initiatives now bring together over 350 diverse community partners. They are:
 - Temporary Shelter Task Force (continuing from housing and homelessness coalition)
 - Housing First for Youth
 - Community Stream of EPIC (Eldercare Project in Cowichan)
 - Cowichan Regional Airshed Roundtable
 - Cowichan Community Action Team (CAT)
 - Physical Literacy (Play Cowichan)
 - Ladysmith and Cowichan Lake Poverty Reduction Strategies
 - Extreme Weather Shelter Planning
- Active participants representing a community voice participating at the Collaborative Services Committee, Cowichan Primary Care Network, Cowichan Regional Airshed Strategy Round Table, Community Action Team, and Cowichan District Hospital Planning and Poverty Reduction Teams. 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 75 active members and 18 members at large.
- Meeting structure includes delegations, spotlight speakers, strategic dialogue and member input.
- 22 OCCHN meetings and sub committee meetings were held in 2022.
- 44 Community meetings related to Extreme Weather Shelter, Poisoned Drug Crisis, Housing First for Youth, COVID Emergency Shelter Task Force, EPIC and Airshed Roundtable were held that were planned or supported by OCCHN.
- Our website was revitalized and experienced 9,908 visits and 211,494 hits in 2022.
- 47 weekly newsletters were delivered to OCCHN members to keep them informed of meetings, events, granting opportunities and health related information.
- The Pathways Resource Guide and Website is now active and growing monthly with xxx views per month

Accomplishments

- The development of the Our Health, Our Community Health and Wellness Survey to be launched in 2023.
- OCCHN in collaboration with numerous community organizations supported efforts that brought over 1.3 million dollars 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 a lack of additional capacity funding has put initiatives such as the small grants initiative.
- As one of the Community Leads, OCCHN supported the COVID Response Task Force that created the Village at 610 Trunk Road providing housing for those who were living in the temporary shelter sites. This is transforming lives and is now a model being replicated in other communities.
- Engaging in health care round table with Jagmeet Singh and Alistair MacGregor.
- 1 Airshed Roundtable was held and 5 Airshed Leadership sessions were held. Incentives to remove wood burning appliances and address wildfire smoke were the focus of 2022
- OCCHN continues to lead the community component of EPIC working to support frail and isolated seniors. EPIC has played an important role in the Island Health- Health and Care Planning Project.
- OCCHN supports the development of a Connectivity Plan for internet connections in the CVRD.
- OCCHN supports the development of a Hazard Risk Vulnerability Plan for the CVRD.

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

We are Better Together. Here's How

We are a conduit to Island Health, Local Governments, First Nations and Community. In 2022 with the pandemic subsiding Our Cowichan continued to support our communities to improve health outcomes.

Through the relationship building of our community partners and a deeper understanding of each other we have become a platform where health and community work together synonymously to enrich the lives of our residents. OCCHN has grown to over 75 active members and 18 members at large who are informed on community issues, guide responses, share meaningful relationships, friendships and comradery.

Pictured: Our Cowichan Regional virtual gatherings continue in 2022. Above; Community partners continue to access the Cowichan Communities Health Profile completed in 2021 for information to support planning and grant writing (www.ourcchn.ca)



Our Health, Our Community Health and Wellness Survey



Building on the Cowichan Communities Health Profile, OCCHN undertakes its largest project to date. In partnership with Island Health, OCCHN pilots the development of the Our Health, Our Community Regional Health Survey. A number of activities took place in 2022 that included the hiring of a project manager, development of the advisory team, community engagement and design of the survey. This survey will tell us how our community is doing with the feedback shaping services, programs and policies for our community. It will be the foundation for other surveys across the Island Health region in years to come.

Pictured: Members of the survey project planning team, Cindy Lise, Dr Shannon Waters, Angela Reid, Cher Ghafari, Denise Williams, Jennifer Jones, Vanessa Daether.

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 focus of EPIC in 2022 has been to increase engagement in preventative activities and actions to ensure seniors can remain healthy and supported in the home of their choice. The latest addition of information resources included the development of the “Are you Prepared for the Unexpected?” which provides information on advanced care planning.



Cowichan Community Action Team (CAT)

The opioid crisis has continued to decimate lives in our region. OCCHN continues to facilitate and support the CAT and CAT Leadership table. The efforts of the CAT highlight the ongoing crisis which has enabled \$80,000.00 in funding from the Overdose Emergency Response Centre to come to our community for 2022. Our CAT has grown to over 150 members who work diligently to address substance use in our region. With that said, the poisoned drug supply is relentless and lives continue to be lost as the Cowichan Region grieved with the deaths of 40 individuals in 2022 due to suspected drug poisonings.

The goal of the CAT is 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. See this link for an overview of the work of many members of the CAT in 2022. <https://youtu.be/h8q--TAXJuo>

Naloxone training and kits were available for community members at the International Overdose Awareness Day event in Duncan. **Photo by Shalu Mehta/The Discourse.** Tracy says she’s volunteering with the Cowichan Community Action Team to help reduce stigma about substance use and the poisoned drug crisis and get people talking about it. **Photo by Shalu Mehta/The Discourse**



COVID Emergency Shelter Task Force



Photos below: The Village at 610 Trunk Road. Below: Residents continue to thrive and help improve the area through art and gardens.

The Village has now been in operation since the spring of 2022. During this time the transformation of a neighbourhood, community and the lives of the residents who live there has been astonishing. Oversight, food, outreach services, safe supply for those who want it, primary care and security have been

provided by multiple community partners and organizations. Immediately the effects of the housing first

approach began to have an impact as individuals stabilized. Residents are healthier, happier, use less substances and are flourishing. Residents have moved from a painful existence on the street to engaging in employment opportunities, street outreach, gardening, beautifying the neighbourhood through art projects and promoting harm reduction and awareness of the poisoned drug pandemic.

RCMP and bylaw officers reported a significant reduction of 18% in crime in the area and public nuisance calls to the sites and with the individuals that the project was able to house. Efforts to sustain this initiative are ongoing. (It is important to note that this is not the case for people who remain unhoused).



Housing First 4 Youth

Although significant efforts are underway it is clear that there continues to be challenges related to homelessness, mental health and substance use in youth between the ages of 15 and 24. In particular it has been identified that there is a group of vulnerable youth with high-risk behaviours that are struggling on the streets of our communities. The planning team led by OCCHN continues to advocate to funders and decision makers that a safe space for youth in our region is desperately needed so youth can access supports and reduce their exposure to the elements, exploitation and harm. Community partners remain dedicated to working together to find ways to bring these much-needed resources to our region.

Feeding and Reaching out to Youth with High Risk Behaviours

For the second year, was able to secure a grant from the Mischa Weisz Foundation in the amount of \$35,200.00. The grant has leveraged an additional \$65,276 in United Way funding support. This critical grant has been used as a mechanism to connect with the most vulnerable and high-risk youth in our region by providing healthy meals. The funds are held with Cowichan Green Community who works with community members such as those with lived and living experience that produce the meals. Meals are then provided to Discovery Youth and Family Substance Use Services Outreach Team and Cowichan Tribes outreach teams that deliver them to youth on the street. The critical relationships that have been established between the youth and service providers is saving lives. Because our region does not have a safe space for these youth to go this has been a critical tool for connecting directly with the youth. It is estimated that 4,500 meals have been served.

Pictured: Pizza being prepared in the Cowichan Green Community kitchen and youth outreach workers picking up evening meals to be distributed to youth.



Truth and Reconciliation

Truth and Reconciliation is a life-long journey for all of us. Each time we gather as a network we reflect and learn about the calls to action and our role in community. Our Cowichan stood beside our First Nations partners and communities as they struggled with the news of more unmarked graves. We walked beside them on Truth and Reconciliation Day and continue to strive to educate ourselves and our Health Network to do all we can to improve cultural knowledge and relationships within the Cowichan Region. We continue to strive to address systemic racism by providing space for conversation, to learn, to identify where racism exists, and to act to change our ways.

Pictured: a young Tzinquaw Dancer opens an event with the traditional welcome song.



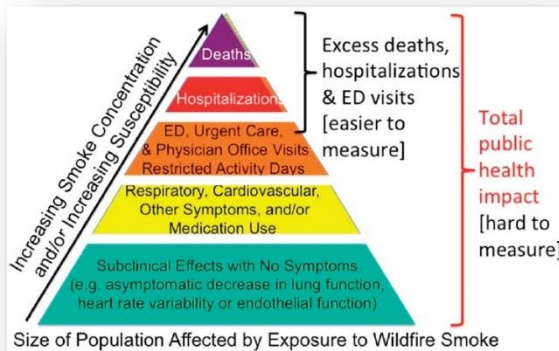
Working with the Community Health Networks on Vancouver Island

Communities across Vancouver Island face many of the same challenges. Building a community of learning and regional connections with other community health networks is an important component of improving health outcomes across Vancouver Island. Network facilitators meet regularly to share experiences and engage in knowledge translation. Collectively networks share information with regional governments and community agencies via opportunities such as the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities, (AVICC).



The Air We Breath -Cowichan Regional Airshed Roundtable

Work at the Airshed Roundtable continues. 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. Efforts continue to mitigate the impact of wood burning via incentives to switch to heat pumps, policy and bylaw changes and educating the public about the



effects of wood burning on human health. To add to the complex challenge, our province has been faced with the harmful impact of devastating wild fires in the past number of years. Wildfire smoke can affect an entire province. Exploration of safe air spaces and refuge are currently under way for times when emergencies such as wild fires take place.

Pictured: Smoke lies in the valley floor when open burning occurs in the Cowichan Valley. Harmful smoke can impact thousands of lives.

Royal Roads Masters in Health Leadership Project

Our Cowichan was given the opportunity to work with 44 Masters in Health Leadership students at Royal Roads University to take a deep dive into our network to find ways where we can improve and enhance our work. Students were given time to explore the benefits of our network and how we can improve funding, community engagement, Indigenous ways of being and our organizational structures. A number of their recommendations have been explored and will help to inform strategic planning revitalization. This was a very thought-provoking project and we are grateful that OCCHN was selected for this project. Some recommendations will be incorporated over time as capacity allows.



Small Grants Initiative

It is with a heavy heart that once again, OCCHN was not able to distribute small grants in 2022. The lack of capacity funding for the network required that this incredible initiative be put on hold. Until 2020 OCCHN was able to give 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 that have leveraged millions of dollars in community resources. We have now allocated a total of \$137,500.00 in grants over the past number of years.



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.

"Over the last year and a half, Our Cowichan Communities Health Network has been very supportive in helping us develop a good CHN working model in the Regional District of Nanaimo. As we continue to work to evolve from two separate networks to one regional network, both the Oceanside and Naut'sa mawt Wellness Network tables have benefited from the lessons learned of projects and tools developed by Our Cowichan such as governance documents, successful meeting structures and learning how the community works together and supports each other to successfully secure grants and more. Our Cowichan is a great role model for our tables in demonstrating how effective networks can be when there are strong collaborative and supportive partnerships."

Naut'sa Mawt/Oceanside Wellness Network, Coordinator
Jane Vinet

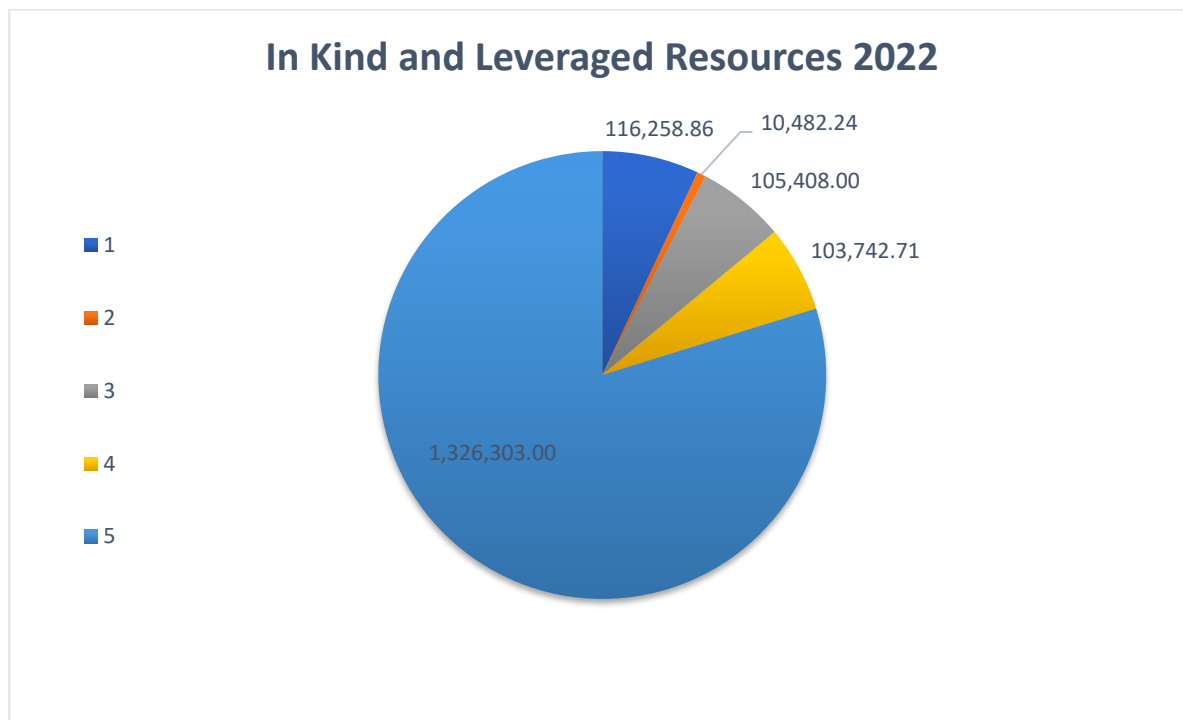
"The work Our Cowichan Communities Health Network provides for the region is essential in dealing with the varied and complex health related challenges we are faced with in the City of Duncan and in our health region. OCCHN plays a vital role in bringing partners together to develop the solutions we need to effectively advocate to other levels of government with one collective voice. We are grateful for the work they do and the important niche they fill to help strengthen the Cowichan Region."

Michelle Staples
Mayor
City of Duncan

"As the local Medical Health Officer for the Cowichan Valley Region I work with others to support the health of all beings within the region. Having an on the ground team, such as the Our Cowichan Community Health Network, is a critical component of this work. From the Drug Poisoning Crisis, to the COVID response, to the current roll out of "Our Health, Our Community Health and Wellness Survey" our collective efforts are stronger together."

Dr Shannon Waters Medical Health Officer
Island Health

2022 Contributions of volunteers and in kind services have great value for Our Cowichan. By working together we are more effective.



1. \$116,258.86 Island Health Service contract \$80,000.00 plus \$50,000.00 top up grant.
2. \$10,482.24 Our Cowichan Leadership team in kind contributions.
3. \$105,408.00 Island Health in kind contributions including Our Health, Our Community Health and Wellness Survey.
4. \$103,742.71 Our Cowichan membership in kind support and contributions via committees, meetings and actions from all OCCHN.
5. \$1,326,303.00 Incoming grants received via OCCHN in preparing applications and supporting community organizations with grant writing.

*NOTE 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 significantly higher than "in kind" wages.** Amounts noted are estimated based on the number of meetings, number of representatives and number of occurrences in 2022.*



Are CHNs helping to increase community capacity to take action to address health?

The findings of evaluation of networks on Vancouver Island strongly indicate that the existence of health networks such as Our Cowichan increased community capacity to address social determinants of health in a number of significant ways. Our network has now been in operation for over 10 years and remains an integral backbone that acts as a conduit for learning, data collection and analysis, planning, regional communication, collective impact and networking. There was agreement that the outcomes of many of the initiatives would not have experienced the same level of success without the network functioning as the common sustaining thread. The ability of Our Cowichan to work with community partners for collective planning and grant writing has resulted in resources coming to our region in ways we have not experienced before. Duplication of resources are diminishing and joint initiatives are demonstrating success with organizations aligning efforts and providing resources or sharing the lead. The Village project is a perfect example of dozens of community partners in health, local government, First Nations and community partners working together to improve the lives and health of the underserved population.

Challenges

Our Cowichan has been able to operate on grant funding that has allowed the network to engage in numerous activities to improve the social determinants of health including the very successful small grants initiative and the Cowichan Communities Health Profile for example. Due to the instability of grant funding and without any imminent options, activities such as the small grants project were cancelled in 2022 to ensure that the remaining funds allowed the network to continue to engage and meet with members. OCCHN has received a small grant from Island Health in the amount of \$36,258.00 to assist in our ability to have some activities in 2022 continue with the focus on network engagement and connectivity being a priority. Multiple strategies to reduce challenges are being explored including some recommendations from the Royal Roads Masters in Health Leadership deeper dive that took place in the fall of 2022.

Partnerships that Make Our Cowichan Possible

Health Networks such as Our Cowichan build the foundation of a strong community-based approach to challenges we all share. Intersectoral collective action via the Health Network is working and we are busier than ever! We thank Island Health for the funding that allows us to engage in this important effort as well as the Cowichan Valley Regional District for their contribution by providing administration and staff support. We are also grateful for the opportunity to work with multiple sectors within Island Health from Executive, to Directors to talented employees at all levels in ways we have never done before. Success does not just happen so we recognize the thousands of hours of volunteer time of Co-Chairs, Leadership Committee Members, Task Force Members, and the numerous committee members that are committed to this work and who are the core drivers of OCCHN.



Budget January 2022 to December 31, 2022

| Account Description | Year to Date | Budget Amount | %Used |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------|
| General Revenue | | | |
| Grants | | | |
| Provincial Conditional | -80,000.00 | -80,000.00 | 100 |
| General | -217,982.86 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Grants | -297,982.86 | -80,000.00 | 372 |
| Surplus Deficit Current Year | -33,816.74 | -33,817.00 | 100 |
| Total Operating Revenue/Exp | -331,799.60 | -113,817.00 | 292 |
| General Expenditures | | | |
| Contract Services -Survey | 32,614.76 | 179,000.00 | 17 |
| Consultants | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Training and Development | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Contract Services Lead | 81,075.64 | 80,000.00 | 101 |
| Contract Services Support | 1,200.00 | 1,200.00 | 100 |
| Alloc- General Government | 4,565.00 | 4,565.00 | 100 |
| Meeting Expenses | 2,436.45 | 5,000.00 | 49 |
| Office Supplies | 645.39 | 1,250.00 | 52 |
| Airshed Strategy | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Opioid Dialogues | 0 | 2,500.00 | |
| Grant in Aid | 0 | 18,000.00 | 0 |
| Contingency | 0 | 2,802.00 | 0 |
| Community Forums | | | |
| Advertising | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Rentals/Building | 66.75 | 0 | 0 |
| Refreshments | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Communications | | | |
| Community Information | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Web Page | 1,000.00 | 1,000.00 | 0 |
| Total Operating Expenses | 123,603.99 | 113,817.00 | 109 |
| Total Surplus Deficit | -208,195.61 | 0 | 0 |
| Total General Revenue Fund | -208,195.61 | 0 | 0 |

We are grateful for a one-time top up grant from Island Health in the amount of \$36,867.91 which allowed us to continue to do our good work and to meet and engage with community organizations and partners.