

Date: June 27, 2024

To: All BCEHS Employees

Re: **Bi-Monthly Culture Initiatives Update**

Next week, on July 1, we mark the 50th anniversary of our provincial ambulance service. It's a remarkable milestone and one we will celebrate in different ways throughout 2024 and 2025. As we reflect upon and honour our history as the ambulance service, we are also marking the year as one in which we recommit to create a culturally safe and supportive work environment free of racism and discrimination for our employees and the people we serve.

Recently, we shared [information](#) on initiatives both our organization and CUPE 873 will be undertaking during this special year, but further to this, I wanted to provide an update on progress being made to improve the experience our employees have at BCEHS and how we recognize and celebrate them.

BCEHS Long Service Medal

I am very pleased to let you know that we will be launching a new way of recognizing our 25-year employees this fall, with the introduction of a new BCEHS long service medal.

In alignment with our commitment to truth and reconciliation and taking action to eradicate Indigenous-specific racism, we were honoured to collaborate with Perry Skyjack, a talented Coast Salish artist, on the creation of a special medal that blends Indigenous imagery with the BCEHS Indigenous Health logo.



All employees reaching their 25-year milestone this year will receive the medal at the BCEHS long service awards this fall. As part of the inaugural year for the recognition, all active BCEHS employees with 25 years or more service will also receive the award from their leader in the coming months.

About the Artwork

Within Indigenous Worldview, the Eagle is a symbol of spiritual connection and strength. The Eagle's mouth is closed, reminding us to know when to listen, and with open wings, we are reminded of the practice of vulnerability. The Eagle is embracing the BCEHS logo to remind us that we are all one, interconnected, and that we are stronger when we work together. The intentional incorporation of the number 4, seen in the 4 tail feathers and 4 feathers on each wing, resonates with Indigenous wisdom, where 4 holds

significance in sacred medicines, representative of the 4 directions, and our 4 components of health: physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional.

50 Years of Caring Website

As part of our **50 Stories for 50 Years** project, we are gathering stories from across BCEHS, both back in time and current day, as we celebrate our amazing people and the milestones throughout our evolution.

The **50 Years of Caring** website is now live at www.bcehs.ca/50 so please take a moment to read the stories and celebrate along with us! The stories and videos will continue to be developed and posted online and shared with staff throughout the year, and many will be shared on our social media platforms and with media as well.

BCEHS People Plan Employee Engagement Sessions

The BCEHS three-year People Plan and Culture Commitment are both key to our continued growth and improvement as an organization. The employee people plan and commitment is available [here](#). As we enter our 50th year, we are embarking on a series of initial employee engagement sessions on the plan and the commitment we are making to each other and ourselves for how we want to show up and be our best selves for our patients, our teams and our communities every day.

We want to hear from you and get your feedback! The virtual engagement session dates are:

July 4 – 12-1 pm, 2-3 pm, 5-6 pm

July 8 – 10-11 am

July 10 – 12-1 pm, 5-6 pm, 6:30-7:30 pm

July 12 – 6:30-7:30 am, 9-10 am, 2-3 pm

July 15 – 9-10 am, 3-4 pm

To sign up for a session, go [here](#)

Indigenous Health Action Strategy

As part of our larger commitment to engagement and positive culture change, we are continually expanding opportunities for diverse voices to help shape our future. Under our Indigenous Health Action Strategy, we are creating an Indigenous Community of Practice at BCEHS. This will help us with providing additional support for our Indigenous employees, create an opportunity for self-identification, and elevate voices key to shaping culturally safe care, experiences and service across BCEHS.

Motherhood Leadership Coaching Program

In February, we announced we were investing in a pilot leadership development program delivered by [Matur](#), which is designed to support employees who identify as mothers to manage work and parenthood. A blended cohort of 15 included and excluded staff

members participated through nine sessions in April and May. So far, the program has received outstanding feedback from participants, who called it “truly transformative”, “eye-opening for ways to reduce stress levels”, and “a chance to realign values and self-worth”.

Given the positive input so far, BCEHS will proceed with a 90-minute workshop October 8th for up to 100 mothers. More information on how to register for those who are interested will be provided in the coming weeks. Once evaluation on the initial pilot program is fully complete, we will be announcing a new cohort for October or November 2024.

Culture Labs Leadership Development Program

In February, the inaugural Culture Labs leadership development program launched with 60 participants from across BCEHS. Five sessions took place starting in February, with the last session taking place last week.

The purpose of the program was to learn how to support and advance culture change using practical tools while building a community of Culture Champions, with sponsorship from the BCEHS Senior Leadership Team.

The Employee Experience team is currently evaluating the success of the program in partnership with the champions and the Senior Leadership Team to solidify next steps, which includes expansion of the program to include front line participation.

We still have important work to do to improve our culture and our workplaces and it is an exciting time to be part of this organization as we take meaningful action to reflect upon and learn from our past, celebrate our accomplishments, and look forward to a bright and positive future.

Thank you to each of you for all you do to make BCEHS so special. I look forward to celebrating with you throughout the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Leanne Heppell

EVP & Chief Ambulance Officer
BC Emergency Health Services
Provincial Health Services Authority