



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Office of the Vice-President, Health
UBC Health

EVENT REPORT

Bridging Research and Action 2025



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On May 15-16, 2025, UBC Health hosted Bridging Research and Action, a two-day event that brought together over 500 health partners and interest holders from across BC and beyond to create opportunities for translating research into action. This event summary highlights key takeaways, themes, feedback, and opportunities for future engagement.





LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

UBC Health would like to recognize the partners and supporters involved in convening... We acknowledge that the two main campuses of the University of British Columbia are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the x̱məθḵ'əy̱ əm (Musqueam) and Syilx Okanagan Nation. We also recognize that UBC's activities take place in the community on the unceded, ceded, and traditional territories of over 200 First Nations and 39 Métis Chartered Communities. Each possesses their own unique traditions and history on the land that we refer to as British Columbia, and we acknowledge the traditional guardians and caretakers of these territories.



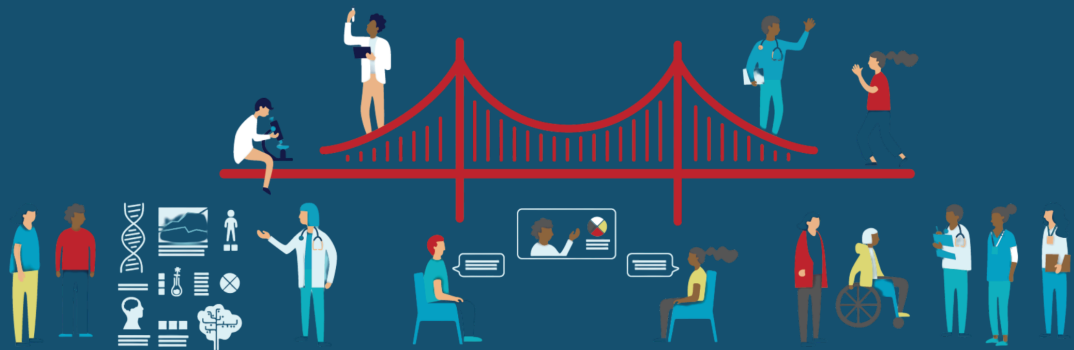
ABOUT THE EVENT

Building on the calls to action established through UBC Health-hosted dialogue events (2021-2024), Bridging Research and Action held on May 15 & 16, 2025. The event connected partners from across BC's health system, research ecosystem, and communities to explore how research insights can be translated into actionable strategies to improve health across the province. It aimed to bring together diverse perspectives and sectors to catalyze the integration of research and innovation into practice and develop shared aims for implementation.

- 4** **Plenary Sessions ([Learn More](#))**
- 30** **Concurrent Sessions ([Learn More](#))**
- 8** **Sessions Co-led or Co-Designed by Patients ([Learn More](#))**

Over two days, we brought together researchers, practitioners, policy leaders, patient and community partners, and other interest-holders across sectors to showcase relevant research and innovation; facilitate dialogue across disciplines and sectors, and to build shared aims for integrating research into practice. It was deliberately designed to be inclusive, with in-person sessions on UBC Point Grey and Okanagan campuses and virtual access for province-wide participation.

EXPLORE THE EVENT



Key Highlights & Takeaways

[Learn More](#)

Session Recordings

[Learn More](#)

Event Photos

[Learn More](#)

Event Program

[Learn More](#)

~500 Attendees

66 in Kelowna

283 Online

148 in Vancouver

Representation from all major BC health regions and strong interdisciplinary and cross-organizational representation

Speakers represented a broad spectrum of roles and institutions, including:

- Faculty and researchers from multiple UBC faculties such as Medicine, Nursing, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Applied Science, Social Work, and Education.
- Health care leaders and clinical practitioners from Vancouver Coastal Health, Fraser Health, Interior Health, Northern Health, and the Provincial Health Services Authority.
- Community organizations and patient partners, ensuring that lived experience and community voices were central to the event.
- Indigenous consultants and knowledge keepers who enriched discussions with cultural insights and guidance.
- Experts in digital health, data science, and AI from academic, clinical, and innovation sectors.
- Representatives from other universities and research institutes across Canada.

WHO TOOK PART



[View Event Photos](#)

Themes & Topics Explored

Over two days, the program covered an extensive array of themes, including:

Indigenous Knowledge and Health Equity

Opening plenaries and dedicated sessions highlighted Indigenous perspectives, traditional knowledge, and health equity frameworks.

Digital Health and Artificial Intelligence

Sessions explored AI's role in rural health care, digital resilience among youth, ethical AI integration, and AI-enabled learning health systems.

Learning Health Systems

Several sessions focused on enabling environments for continuous learning and rapid knowledge mobilization within health systems.

Community and Patient Engagement

Emphasis was placed on storytelling, lived experience, and community-centred approaches to research and health innovation.

Research Implementation and Infrastructure

Case studies and panels examined guideline implementation, research integration into clinical practice, and infrastructure development.

Climate and Environmental Health

Sessions explored the intersection of climate migration and health, as well as climate change's mental health effects.

Arts-Based Research

Innovative arts-based methods were presented as powerful tools to fill gaps in traditional healthcare and drive community action.

[View the Program](#)

1 Indigenous Knowledge in Action

This session featured Duane Jackson, Dr. Christopher Horsethief, and Dr. Gabrielle Legault, who explored questions of meaningful collaboration, Indigenous-led governance, and the role of health system actors in supporting and complementing Indigenous leadership.



[Watch Recording](#)

2 Care is Research / Research is Care

This session featured a dialogue between BC's health authorities and academic institutions on how they are working together to advance research-integrated care through shared priorities, mutual understanding and strategic collaborations



[Watch Recording](#)

3 Building Digital Resilience in Youth

This session explored the dual role of social media in supporting and challenging youth mental health, focusing on how it shapes mental health outcomes and how digital resilience can be strengthened through collaboration across the health sector.

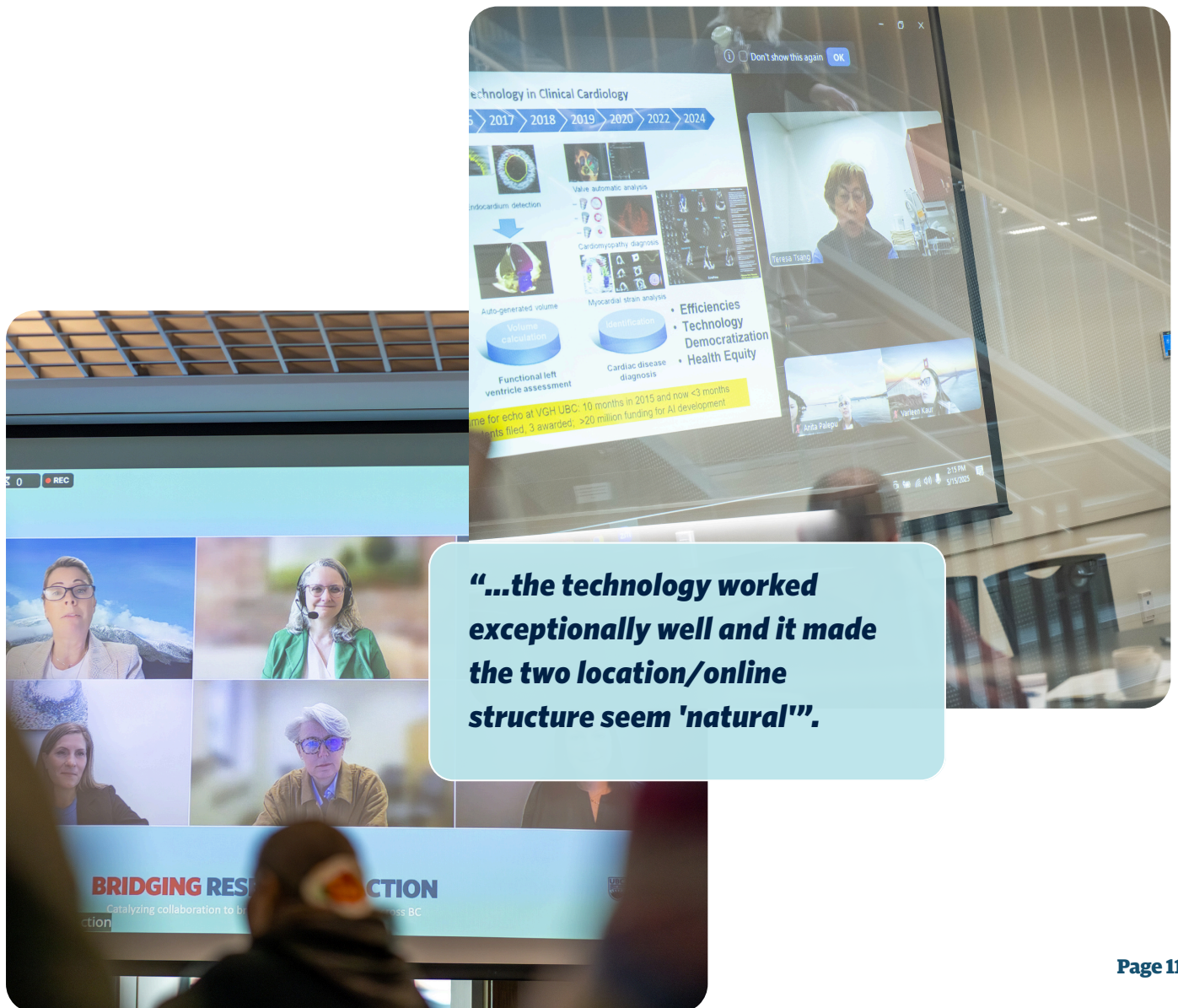


[Watch Recording](#)

Highlights

Cross Campus Commitment

The event was intentionally designed for cross-campus engagement and province-wide dialogue, with sessions hosted at both UBC Point Grey and Okanagan, as well as virtual participation from across the BC. Most participants responding to the post-event survey were extremely satisfied with the effectiveness of the cross-site hybrid format.



"...the technology worked exceptionally well and it made the two location/online structure seem 'natural'".

Participants found the sessions relevant and appreciated learning from diverse perspectives, with a majority noting that the context applied to their work. Many participants reported meeting someone new or strengthening existing relationships, with some indicating plans to follow up or co-develop initiatives.

“The conference more than exceeded my hopes and expectations- in relevancy, skilled presenters format, inclusivity, optimism! Thank you so much for making this event available and for your thoughtful planning to meet the hoped outcomes. I know many bridges were envisioned and built over the few days!”

Participants highlighted the value of bringing together diverse voices and perspectives to drive collaboration and change. Research participants in particular noted the event helped surface potential collaborations, but they also highlighted the need for more structured mechanisms to support these partnerships after the event. There is an opportunity to consider how UBC Health can support that follow-up in a more intentional way, whether through smaller thematic gatherings, shared platforms, or formation of working groups or communities of practice.

“This was one of the few events where patients, policy folks, and researchers could really talk to each other”

While participants found value in the content, they wanted more structured networking and interactive opportunities, including fewer concurrent sessions and more built-in time for informal exchange

WHAT WE HEARD



What Actions Came Out

Recommendations

Protect time for collaborative work, recognize the invisible labour of building trust, provide structural support (funding, workload protections) to enable sustained collaboration.

Focus on providing meaningful training opportunities for students/early career professionals to train and engage

Healthcare and research must adapt traditional methods (e.g., RCTs) which may not be feasible for fast-moving technologies. Need to be smart about new ways to develop ways to use real-world data, comparative analysis, new designs of trials, new ways to incorporate data.

Collaboration

The most consistent theme across sessions was the emphasis on collaboration and relationship building. Sessions emphasized the value of ongoing interdisciplinary, cross-campus, cross-sector, and community collaboration to address complex health challenges. Sessions highlighted not only the importance of collaboration but also that it is a commitment requiring common understanding, trust, dialogue, coordination, and protected time

Need for Training & Capacity Building

The need for expanded training and educational opportunities was highlighted, particularly in areas such as interprofessional education, digital literacy, and community-engaged research. These opportunities were seen as vital for preparing current and future health leaders to work in team-based environments.

Adaptive & Responsive Research Methods

There was a call to address a growing need to adapt research methods and data collection practices to reflect the evolving healthcare landscape. Sessions highlighted the need for more flexible, real-time approaches that can respond to rapid technological advancements, shifting care models, and the complexities of trauma-informed research approaches. The importance of developing research models that not only track interventions over time but also remain responsive to context, ensuring data remains meaningful, ethical, and actionable in diverse and dynamic settings.



[View Event Photos](#)



What Actions Came Out

Institutional Supports

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Examples & Highlights

Joint MOU and infrastructure investment between Northern Health and UNBC to support sustainable capacity

Accessible Knowledge Mobilization

The power of plain language and storytelling as a tool for knowledge exchange, advocacy, and community engagement was recognized. Speakers highlighted the critical role of plain language, accessible reports and briefs in translating complex research into action. Furthermore, they encouraged the sharing of diverse perspectives, of patients, community members, and researchers, which helps to humanize research and drive meaningful change.

Report card for primary care accessibility aiding in development of a strategy to address gaps in care.

Responsible AI Adoption

As AI becomes more embedded in health systems, there is a call to ensure that AI applications in health are developed and deployed with attention to ethics, transparency and equity. This includes centering human oversight, addressing privacy concerns, and ensuring that AI supports, rather than replaces, relationships in care.

AI as a support tool, not a replacement: Providers and patients are more comfortable with AI assisting, not replacing, clinicians in the immediate future.

Areas for Future Convening

UBC Health's Commitment



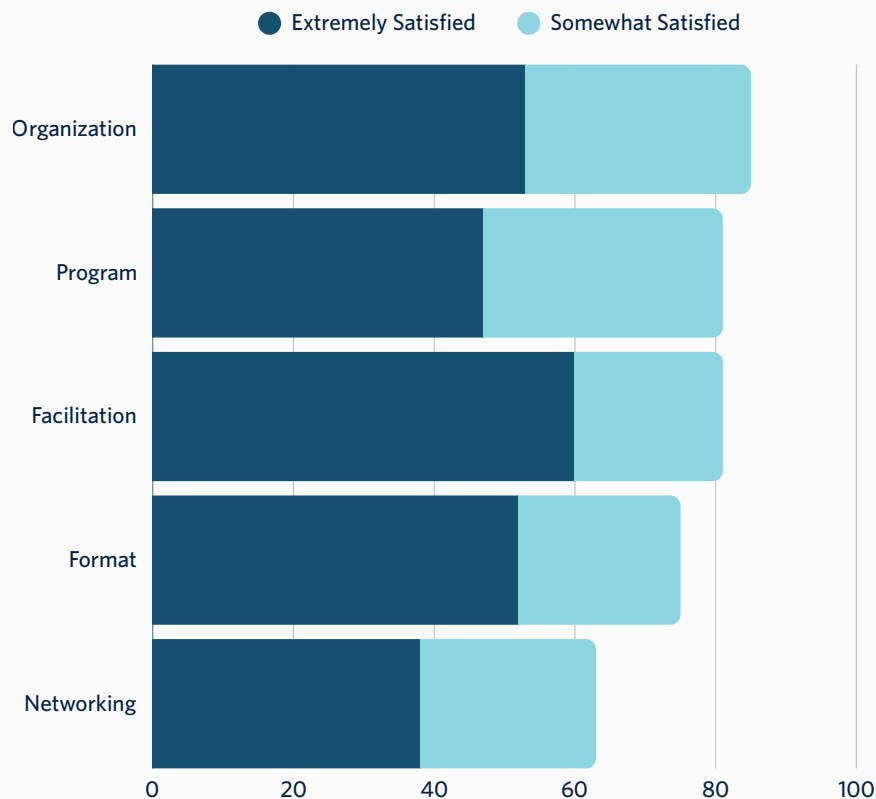
The event affirmed the value of connection and the complexity of convening across diverse roles, regions, and realities. UBC Health is committed to continuing this work by creating intentional spaces for shared learning, relationship-building, and coordinated action across BC's health system.

Looking ahead, UBC Health will focus on:

- Strategically timed events that align with key milestones and priorities
- Purpose-driven design, using events to surface tensions, align priorities, and track shared progress
- Focused gatherings that deepen engagement on critical topics
- Ongoing collaboration with partners and interest holders to co-design programming that connects research, care, and education

Through its engagement strategy, UBC Health will continue to activate networks, strengthen research-practice-community integration, and support the growth of learning health systems grounded in equity, engagement, and real-world impact.

Event Satisfaction



“The [event] more than exceeded my hopes and expectations- in relevancy, skilled presenters format, inclusivity, optimism”

Overall, participants who completed the post-event survey were satisfied with the logistics of the event. The majority of respondents were extremely or somewhat satisfied in all categories: organization, program, facilitation, format (cross-site hybrid), and networking opportunities.

EVALUATION SUMMARY

Session Experience

Of the participants who completed the post-event survey, the sessions were highly rated for both quality and relevance.

- Quality: 84% sessions rated as Excellent/Good
- Relevance: 90% sessions rated as Relevant
- Value: 88% sessions rated as Valuable

Connection & Collaboration

- 70% of session speakers reported engaging with someone they intend to follow up with.
- 36% reported a collaboration, working group, or action emerging from their session.

Reflections for the Future



The event was appreciated for its inclusiveness, but also highlighted key areas for improvement for future gatherings. Moving forward, participants desired:

- More informal and structured opportunities for interaction, beyond sessions, to build shared understanding and next steps
- Better balance between breadth and depth, especially in session design, with fewer concurrent sessions and more time for productive dialogue
- Clearer mechanisms and support for momentum post-event engagement, including follow-up on collaborations, working groups, or shared initiatives

These reflections will guide our efforts to make convening more focused, participatory, and action-oriented to ensure UBC Health events serve as spaces to catalyze coordinated and sustained action.

Thank you to all the participants, speakers, partners, and supporters who made Bridging Research and Action possible. The event was shaped by the collective energy, insight, and generosity of more than 500 individuals across the province and beyond. Your willingness to share, listen, and co-create helped spark new conversations and build the foundations for future collaboration. Special thanks to the advisory committee, session leads, volunteers, and staff who brought intention and care to every aspect of planning and delivery, and to the many contributors across UBC Vancouver, UBC Okanagan, and the broader community to helped us reach across geographies, campuses, and sectors.

We extend our gratitude to all members (and delegates) of the Advisory Committee, whose invaluable insights and expertise have been instrumental in shaping the event.

- Krista Allan, Vice President, Quality, Research, Chief Nursing and Allied Health Officer, Island Health
- Vikram Bubber, Patient Partner
- Stirling Bryan, Chief Scientific Officer, Michael Smith Health Research BC; Professor, School of Population and Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, UBC Vancouver
- Gen Creighton, Knowledge Exchange Manager, UBC Knowledge Exchange Unit
- Rubee Dev, Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, Faculty of Applied Science, UBC Vancouver
- Kate Keetch, Director, Department of Evaluation and Research Services, Fraser Health
- Jacqueline Per, Executive Director, Learning and Research, Project Lead - SFU School of Medicine, Fraser Health; Adjunct Professor, School of Nursing, Faculty of Applied Science, UBC Vancouver
- Darcia Pope, Vice President, Strategy, Innovation & Planetary Health, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Kim Schmidt, Research Director, Edwin S.H. Leong Centre for Healthy Aging, UBC
- Rob Shave, Special Advisor to the Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation, Professor, School of Health and Exercise Sciences, Faculty of Health and Social Development, UBC Okanagan
- Sana Shahram, Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, Institute for Healthy Living and Chronic Disease Prevention, Faculty of Health and Social Development, UBC Okanagan
- Michelle Stack, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, UBC Vancouver
- Khirsty MacArthur, Patient Partner
- Cheryl Mitchell, Associate Teaching Professor; Academic Director, MBA in Sustainable Innovation; Gustavson School of Business, University of Victoria
- Rachael Ritchie, Director of Innovation, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Dee Taylor, Corporate Director, Research, Interior Health; Adjunct Professor, School of Nursing, Faculty of Health and Social Development, UBC Okanagan
- Angela Wignall, Chief Executive Officer, Nurse and Nurse Practitioners of BC

Bridging Research and Action Report 2025



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