



Going Rural: Enhancing Practice Education A Collaborative Health Education Symposium

Summary Report November 2021

Introduction

On October 21, 2021, UBC Health hosted *Going Rural: Enhancing Practice Education*, a virtual collaborative health education symposium on practice education in rural and remote areas of British Columbia. The symposium focused on the [Rural Education Acceleration and Collaboration in Health \(REACH\) Action Framework](#). REACH is intended to increase the number of health student placements in rural and remote areas of BC in order to build placement capacity across the province. The REACH Action Framework provides an approach for engagement and includes a broad range of collective actions for rural health partners to improve the assessment, development, design, implementation, and monitoring of rural practice education.

The symposium was intended to bring together health partners who have a role in facilitating the delivery of practice education in rural and remote areas of BC to discuss the REACH Action Framework development process, contents, and lessons learned as well as identify collaborative opportunities to utilize the framework in order to enhance capacity and quality of rural and remote practice education.

The symposium aims were:

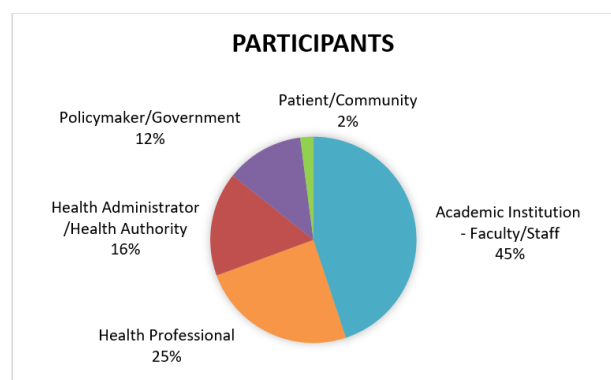
- Highlight the urgent need to take action
- Increase the visibility of rural practice education
- Frame the approach
- Catalyze individual and collective action
- Sustain momentum
- Build networks of people and resources

Participants

The symposium was open to students, academics, administrators, health professionals, students, patients, community members, health authorities, and government staff working in and/or researching rural practice education in the health professions. There were 126 people who registered for the symposium and 98 people who attended. The graph shows the breakdown of participants by partner group.

Students were invited to attend; however, the symposium was scheduled during the day when most health professional students have mandatory classes or community placement rotations, so there were no student participants at the symposium.

A list of participants is available in the [Appendix](#).



Overview

The symposium opened with an Indigenous welcome and prayer from Elder Cheryl Schweizer from the Tl'azt'en Nation, followed by remarks from Dr. Ray Markham, UBC's Special Advisor to the Vice-President, Health on Health Systems and Executive Director, Rural Coordination Centre of BC.

Carrie Krekoski, Practice Education Manager at UBC Health, provided an overview of the development process and content of the REACH Action Framework, a copy of which participants had received prior to the symposium.

The symposium was structured to foster discussion between participants around the four themes of the framework (Plan & Innovate, Recruit, Retain, and Sustain) in order to move the framework forward. Participants were asked to self-select breakout rooms based on theme and discuss strengths and opportunities of the framework, which actions in the framework could be implemented, and what success would look like. Participants also shared information about related initiatives and prioritized actions.

During the report back, groups made recommendations for priority collective actions for each theme. The symposium ended with next steps and closing remarks from Donna Drynan, Director of Education at UBC Health.

Discussion Summary

While each breakout group was focused on an individual framework theme, many discussions overlapped with other themes. Central subthemes, proposed actions, and discussions from each breakout group have been synthesized below and will be further explored by and/or developed through working groups led by partners.

Key Points	Theme(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure representation of rural community and patients at all levels of health education – pre-requisite learning, admissions, teaching and learning, and preceptorship (e.g. opportunities to engage with rural patients, explore rural student access to pre-requisite learning for entry to health professions' programs, and better understand/respond to the needs of rural communities)	Plan & Innovate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Collaborate to support rural interprofessional education and practice (e.g. collective efforts across post-secondary institutions to support interprofessional education/collaboration, address governance, scheduling, siloed training)	Plan & Innovate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepare students for rural and diverse communities and enhance preparatory curriculum and rural learning experiences/opportunities	Plan & Innovate Recruit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide a student housing support/network of available rural housing for all health professional students	Plan & Innovate Recruit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Connect interdisciplinary students with rural practice information, rural peers and faculty/preceptors to help orientate students to rural placements, understand student needs, increase interest in rural practice, reduce isolation during rural placements and foster interprofessional education/collaboration	Recruit Retain
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Utilize technology to support communities of practice among students and practitioners and as a source of support to students' learning alongside hands-on learning opportunities	Retain

Key Points	Theme(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect time to stay connected with rural education partners, be intentional about keeping momentum (e.g., a symposium that features innovation across rural sectors – education, health, and community and opportunities to learn about what others are doing) 	Retain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance pipelining efforts that include funding incentives for students to return to rural communities, creating rural health professions' educator pathways, and supporting interprofessional mentorship for high school students 	Retain Sustain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance rural practice education capacity by sorting out inequity in preceptor payment, upscaling part-time preceptors, and utilizing community-based experiential education facilitators who support students and preceptors 	Sustain Plan & Innovate

Next Steps

The role of UBC Health is to facilitate rural health partner groups in building and sustaining relationships developed at the symposium in order to develop and implement the priority actions that were identified.

UBC Health will share the symposium report with participants, the REACH Advisory Committee, and others who expressed interest in but were unable to attend the symposium. UBC Health will also invite rural health partners to continue their discussions and advance proposed priority actions through special interest groups. They will have opportunities through future, regional, and project-focused sessions to advance framework and implement actions

To share findings more broadly and in the spirit of collaboration, UBC Health will present a summary of the symposium at the Association for Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning BC/Yukon (ACE-WIL) symposium in November 2021.

REACH Action Space

UBC Health has developed an online REACH Action Space for rural health partners to access during their ongoing implementation of the framework. The Action Space aims to foster discussion and strengthen connections between partners in health professions practice education as well as create a virtual think tank for further innovation, policy analysis, scenario planning, and action to enhance the rural/remote work-integrated learning ecosystem. Visit the REACH Action Space at health.ubc.ca/reach.

Acknowledgements

REACH is supported by funding through the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training. REACH project partners are:

- Health professional programs at UBC
- School of Nursing at the University of Northern British Columbia
- College of New Caledonia
- Rural Coordination Centre of BC
- Northern Health

UBC Health would like to thank all participants for their engagement during the symposium and their commitment to enhancing capacity and quality rural and remote practice education in British Columbia.

Appendix: Participants

Ibolya Agoston, Northern Health
Melinda Allison, Northern Health
Alyssa Amit, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training
Judy April, Northern Health
Kimberley Aubert, Justice Institute of BC
Tanya Barrett, College of New Caledonia
Karin Blouw, University of Northern British Columbia
Jeff Boniface, University of British Columbia
Lisa Bower, Vancouver Coastal Health
Eric Bringsli, Ministry of Health
Ali Browes, University of British Columbia
Melody Chilibeck, Ministry of Health
Minda Chittenden, ReFunction Health Group
Marcia Choi, University of British Columbia
Jacky Coates, University of British Columbia
Josh Cook, Ministry of Health
Christie Diamond, Provincial Health Services Authority
Donna Drynan, University of British Columbia
Valery Dubenko, Ministry of Health
Lubna Ekramoddoullah, University of British Columbia
Colleen Enns, Pacific Northwest Division of Family Practice
Ben Fair, University of British Columbia
Kayla Fang, University of British Columbia
Terry Fedorkiw, University of British Columbia / University of Northern British Columbia
Carole Fell, Northern Health
Stefanie Finch, Northern Health
Kim Foster, Northern Health
Bre Ghesquiere, Ministry of Health
Sherry Gill, Island Health
Gurprit Gill, Vancouver Coastal Health
William Godolphin, University of British Columbia
Leila Goharian, Vancouver Coastal Health
Jennifer Golinski, University of British Columbia
Riki Gottlieb, University of British Columbia
Veronica Grant, University of British Columbia
Sarah Gray, University of British Columbia / University of Northern British Columbia
Carmen Harrington, Ministry of Health
Holly Heximer, Interior Health
Faith Hinds, Interior Health
Lizzie Hodgkinson, University of British Columbia
Courtenay Hopson, Northern Health
Maria Hubinette, University of British Columbia
Andrea Ingstrup, First Nations Health Authority
Sandra Jarvis-Selinger, University of British Columbia
Cecilia Jevitt, University of British Columbia
Nadeen Johansen, Ministry of Health
Kaillie Kangro, Vancouver Coastal Health
Mandy Kennedy, Interior Health
Asia Kent, Ministry of Health
Cathy Kline, University of British Columbia
George Kogan, Ministry of Health
Carrie Krekoski, University of British Columbia
Katharine Krystalowich, Ministry of Health

Sarah LaFleur, Interior Health
Rob Lazzinnaro, Interior Health
Tysen LeBlond, Northern Health
Jenny Li, University of British Columbia
Diana Lin, University of British Columbia
Michelle Lui, College of New Caledonia
Daryl Luster, BC Hepatitis Network
Gordon Ly, University of British Columbia
Vera Maesen, University of British Columbia
Ray Markham, Rural Coordination Centre of BC / University of British Columbia
Anne Martin-Matthews, University of British Columbia
Jasmine Mason, University of British Columbia
Alison McLean, Vancouver Coastal Health
Olivia Newton, Northern Health
Christie Newton, University of British Columbia
Melanie Nielsen, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training
Juliet Oshiro, Rural eMentoring BC
Shelley Pallot, Northern Health
Danielle Rettie, Northern Health
Daryl Reynolds, BC Association of Kinesiologists
Robin Roots, University of British Columbia / University of Northern British Columbia
Shawna Ryan, College of the Rockies
Caroline Sanders, University of Northern British Columbia
Jeff Small, University of British Columbia
Hana Sroka, Canadian assoc of Genetic Counsellors
Allie Stephen, Northern Health
Taylor Turgeon, Northern Health
Robyn Turner, Northern Health
Cindi Valensky, University of British Columbia
Courtney Verhage, Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Rhoda Viray, Northern Health
Cara Visagie, Northern Health
Kara Vogt, University of British Columbia
Tanya Webster, Northern Health
Carl Whiteside, Rural Coordination Centre of BC
Rita Wiebe, Community Member
Vanessa Wiebe, University of British Columbia
Elisha Williams, University of British Columbia
Jaime Williams, Vancouver Coastal Health
Paul Winwood, University of British Columbia / University of Northern British Columbia
Victoria Wood, University of British Columbia
Adrian Yee, University of British Columbia
Janice Yeung, University of British Columbia
Sandra Zhou, Ministry of Health