



Health Matters Newsletter March 6, 2020



Sometimes the climb pays great dividends! Trailhead can be found at Genoa Bay.

Today's Health Matters Includes:

*Meeting Schedule *Community Meetings and Events *Is There Really a Loneliness Epidemic Pod Cast
*Free Cultural Safety Training *Tamarack Community Development Webinars *Anti Bullying and
Harassment Workshop *Youth 2020 Spring Break Activities *The Discourse is Celebrating Women-
Nominate a Strong Women Leader * The Hidden Cost of Overdoses – Discourse Article *Social Services
Turn Over Survey * Becoming A Health Coach Upcoming Training

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- ✓ **Next Admin Committee Meeting- April 2, 4:30-6:30** CVRD Committee Room 2
 - ✓ **Next Our Cowichan Network Meeting at March 12, 2020, Ramada Silver Bridge** Light dinner at 5:15 pm Meeting starts at 5:45 pm.

Community Events- Meetings

- **Cowichan Housing and Homelessness Coalition Meeting (All Welcome) March 24** 11:00 am to 1:00 pm Location to be determined
 - **Community Action Team (CAT) Meeting March 26, 2020**, 9 am-11am Cowichan Community Centre Board Room
 - **EPIC-Community Steering Committee March 19, 2020** 1:30 -3:30 pm Ts'i'ts'uwatul' Lelum
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Is there Really a Loneliness Epidemic? Podcast on Loneliness

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/2TcHICbuuBPOfnF16tJLTH?si=igBV8BvqStG3qvEd8SkLzg>

FREE Cultural Safety Training

Island Health

The online Cultural Safety Training, “For the Next Seven Generations – for the Children”, developed by Island Health’s Aboriginal Health Program is now available for the public.

<https://www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/aboriginal-health/aboriginal-health-cultural-safety>

First Nations Health Authority

You are invited to the First Nations Health Authority and BC Patient Safety & Quality Council cultural safety and cultural humility webinar action series! 12 webinar events have been captured to encourage participation, learning, self-reflection and positive change among BC's healthcare professionals.

<https://www.fnha.ca/wellness/cultural-humility/webinars>

Tamarack Community Development Webinars

[Applying ABCD in an Urban Indigenous Context](#)

Date: March 12, 2020

Speaker: Lori Sokoluk

[Making Basic Income Feasible in Canada](#)

Date: March 12, 2020

Speakers: Sheila Regehr and Tom Cooper

[Evaluating Your Asset-Based Community Development Efforts](#)

Date: March 24, 2020

Speakers: John McKnight and Howard Lawrence

[Beyond the Project: Fostering Ongoing Engagement with Your Community](#)

Date: March 25, 2020

Speakers: Anthea Brown and Lisa Attygalle

[5 Strategies to Reduce Poverty in Canada](#)

Date: April 16, 2020

Speakers: James Hughes and Paul Born

[The Power of One: The Role of an Individual in Systems Change](#)

Date: May 12, 2020

Speakers: Cameron Norman and Liz Weaver



The Discourse is Celebrating Women

Women's Day, and we're celebrating! Here's how:

The next three editions

- Sunday, March 8 is International newsletter will have a special section dedicated to the month-long [Cowichan Valley International Women's Day Festival](#). Hope to catch you there, especially at the **rally this Saturday**. The rally will honour women elected leaders in an acknowledgement ceremony, and celebrate that half of Cowichan's elected leaders are women.
- We're hosting our own event, in partnership with the festival. We're calling it **Public Newsroom: Women in Cowichan Media**. It will take place Saturday, March 21, noon to 2 p.m. at the Duncan Showroom, 131 Station St. [Please let us know if you can join us.](#)
- **All month, we will publish short profiles of women making a difference in the Cowichan region, nominated by you. It's not too late to [tell us](#) who you think we should spotlight.**



The hidden costs of overdoses

Dr. Elizabeth Plant is an addiction physician in the Cowichan Valley. She recently completed an addiction medicine fellowship with the BC Centre on Substance Use. **David Minkow/The Discourse Cowichan**

Toxic brain injuries are a hidden epidemic in the opioid overdose crisis, a Cowichan Valley doctor says.

DAVID MINKOW | MARCH 3, 2020

Support this work. Tell a friend.

Over the weekend, a man living on the streets of Duncan told me that he has overdosed 28 times on opioids. Others say they have lost count. Their survival, at times, was thanks to bystanders with [naloxone kits](#), which have become ubiquitous in the street community.

[Harm reduction measures](#) — including access to naloxone, access to overdose prevention sites and access to treatment — are saving lives. Last week, the [BC Coroners Service reported](#) that the number of overdose deaths fell by more than a third in 2019. But evidence suggests that while the death rate is dropping, the overdose rate [may be holding steady](#).

We need to take steps to prevent non-fatal overdoses, too, says Dr. Elizabeth Plant, a Cowichan Valley family physician who specializes in addiction treatment. “Overdoses are not binary in terms of you either get Narcanned and you’re okay or you don’t get it and you die,” Plant explains. People who overdose on opioids can suffer brain injuries with long-term health consequences, she says. The result is a [“hidden epidemic”](#) of toxic brain injuries in people with substance use disorder, who need appropriate supports and treatment.

Plant says that emergency room physicians, intensive care physicians and neurologists across the province are sounding the alarm over what they see in their patients.

How overdoses can cause brain damage

Opioid overdoses slow or stop breathing, which deprives the brain of oxygen, Plant explains. “When a person has a very potent opioid on board, and the drive to breathe decreases to the point that they lose consciousness, then they can’t choose to breathe,” she says.

Deep in the brain, there are certain structures that are particularly sensitive to oxygen deprivation, Plant says. These structures control things such as memory, speech and motor control, she says. Lack of oxygen can damage these brain regions, sometimes permanently.

An injection of naloxone can reverse an overdose and prevent brain damage or death.

Jacqueline Ronson/The Discourse Cowichan

“Forever changed”

Plant says she treats many patients with brain injuries caused by drug overdoses. Some have symptoms that are hardly detectable while other patients will require 24-hour care the rest of their lives, she says.

According to Plant, common symptoms include:

- Memory loss
- Decreased ability to regulate emotions and control impulses
- Loss of coordination and balance
- Speech difficulties
- Impaired social interpretation skills, such as the ability to understand sarcasm or humour

Toxic brain injuries can worsen pre-existing mental health conditions, increase substance use and increase chances of relapse. These injuries tend to cause permanent damage to the brain, Plant says.

“The prognosis if you have sustained an injury like that: this is a forever-changed person.”

How to reduce the number of toxic brain injuries

A [safe supply](#) of drugs would reduce the number of overdoses, says Plant. Street drugs have an unknown and highly variable potency. Highly potent opioids like fentanyl can cause overdose even in tiny amounts. Like many other local leaders, Plant says she is disappointed that the province has [rejected a proposal](#) for a safe supply pilot project in Cowichan.

She adds, “We need to have within our own community an integrated comprehensive approach to treating opioid use disorder where we can offer the full spectrum of care here.” This includes, she says, [opioid agonist therapy](#) that is accessible to everyone, immediately. And overdose response is not just about survival, Plant says. “Even if the person is not dead, we still need to be vigilant to intervene, because naloxone and oxygen and CPR can circulate oxygenated blood to the brain,” she says. “Those interventions can not just save somebody’s life but they can also save their brain cells.”

Do you have a question about life on the streets of Duncan?

[Send me an email](#) to let me know what you’re wondering about.

And stay tuned for a street-level look at the opioid overdose crisis in the Cowichan Valley. I’ve been reporting this issue, [with your input](#), for several weeks, and I have lots more to share.

Youth 2020 Spring Break Activities

		<p align="center">SPRING BREAK ACTIVITIES Join us for FREE Fun and Exciting Volunteer Adventures, Workshops, Garden Parties Snacks and Drinks Provided March 12th & 16th to 21st All Ages Welcome! Need a ride to an activity? Let us know!</p>	
<p>Thursday March 12th 12:00pm-1:45pm Community Futures Build Community Emergency Kits</p> <p>2:00pm—3:00pm Canada’s Best Karate Self Defense Class</p>		<p>Thursday March 19th 9:30am—11:30am Community Futures How to Make a Good Decision</p> <p>12:30am—3:00pm Community Futures Meditation and Yoga</p> <p>3:30pm—4:30pm Cowichan Green Community Kinsmen Park Garden Party</p>	
<p>Monday March 16th 12:30pm– 3:30pm CVRD Parks & Trails—Bright Angel Park Pollinator Meadow Work Party</p>		<p>Saturday March 21st 10:00am– 2:00pm Khenipsen Road World Planting Day</p>	
<p>Tuesday March 17th 9:30am-12:00pm Community Futures Beginners Money Management Team Management</p> <p>12:30pm—3:30pm CVRD Parks & Trails—Busy Creek Blackberry Pull</p>		<p align="center">Spots are limited! Pre-registration is Mandatory. Contact Jakki at: youth2020cowichan@gmail.com</p>	
<p>Wednesday March 18th 9:30am– 12:00pm Cowichan Garry Oak Preserve Restoration Project</p>			
		<p align="center">Funded by the Government of Canada under the Canada Service Corps program</p>  	

SOCIAL SERVICES NEWS

NEWS, UPDATES, AND STORIES ABOUT SOCIAL CARE IN BC

Brought to you by: The Federation
of Community Social Services of BC

THE FEDERATION
of COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES of BC



For the 2020 Compensation and Employee Turnover Report Orientation Sessions. Agencies are encouraged to send staff who are responsible for completing the report to familiarize CSSEA Reporting Session

Registration is now open themselves with the report's data requirements.

[Dates, locations and registration info for CSSEA Members.](#)

[Dates, locations and registration info for non-union agencies.](#)

More information about the [Non-Union Agency Compensation & Employee Turnover Report can be found here](#). Be sure to check out the Resources section at the bottom of this page for [Frequently Asked Questions, an Excel spreadsheet with helpful information, and more](#).



University
of Victoria

Institute on Aging
& Lifelong Health

Interested in Becoming a Health Coach?

March 23 / 24, 2020 in Nanaimo, BC

The University of Victoria - Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health is looking for men and women that would be interested in becoming a Health Coach.

Health Coaches will receive a two-day training (March 23 / 24, 2020) in Nanaimo, will provide a 30-minute weekly telephone call for a period of three months to provide encouragement, guidance, support and teach participants key self-management skills and strategies to effectively manage their health.

For more information please contact:

- 1) Suzanne @ 1-866-902-3767 (toll Free) / selfmanagementbc.ca, or
- 2) Fran @ 250.516.5742 / fhensen@uvic.ca.

Health Matters Newsletter

Do you have a resource, event or information you would like to share?

Send it to cindylisecchn@shaw.ca and it will be included in the weekly newsletter