



**Health Matters Newsletter  
January 31, 2020**

**Today's Health Matters Includes:**

- Meeting Schedule
- Community Meetings and Events
- Article on Opioid Epidemic worth sharing
- CVRD Woodstove Replacement Rebate Program 2020 launches
- Kids in Control (attached)
- Community Development Webinars (Tamarack)
- Cowichan Community Action Team Peer Coordinator Posting (attached)
- Currents -Upstream Newsletter talks about Mental Health



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- ✓ **Next Admin Committee Meeting- February 6, 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.

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**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 February 27, 2020**, 9 am-11am Cowichan Community Centre Board Room
  - **EPIC-Community Steering Committee February 20, 2020** 1:30 -3:30 pm Ts'i'ts'uwatul' Lelum
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## Kids in Control (poster attached)

If you know of a child whose family member has a mental illness and who would benefit from the program described in the attached poster, please let us know.

Forwarding this email to anyone who might be interested would be greatly appreciated.

**Danita Senf**

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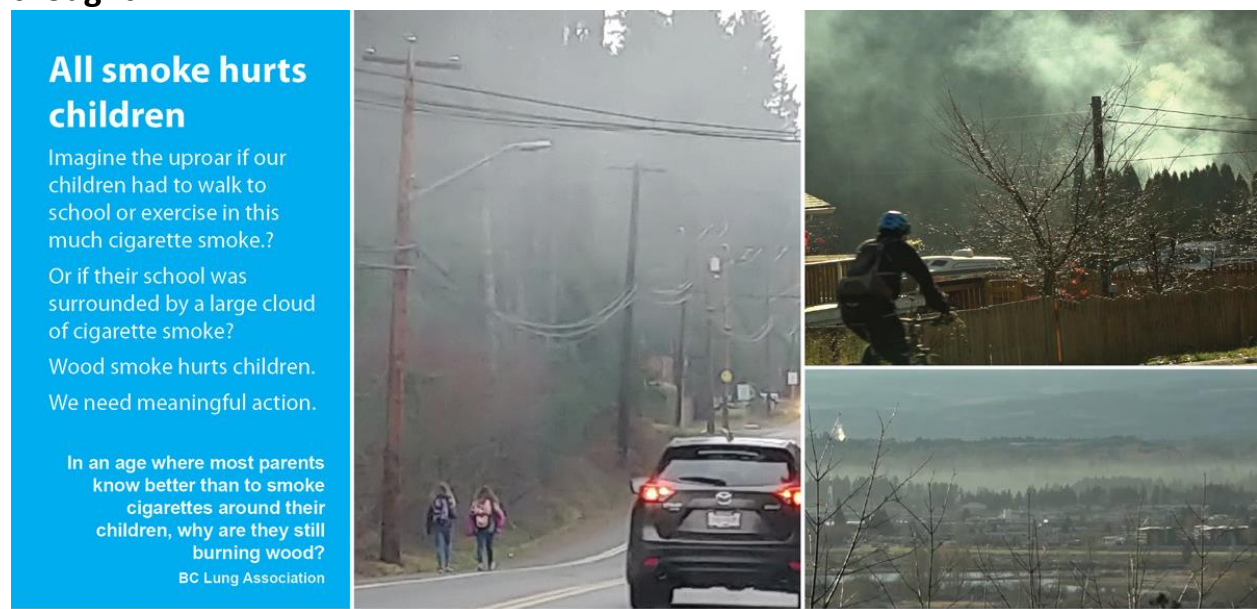
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## Article on learning the Facts re: the Opioid Epidemic that is worth sharing.

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/asithappens/as-it-happens-monday-edition-1.5441967/why-this-former-harper-adviser-had-a-change-of-heart-about-supervised-injection-sites-1.5442142>

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## Just in Case You Missed it Last Week was National Non-Smoking Week- food for thought



**All smoke hurts children**

Imagine the uproar if our children had to walk to school or exercise in this much cigarette smoke?

Or if their school was surrounded by a large cloud of cigarette smoke?

Wood smoke hurts children.  
We need meaningful action.

In an age where most parents know better than to smoke cigarettes around their children, why are they still burning wood?  
BC Lung Association

**This National Non-Smoking Week, let's get serious about wood smoke**  
January 19-25, 2020

**Breathe**  
Clean Air Comox Valley  
[www.breathecleanair.ca](http://www.breathecleanair.ca)

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## CVRD Woodstove Replacement Rebate Program

Here is a quick note to let you know that the 2020 woodstove replacement program is now officially launched! Also, February is 'Heart Month', a time to bring attention to the importance of cardiovascular health, and what we can do to reduce our risk of cardiovascular disease.

**\$2,000 in your pocket**, better heart and lung health and cleaner air in the Cowichan Valley? Win! Win! Win! Find out more and apply for the CVRDs woodstove replacement rebate. #mycvrd #ClearAirCowichan #CVRD2020WoodstoveRebate

<https://www.cvrld.bc.ca/3010/Apply-for-a-Woodstove-Rebate>

## For Your Information

**Video 1 – Healthier Home Heating Video** Featuring Dr. Shannon Waters and Earle Plain.

*Learn more about how you can improve air quality in the Cowichan Valley and save money when you trade in your old woodstove for cleaner and more efficient home heat.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOxtX9g6hZc&t=19s>

**Video 2 - Clean wood burning practices** Video commissioned by the province in 2018

*Maximize heating and minimize harmful gases and particulate matter associated with smoke.*

*Modern certified woodstoves that are well maintained provide more efficient heating and safer environment for you and those around you*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsgRzi2dKGI&feature=youtu.be>

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## Upcoming Community Development Webinars via Tamarack

[The Courage to Lead](#)

**Date:** February 18, 2020

**Speakers:** Lucie Honey-Ray and Liz Weaver

[Asking our Communities: A Journey to Understand Participation and Involvement](#)

**Date:** February 25, 2020

**Speakers:** Lidia Kemeny and Paul Born

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

**Date:** March 12, 2020

**Speaker:** Lori Sokoluk

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What's the best vaccine against mental health? Reducing inequality.



*"Mental Health"* by Ximena Martínez is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0](#)

Analisa --

This week our social media feeds will light up with Bell Let's Talk encouragement to collectively work on de-stigmatizing mental health issues by talking about it.

The more we talk about it, the more we de-stigmatize. The more we de-stigmatize it, the more we understand how prevalent mental health issues are: by the time we turn 40, half of all Canadians will have experienced a mental illness, according to a Mental Health Commission of Canada 2013 study, [Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health Care](#).

In its follow up report, [Strengthening the Case for Investing in Canada's Mental Health System: Economic Considerations](#), the commission reports that the highest rate of mental health problems or illnesses is among Canadians in their 20s and about half of mental health issues likely begin in the teenage years.

But we also know mental health struggles have [no age limit](#): the commission reports that [1.8 million Canadians over 60 live with a mental health condition](#).

Why do so many people suffer from mental health issues in such a well-off country like Canada? The social determinants of health point us to multiple and sometimes overlapping sources of mental health issues, such as the adverse consequences of income inequality, poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, and forced migration due to factors such as war and climate change.

In their latest book, [The Inner Level: How More Equal Societies Reduce Stress, Restore Sanity and Improve Everyone's Wellbeing](#), Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett point to the devastating effects that income inequality has on a society.

Pickett [says](#) "inequality eats into the heart of our immediate, personal world, and the vast majority of the population are affected by the ways in which inequality becomes the enemy between us. What gets between us and other people are all the things that make us feel ill at ease with one another, worried about how others see us, and shy and awkward in company—in short, all our social anxieties."

Pickett and Wilkinson's solution: "Empowering people to see the roots of their distress and unease not in their personal weaknesses but in the divisiveness of inequality and its emphasis on superiority and inferiority is a necessary step in releasing our collective capacity to fight for change."

This [Lancet article](#) outlines a framework to address the social determinants of mental health, but the authors say it will require “a coordinated, truly global effort by governments, civil societies, and the private sector.”

Yes, that means public and private investments to create faster access to mental health services, better workplace mental health provisions, and early interventions for children. But it will also require more than simply treating the symptoms.

As Michael Marmot [has written](#): “Why treat people and send them back to the conditions that made them sick? We need to treat people, but we need to address the issues that make people sick.”

The United Nations’ special rapporteur on health, [Dainius Pūras, recommends](#) that governments implement early childhood programs, quick intervention for disadvantaged children, as well as “policies to reduce inequality and exclusion, strengthen unionization of the workforce, and improve financial assistance to those in need.

“This would be the best ‘vaccine’ against mental illness and would be much better than the excessive use of psychotropic medication,” Pūras says.

There’s an economic case for tackling the root causes of mental health. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that depression and anxiety alone costs [\\$49.6 billion a year in lost GDP](#). Investing in prevention and early interventions for children and youth would save the system about [25 per cent in cost savings](#), according to the Mental Health Commission of Canada. But economic considerations aren’t the only reason to act. What if we use our annual “let’s talk” conversation to change the frame, beyond de-stigmatization? Are we ready for that next step?

[This long read](#) makes a compelling case for shifting the mental illness frame from the economic costs and loss of productivity to something more fundamental: the human right to freedom and dignity.

That approach aligns with [New Zealand’s wellbeing budget approach](#), which explicitly acknowledges personal and community wellbeing is a far better indicator of success than GDP growth. New Zealand’s wellbeing strategy includes a strong focus on investing in “the health and disability, social welfare, housing, education, and justice, sectors, as well as social determinants of health, such as housing, employment, poverty, social attitudes, and discrimination. It includes whether approaches to mental health and wellbeing are culturally appropriate.”

What would a wellbeing approach to mental health look like if Canada decided to become a leader in transformative change? That’s the conversation I’d like to have on Bell Let’s Talk day (January 29).

We hear a lot of “you’re not alone” expressions of solidarity on Let’s Talk social media channels, but if we really meant it, we would *show* that anyone experiencing mental health issues is not alone by transforming the system so we can get at the root causes—including inequality.

That’s a conversation I can get behind. Won’t you join me?



Trish Hennessy  
Upstream Executive Director

## Social Determinants of Mental Health

- **Food insecurity:** There is a strong correlation between food insecurity and poor mental health, according to PROOF. Read [here](#).
- **Poverty wages:** Raising the minimum wage can prevent suicide. Read [here](#).
- **Homelessness:** Finland's solution to homelessness goes beyond giving the homeless a place to live—social workers are in the building. Read [here](#).
- **Debt and stress:** A new survey of Canadians by DUCA Impact Lab and Angus Reid shows a strong link between debt and stress. [Read here](#). Amsterdam has a debt credit bank to buy out youth's debt. [Read here](#).
- **Social determinants of mental health primers:** This resource from the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health is a keeper. [Read here](#). This short video connects the dots between policy decisions and mental health. [Watch here](#).

## Inspiration

Former FLOTUS, Michelle Obama, gave an epic speech on the need to transform our approach to mental health in 2015. It's more relevant than ever. [Read here](#).

This discussion about mental health at the World Economic Forum features, among others, Prince William and New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. [Watch here](#).

## Kudos

For the 18<sup>th</sup> year in a row, nurses are the most trusted profession. Read [here](#).

*Upstream is a national communications think tank working with a growing movement of people who recognize that social, ecological, and economic conditions shape people's health and the wellbeing of our communities. By strategically promoting the upstream public health frame, we're nurturing a national conversation about how to make better public policy that leads to more equitable and healthier society.*

Join us on Twitter @UpstreamAction

Tell us your news at [outreach@thinkupstream.net](mailto:outreach@thinkupstream.net)



Trish Hennessy

<http://www.thinkupstream.net/>

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## Health Matters Newsletter

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

Send it to [cindylisecchn@shaw.ca](mailto:cindylisecchn@shaw.ca) and it will be included in the weekly newsletter