

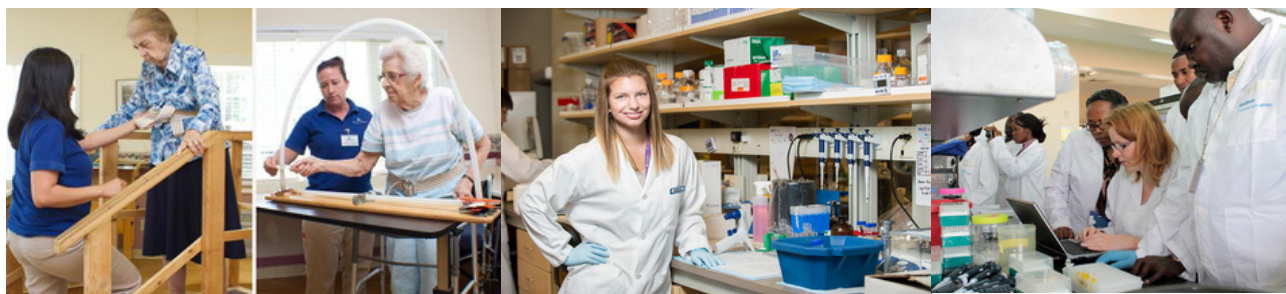


Allied Health Professionals Day

Celebrating Allied Health Professionals: Recognizing Excellence in 2025 and Looking Ahead to 2026



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Recognizing the People, Lands, and Languages

The Allied Health Policy Secretariat acknowledges with humility that its office is based on the traditional territories of the ɫək ʷəŋən speaking peoples, also known as the Xwsepsum and Songhees Nations. We celebrate the incredible cultural and linguistic diversity of Indigenous nations who are the stewards of these lands since time immemorial.

A Message from the Provincial Chief Allied Health Officer

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to share this inaugural publication, reflecting on our celebration of Allied Health Professionals Day in 2025, and looking forward to the activities planned in 2026.

The Allied Health Policy Secretariat (AHPS) was created in June 2020 to strengthen leadership and oversight of BC's allied health workforce. We are a team passionate about advancing high quality, culturally safe care and equitable workforce policies and programs, working in partnership to drive meaningful system improvement.



As a core component of the [Allied Health Strategic Plan](#), the AHPS has continued to promote the recognition and celebration of Allied Health Professionals Day since 2022. This spotlight illuminates two new initiatives that began in 2025: the Allied Health Professionals Day Awards and a panel discussion featuring Chief Allied Health Officers from around the world. Both initiatives were well-received, attracting more award nominations than expected and a tremendous turnout for the panel, while generating positive feedback from partners across the province. We are pleased to celebrate some of these stories below. Building on this success, we are excited to expand the awards program in 2026 and plan another panel event with the theme *One Voice, Greater Impact: Advancing Allied Health's Role in Health System Planning, Governance, and Transformation*.

It is with sincere gratitude that I thank all allied health professionals, professional associations, regulators, employers, unions, the post-secondary education sector, and other system partners for the dedication you bring to your work every day. Our collective efforts to recognize the critical role of allied health in health system performance and how we can strengthen team-based, collaborative practice across the province are highlighted in the following pages.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Cramb'.

Lorrie Cramb
Provincial Chief Allied Health Officer
Executive Director

Allied Health Professionals Day History

British Columbia began officially proclaiming October 14th as Allied Health Professionals Day in 2022. First established in the United Kingdom, this annual celebration has grown into a global movement that highlights the essential contributions of allied health professionals and recognizes the exceptional work they deliver.

This day is an opportunity to recognize the allied health workforce and share appreciation for all they do to help people in BC live healthier lives.

As a key component of delivering on action 6 of the [Allied Health Strategic Plan](#), the Allied Health Policy Secretariat has facilitated recognition and celebration of this event over the past five years. We continue to improve upon and expand our efforts each year to raise awareness and increase recognition of the allied health workforce.

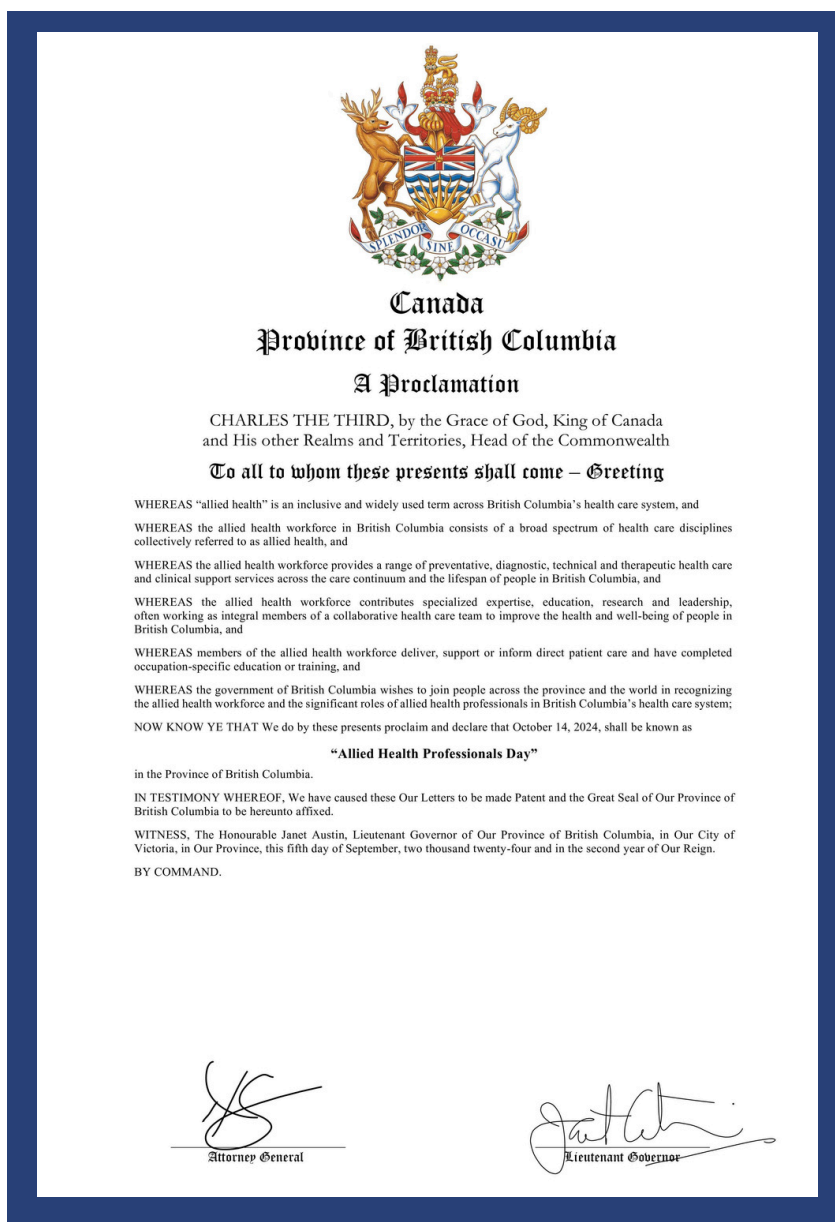


Figure 1. Province of BC Proclamation of Allied Health Professionals Day in 2024

Recognition Awards (2025)

In 2025, the Allied Health Policy Secretariat (AHPS) launched the Allied Health Professionals Day Recognition Awards, a new initiative created for peers to recognize allied health excellence across the province, drawing on proven recognition models from across BC and other leading jurisdictions.

The AHPS invited colleagues and supervisors to honour the allied health professionals they work with in either public or private practice settings. Nominations were accepted for individuals or teams across seven award categories, and the response exceeded expectations. More than 300 submissions were received, with each nominee receiving a certificate signed by the Provincial Chief Allied Health Officer in recognition of their work.

Nominees were recognized across seven categories:

- Emerging Allied Health Leader
- Innovative Research and Knowledge Translation
- Outstanding Allied Health Team
- Excellence In Rural and Remote Allied Health Care
- Exemplary Contributions to Indigenous Health and Reconciliation
- Excellence In Clinical Education
- Excellence In Clinical Practice

ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS DAY AWARDS 2025 NOMINATION SOURCE

VCH: Vancouver Coastal Health
Private: Private Practice Providers
VIHA: Island Health
NH: Northern Health
IH: Interior Health
FH: Fraser Health
PHSA: Provincial Health Services Authority
PHC: Providence Health Care
FNHA: First Nations Health Authority

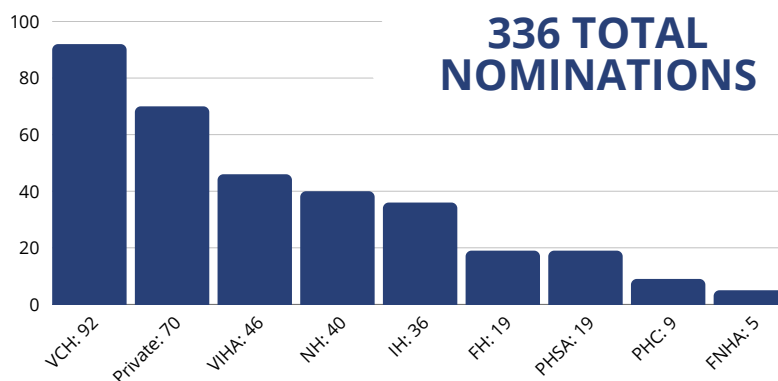


Figure 2. Allied Health Professionals Day Awards 2025 - Nomination Source

Selected excerpts from nominations across all seven categories are shared below. To see the full list of recipients, please see page 8.

Words of Recognition (2025)

Emerging Allied Health Leader

Phil Mach - Manager, Professional Practice & Learning, Island Health

Nomination Submission: I am pleased to nominate Phil for this award. Phil joined the Allied Health leadership team approximately 1.5 years ago. He currently leads the team that provides professional practice support for social workers, disciplines allied to social work, and unregulated allied professionals such as respiratory therapists and medical imaging technologists. In this role, Phil has built the team's understanding and capacity to support and advance unregulated allied health practice in the organization.

Additionally, Phil has been a significant contributor in supporting the implementation and ongoing quality improvement of the health authority's Regulatory and Scope of Practice Committee. His support has been instrumental to the Committee's successes to date - seeking to optimize the roles of care team members.

Innovative Research and Knowledge Translation

Skye Barbic - Head Scientist, Foundry

Nomination Submission: Dr. Skye Barbic, PhD, BScOT, Reg. OT(BC), is the Head Scientist at Foundry, the integrated youth services (IYS) initiative in BC serving over 16,000 youth annually for health and wellness concerns, including mental health. Skye is dedicated to using evidence-based, culturally and developmentally specific research and uses her background in occupational therapy to understand what outcomes matter to youth and families/caregivers to inform Foundry services.

Skye's work has contributed to Foundry's expansion to 35 centers across BC and the Government of Canada's support for a pan-Canadian IYS network, and she was named the first-ever Canada Research Chair in IYS in 2024. Her research into supported employment programs in IYS was recognized as a finalist for the 2023 Premier's Awards for Innovation and Excellence in BC. Through her research program, Skye has trained 64 graduate students and four post-doctoral fellows, delivered over 200 talks, and published nearly 150 articles.

Outstanding Allied Health Team

Mental Wellness Day Program Team, Island Health

Nomination Submission: This multidisciplinary team provides treatment and recovery supports to those with significant mental health and substance use challenges. They are collaborative across our system of care, bringing exceptional skills and knowledge to their work. Always looking to adapt or add programming when needs are identified, they are committed to providing effective, evidence-based programming. They truly believe that recovery is expected for their clients, and provide a client-centered, hopeful approach to their services. They go above and beyond what is expected and their passion and commitment for their work is evident to clients, families and their system partners.

Excellence in Rural and Remote Allied Health Care

Brianna Laurie - Regional Interprofessional Respiratory Therapy Educator, Vancouver Coastal Health

Nomination Submission: I am proud to nominate Brianna Laurie for the Excellence in Rural and Remote Allied Health Care Award. Since stepping into her brand-new role as Regional Interprofessional Respiratory Therapy Educator for Rural & Community with Vancouver Coastal Health in March 2022, Brianna has built an exceptional program from the ground up. She supports nursing, allied health, and medical teams across diverse sites, including Sea-to-Sky Corridor, Sunshine Coast, Powell River, Bella Bella, and Bella Coola, providing education on airway management, oxygen therapies, invasive and non-invasive ventilation, and neonatal and pediatric respiratory management.

Brianna has filled a critical gap in respiratory education and care for these communities, where access to specialized resources is limited. Through her tailored, hands-on teaching and ongoing remote support, she has improved knowledge, confidence, and care delivery for local teams, directly enhancing patient outcomes and strengthening rural healthcare systems.

Exemplary Contributions to Indigenous Health and Reconciliation

Riley David - Director, Allied Health Professional Practice, First Nations Health Authority

Nomination Submission: Riley (MSW) is a passionate and visionary First Nations health leader. As FNHA's inaugural Director of Allied Health Professional Practice, she is playing a pivotal role in uncovering and communicating the unique landscape of allied health within First Nations communities. Drawing on her background in social work, mental health, and addictions, Riley brings a culturally grounded and community-centered approach to her leadership. She ensures the voices of BC First Nations are at the forefront, leading early regional engagement to understand the needs and aspirations related to allied health services.

From this work, Riley developed a strategic framework and roadmap to guide focused investment and action. She is a tireless advocate for both the wellness of First Nations people and the distinct identity of allied health in the broader health system. Riley leads with culture, generously sharing teachings, stories, and experiences to support others on their own cultural and professional journeys.

Excellence In Clinical Education

Rae Marchal - Clinical Educator Physiotherapy, Northern Health Authority

Nomination Submission: Rae has taken on this new role within the health authority to focus on clinical education for existing and new physiotherapists. She has already had such a significant impact throughout the region, supporting clinicians through internal and external educational opportunities. Rae has been able to provide amazing support for new hires and especially for newly graduated physiotherapists, providing resources and helping to synthesize the evidence base for practice in a wide range of practice settings, conditions, and more!

Excellence in Clinical Practice

Steve Ramsbottom - Performance Institute

Nomination Submission: I am nominating Steve Ramsbottom in the category of Excellence in Clinical Practice. As co-owner of Performance Institute, Steve has played an integral role in building a highly respected training and rehabilitation facility. He helps manage and mentor a team of nine trainers, and ensures that clients receive individualized, evidence-based support that enhances their health and performance. His scope of practice is broad, working with youth, seniors, weekend warriors, clients with disabilities, active rehab patients, as well as provincial and professional athletes.

Beyond day-to-day client work, he regularly conducts workshops on Inclusive Fitness Training, equipping other professionals with tools to provide accessible, client-centered care. His expertise has been recognized internationally, with an invitation to Oman to present and lead practical workshops. This combination of clinical skill, leadership, and commitment to advancing the profession makes him a highly deserving candidate for this award.

Award Recipients (2025)

In addition to the selected excerpts from nominations above, the following is a complete* list of recipients. **List contains recipients who provided media release forms*

Emerging Allied Health Leader (Name, Employer)		
Angela Sue, BC Cancer	Dr. Annie Huang, Integra Eye Care Centre	Fairahn Reid, Island Health
Garinee “Karen” Hopkins, Fraser Health	Ingrid Kusniewicz, Vancouver Coastal Health	Jane “Jenny” Finnegan, Fraser Health
Jordan Pugh, Island Health	Katie Janzen, Tall Tree Health	Kyle Bogle, Vancouver Coastal Health
Lauren Lefley, Northern Health	Matthew Millar, Island Health	Melissa Michaud, Interior Health
Phil Mach, Island Health	Sarah Baumbusch, Vancouver Coastal Health	Taylor Nicholls, Interior Health
Terri Shea, Vancouver Coastal Health	Vesta Rankin, Vancouver Coastal Health	

Innovative Research and Knowledge Translation (Name, Employer)		
Dina Salih, Island Health	Elaine Eppler, Vancouver Coastal Health	Eleah Stringer, BC Cancer
Karen Letournau, Island Health	Les Smith, School District 57	Maire Westby, Vancouver Coastal Health
Dr. Skye Barbic, Foundry		



Award Recipients (2025)

Outstanding Allied Health Team (Name, Employer)

Abbotsford Regional Hospital Tomography, Fraser Health	Allied Health Resource Team, Northern Health	Early Psychosis Intervention – Coastal Case Managers, Vancouver Coastal Health
GF Strong Adult Concussion Service, Vancouver Coastal Health	Integra Eyecare Centre	Nuclear Medicine, Fraser Health
Primary Care Network Physiotherapy, Kootenay Medical Centre	Renal Dietitians Team, Providence Health Care	Respiratory Therapy Regional Leadership, Island Health
Spiritual Health and Pastoral Care Team, Providence Health Care	Tall Tree Health	The Independence Model (TIM), Providence Health Care
Veritas Integrative Health and Premier Physio		

Excellence in Rural and Remote Allied Health Care (Name, Employer)

Brianna Laurie, Vancouver Coastal Health	Elizabeth Edwards, Interior Health	Kayla Paterson, Vancouver Coastal Health
Kelsey Tran, Northern Health	Laura Noara, Vancouver Coastal Health	Meghan Hughes, Community Therapists
Melanie Cailleaux, Northern Health	Tawn Dingwall, Northern Health	Zori Kaneva, Vancouver Coastal Health

Exemplary Contributions to Indigenous Health and Reconciliation (Name, Employer)

Mary Ann Statton, Fraser Health	Nicole Hendry, Northern Health	Riley David, First Nations Health Authority
Stacey Bisson, London Drugs Optical		

Award Recipients (2025)

Excellence in Clinical Education (Name, Employer)

Andrea Civitarese, Vancouver Coastal Health	Annemarie Budau, Vancouver Coastal Health	Cait O’Sullivan, Island Health
Caitlin Williams, University of British Columbia	Carolyn Watt, Northern Health	Cristi Froyman, Interior Health
Denise Kendrick, Vancouver Coastal Health	Diana Ngyuen, Integra Eye Care Centre	Dona Lajeunesse, Fraser Health
Furqana Khan, Northern Health	Kelly Yuill, Vancouver Coastal Health	Megan Kan, Providence Health Care
Nicole Desjarlais, Interior Health	Pamela Summers, Vancouver Coastal Health	Rae Marchal, Northern Health
Shirin von Mende, Vancouver Coastal Health	Stanly Ho, Fraser Health	Valeria Pagdin, Northern Health

Excellence in Clinical Practice (Name, Employer)

Amrit Toor, Northern Health	Christie Lang, Vancouver Coastal Health	Coleman Balaski, Vancouver Coastal Health
Dasha Maslennikova, Symmetrix Kinesiology	Erin Goodman, Vancouver Coastal Health	Evelyn Vermette, Interior Health
Haley Sullivan, Island Health	Irene “Meara” Brown, Island Health	Jody Shul, Northern Health
Karyn Rehbock, BC Children’s Hospital	Kayla MacKirdy, Vancouver Coastal Health	Kimberly Parsons, Vancouver Coastal Health
Lauren Bird, Vancouver Coastal Health	Libby McVey, Northern Health	Lindsay Maxwell, Island Health
Mary Anne Bautista, Vancouver Coastal Health	Michael Armstrong, Island Health	Michelle Collinson, Northern Health
Mignon, Radhakrishnan, Vancouver Coastal Health	Patricia Gartner, Interior Health	Rosalyn Culos, Vancouver Coastal Health
Steve Ramsbottom, Performance Institute	Steven Cherry, Island Health	Sudarshan Anandkumar, Synergy Rehab
Sue Reil, Community Therapists	Teresa Robitaille, Providence Health Care	Tova Plashkes, Vancouver Coastal Health

Global Allied Health Workforce Panel (2025)

Another highlight of October 14, 2025, was the Global Allied Health Workforce Panel, co-moderated by Provincial Chief Allied Health Officer, Lorrie Cramb and Deputy Minister of Health, Cynthia Johansen. The session brought together Chief Allied Health Officers from Australia, Singapore, New Zealand, and England including:

- Anita Hobson-Powell, Chief Allied Health Officer, Department of Health, Disability, and Aging, Australia
- Susan Niam, Chief Allied Health Officer, Ministry of Health, Singapore
- Dr. Martin Chadwick, Chief Allied Health Officer, Ministry of Health, New Zealand
- Beverly Harden, Deputy Chief Allied Health Professions Officer, NHS England

This dynamic, wide-ranging conversation on the future of the global allied health workforce can be viewed [here](#).

GLOBAL ALLIED HEALTH WORKFORCE PANEL

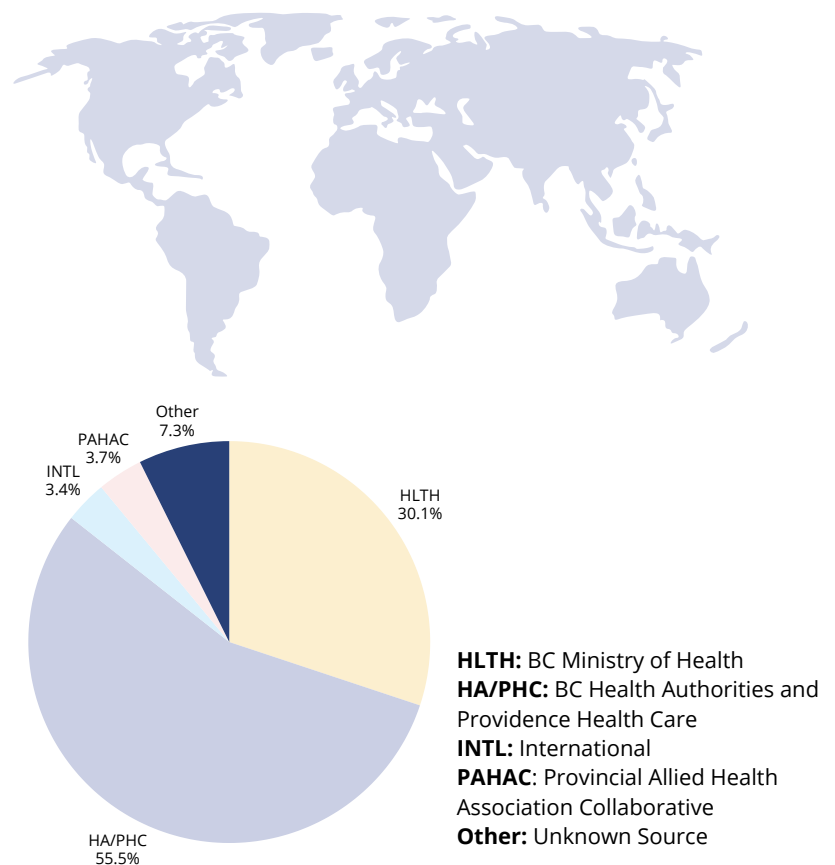


Figure 3. Global Allied Health Workforce Panel Attendees

Planning Allied Health Professionals Day (2026)

In 2026, the Allied Health Policy Secretariat will strengthen its efforts to recognize the remarkable achievements of BC's allied health workforce while elevating the profile and identity of allied health across the province.

Proclamation: We will once again collaborate with partners across BC to proclaim October 14th as Allied Health Professionals Day.

Awards: Building on the success of the inaugural awards program, the Allied Health Professionals Day Recognition Awards will return in 2026. Last year, we received valuable feedback from participants, which will help shape and enhance the initiative. Further details, including information on the nomination process, will be distributed through our association partners and health authorities in the coming weeks.

Virtual Panel: We are also pleased to be planning another virtual panel. Following the success of previous events, we hope to bring together experts and thought leaders from across the allied health community for an engaging discussion on collective identity and policy reform while providing attendees with an opportunity to ask questions and share perspectives. Additional details, including the panelists and registration information, will be shared broadly as the event approaches.

Upcoming Allied Health Events

[International Allied Health Conference](#)

Date: August 16 - 18, 2027

Location: Canberra, Australia

The Allied Health Policy Secretariat can be contacted at:

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