

PROVINCIAL PHYSICIAN HEALTH AND SAFETY SUMMIT





OVERVIEW

The second annual Provincial Physician Health and Safety Summit took place on April 3 and 4, 2024, in Vancouver. This summit brought together 103 participants from health authorities, the Ministry of Health, and front-line physicians, among others, to collaborate, advocate, and explore new solutions for improving physician safety in British Columbia.

Doctors of BC acknowledges that we work, live, and play on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of many First Nations communities throughout British Columbia. Acknowledging these traditional territories is an expression of cultural humility that involves recognizing our commitment to support the provision of culturally safe care to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people in BC.



HIGHLIGHTS

Collaborative discussions: The summit provided a platform for participants to engage in collaborative discussions on the pressing issues surrounding physician health and safety in BC. Attendees included physicians, healthcare administrators, policymakers, and representatives from relevant organizations.

Exploring solutions: The summit served as a forum for exploring innovative solutions to enhance physician safety. Doctors of BC and health authorities presented on 22 projects underway across six health authorities. Topics ranged from implementing workplace wellness programs, to improving access to mental health support services for physicians. Workshops and panel discussions facilitated the exchange of ideas and best practices among participants.

Advocacy efforts: Advocacy played a central role in the summit, with participants advocating for better support systems, policies, and resources to ensure the well-being and safety of physicians. Discussions revolved around addressing workplace stress, burnout, workplace violence, and other occupational hazards faced by physicians.

Networking opportunities: Networking sessions allowed participants to connect with peers, share experiences, and build partnerships aimed at advancing the cause of physician health and safety. These interactions fostered collaboration and encouraged ongoing efforts to address the challenges faced by physicians in BC.

WHO ATTENDED

25

Physician members



18

Health authority representatives,
Occupational Health and Safety

9

Government representatives (Ministry of Health,
WorkSafeBC, SWITCH BC)

16

Health authority representatives,
Medical Affairs

23

Doctors of BC staff

KEY THEMES

Attendees valued knowledge

sharing: The event contributed to increased knowledge of strategies and initiatives aimed at improving physicians’ physical and psychological health and safety.

Value of networking:

Participants valued networking and connecting with peers from various roles and regions.

Continue interactivity: Attendees appreciated interactive sessions and activities that allowed for engagement and participation.

Include more diversity:

Attendees made suggestions to include diverse perspectives, such as those of Indigenous physicians, patient representatives, and community physicians.

More opportunities for

dialogue: While some felt there were adequate opportunities for dialogue, others suggested room for improvement in facilitating discussions and generating solutions.

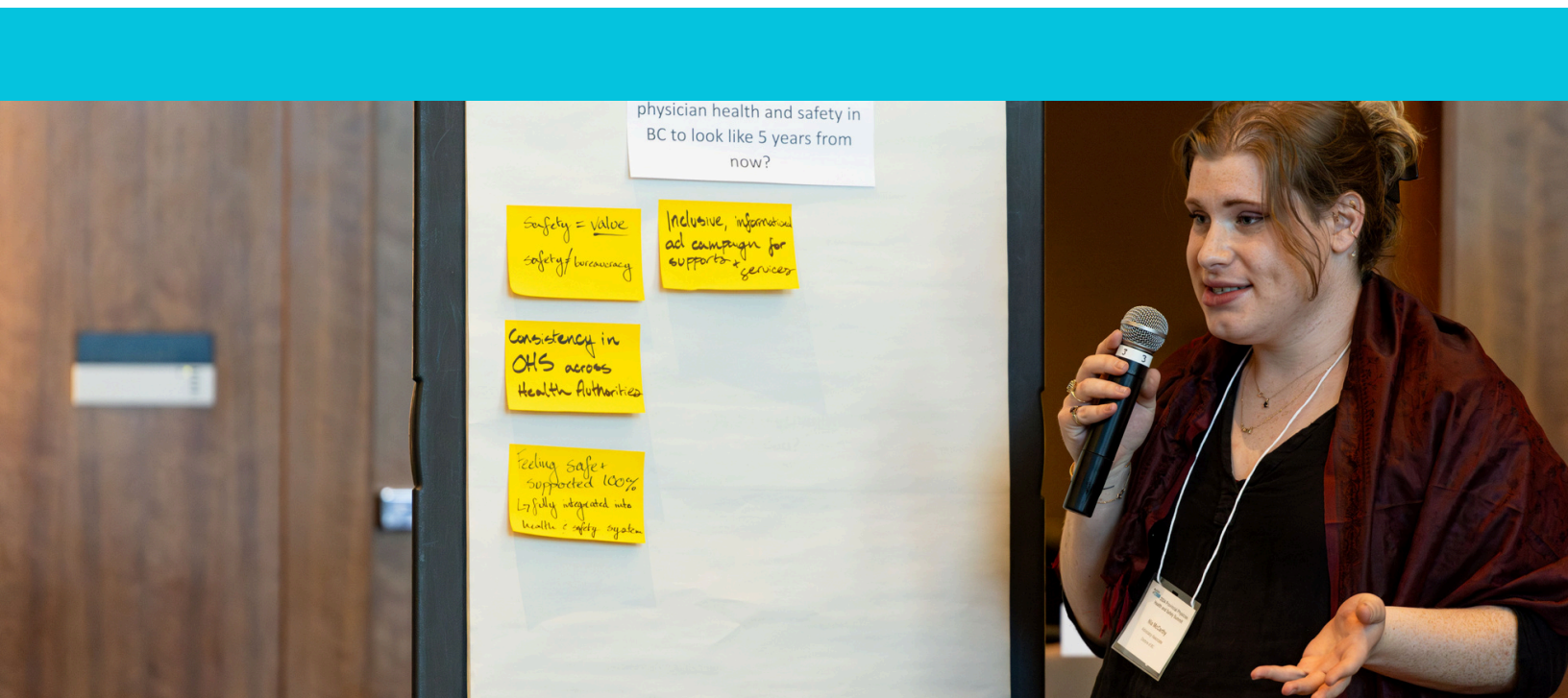




TABLE DISCUSSIONS

Challenges and Opportunities

Participants identified coordination among partners as a key challenge, noting the importance of representing all perspectives in initiatives.

From the data collected, there is a collective desire for a stronger provincial directive, including:

- **Clearer direction and details on provincial directives**
- **Detailed metrics to measure success and accessibility of resources**
- **Sustainable and long-term funding structures for physician health and safety initiatives**
- **Standardized data infrastructure for reporting**
- **A provincial violence prevention curriculum**

MOVING FROM PROJECTS TO SUSTAINABILITY AND SPREAD

The collaboration between Doctors of BC and health authorities has significantly advanced physician health and safety in BC. Recognizing the challenges posed by resource constraints, facilitated discussions at the summit aimed to address these impacts on physician occupational health and safety at various system levels. These discussions underscored the importance of leveraging grassroots momentum and supporting working groups, while promoting the adoption of provincial initiatives where feasible. The primary aim of these discussions was to sustain and enhance current initiatives, transitioning from regional projects to a cohesive, provincial framework for sustainability.

What would you like physician health and safety in BC to look like five years from now?

Consistency and integration

- Consistency and integration: Standardized, integrated, and provincially coordinated safety policies
- Proactive and preventive approaches: Emphasis on prevention and proactive, data-driven risk mitigation
- Support and resources for physicians: Adequate support, equitable resource access, and clear, streamlined roles with reduced bureaucracy

What are the current barriers?

- Resource constraints and systemic issues: Lack of sustainable funding and bureaucratic inefficiencies
- Communication and engagement challenges: Ineffective communication, overwhelming workloads, and siloed teams
- Trust and accountability Issues: Lack of trust and inconsistent enforcement of regulations

What support mechanisms are needed?

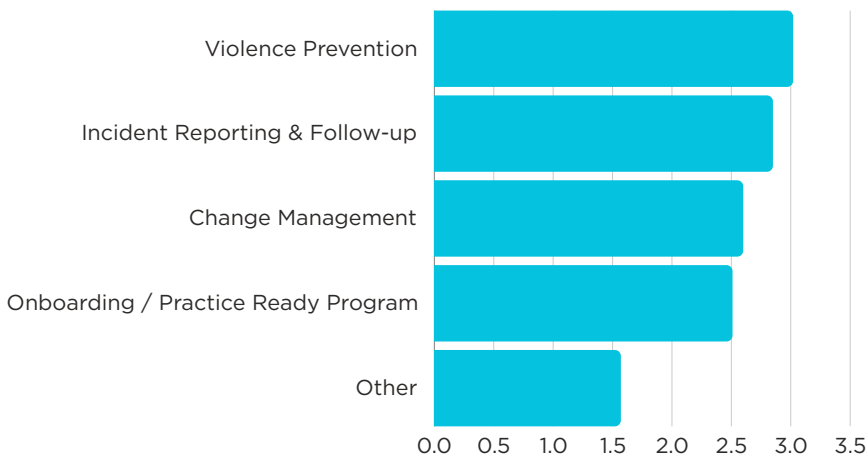
- Effective leadership and governance: Engaged leadership and clear governance with medical oversight
- Resource allocation and support: Sustainable resources and funding for regional needs and implementation
- Communication and relationship building: Robust communication strategies and collaborative mentorship programs

SUSTAINABILITY AND SPREAD

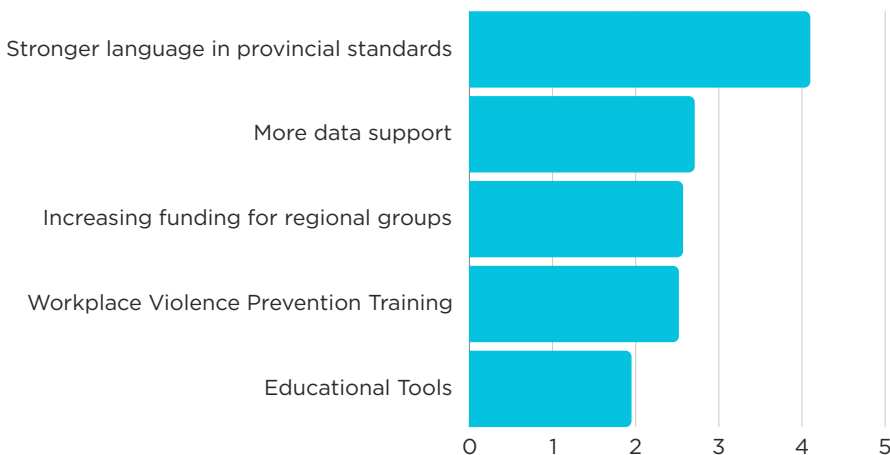
During the session, table groups shared highlights, themes, and key takeaways from their discussions. Active anonymous data was then captured using Slido, ensuring that participants could freely express their views. The results were as follows:



Priority areas to be managed at a provincial level



Other areas to be prioritized at a provincial level



Future goals:

- A unified vision and strong leadership
- Zero tolerance for physician abuse
- Organizational prioritization of OHS
- Sustainable funding for training and de-escalation
- Centralized incident reporting
- Clear roles and responsibilities with provincial oversight
- Consistent communication (e.g., public ad campaigns) and unified provincial standards

COMMUNITY PHYSICIAN HEALTH AND SAFETY TASK GROUP



Eleven physicians from the newly formed Community Physician Health and Safety Task Group attended the 2024 Physician Health and Safety Summit.

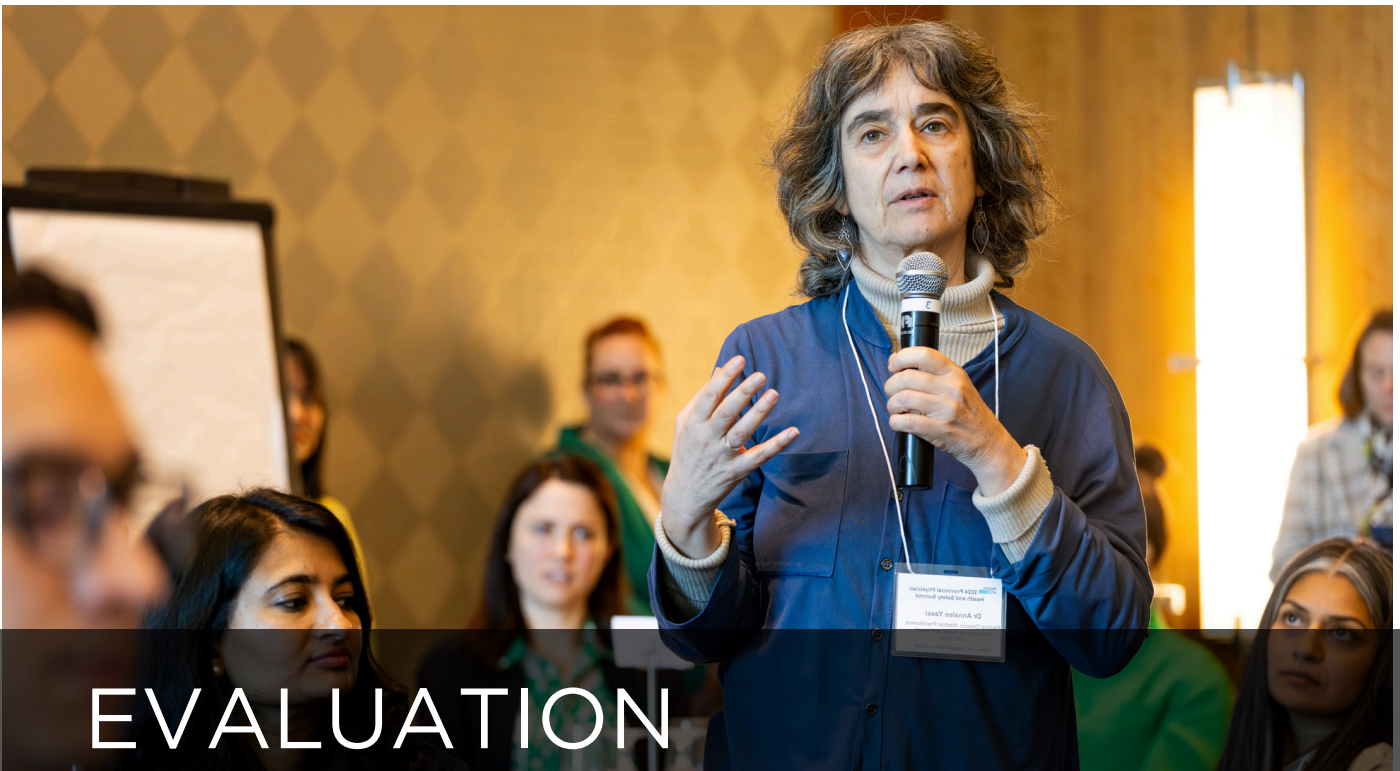
As the second gathering of this group, a lot of time was spent in open dialogue on various challenges faced by community physicians—some within the scope of this work, and some that are being addressed at other tables Doctors of BC is involved in. The group was engaged and unified in their passion for the overall health and safety of community physicians.



There was consensus on a few initial projects being led by SWITCH BC, where community physician input is integral to carry them forward. These include the development of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) checklists and clinic site visits to assess if current OHS obligations are being met and how best to support them.



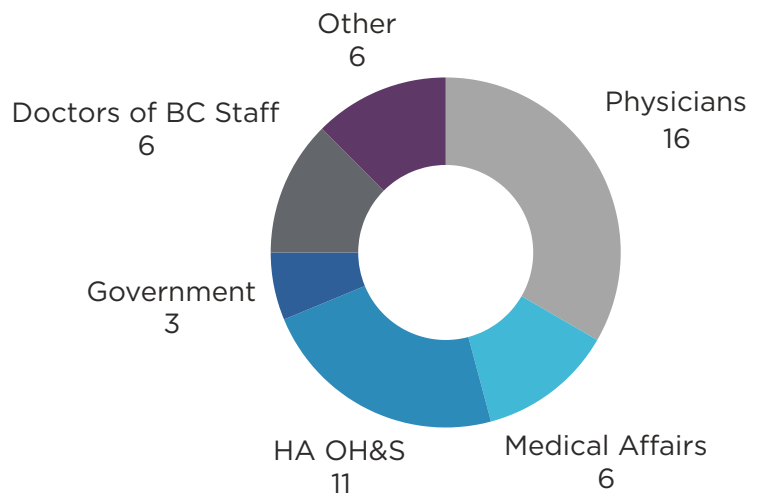
The group will be meeting to discuss and review the projects in more detail over the next few months, with the hopes of sharing finalized work with the broader group of BC community physicians in the fall.



EVALUATION

49 of the 103 participants completed an evaluation on the 2024 Provincial Physician Health and Safety Summit

96% of attendees agreed/strongly agreed they were satisfied with the event



INSIGHTS

Increase in knowledge: Participants reported an increase in knowledge of strategies to elevate physicians' physical and/or psychological health and safety.

Valuable aspects: Participants highlighted networking, idea generation, listening to presentations, and interactions with peers.



WHAT WE HEARD

“The interactive session, so great to see/hear the feedback from each group.”

“RENEWED ABILITY TO TALK ABOUT MAKING THIS PERMANENT AND SUSTAINABLE VS PROJECT-BASED.”

“Great to meet and chat with others from various backgrounds working on this.”

OPPORTUNITIES

Attendees made suggestions for including perspectives from Indigenous physicians, patients, community physicians, and senior leaders within health authorities.





NEXT STEPS

The second annual Provincial Physician Health and Safety Summit served as a platform for health care partners to come together, collaborate, and advocate for meaningful change in the realm of physician safety in BC. Through productive discussions, the sharing of best practices, and the development of actionable recommendations, the summit made significant strides towards fostering a culture of safety and well-being for physicians. Moving forward, it is essential to build on the momentum generated by the summit and continue working towards tangible solutions that prioritize the health and safety of physicians. We look forward to the **2025 PHS Summit on April 9-10.**