

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 16, 2023

Cliff: 1065104

To: All BCEHS staff

File: 195-20

Sent on behalf of Leanne Heppell, BCEHS EVP & Chief Ambulance Officer

Re: Bi-monthly update from the CAO

As I committed to you in my [March 16 update](#), this is the first bi-monthly reporting out on actions being taken to ensure our BCEHS workplaces are safe, respectful and inclusive, and that they promote and foster the mental health and well-being of all employees.

Some of the progress that has been made in the last two months:

Building our internal capacity – making meaningful and enduring change requires dedicated resources, and we are building capacity with the following new team members and roles:

- On May 1, we welcomed Carly Jokic, our new Executive Director, Employee Experience. Carly will lead our Employee Mental Health & Wellness and Employee Recognition teams, and report to the newly created role of Chief, People, Diversity and Culture. Pending classification, posting and recruitment of this role, Carly is reporting to our Chief Operating Officer, Neil Lilley.
- Carly will lead recruitment of a Director, Diversity and Inclusion to join the Employee Experience function and help ensure we have the focused support and guidance required to make positive changes needed at BCEHS. Carly will be visiting as many centres and stations across the province as she can in the coming weeks and months.

Improving oversight and accountability - a special joint committee of the PHSA and BCEHS boards will guide the work of culture improvement at BCEHS. This group has met, developed terms of reference, and appointed two special advisors. Lisa Southern, a lawyer specializing in helping organizations address harassment and discrimination in the workplace, works directly with the board. Annabelle Donovan, an HR specialist with experience leading initiatives addressing employee engagement and culture change, reports to me.

Our draft People Strategy was intended to be provided to employees and the BCEHS board for feedback by May 1st. But I believe this strategy will be better — and stronger — because of Lisa and Annabelle’s input to the first draft. I will share the draft People Strategy through an employee consultation process early this summer. Your feedback will be critically important to the effectiveness of the strategy.

Better supporting our employees – activity is underway to better support our employees by improving training opportunities and increasing leader visibility and engagement opportunities:

- To be better equipped to deal with bullying and harassment allegations, all BCEHS HR employees have now completed additional conflict resolution training, which included education on conducting trauma-informed investigations.
- Face-to-face conflict management training for all leaders is being organized, with the first sessions taking place in June.
- Senior leaders will be engaging with staff across the province in the coming months, including participating in meetings with unit chiefs, managers and directors in Smithers this week and in Nelson the first week of June.
- As part of our commitment to regularly checking in on our employees' wellbeing and experiences, **a link to a Pulse-Check survey** will be emailed to all BCEHS employees tomorrow, May 17th. The survey will be open for two weeks and we encourage you to take a few moments to give us your feedback and share ideas for improvement. These regular surveys help provide valuable insight into your experience as employees and guide our future improvement actions.

Much work has been done over the past two months — and there is still more work to do. We will get it done.

For any employee who feels their workplace is not safe, inclusive or respectful, we want to hear from you. Our dedicated phone line remains available at **1-877-522-1590** for anyone experiencing or witnessing sexual harassment, bullying, or discrimination. Please reach out to receive support and have actions taken.

Thank you to all of you who have come forward and shared your experiences, so that we can follow up and make the changes needed to ensure our workplaces are respectful professional spaces where we can support each other as colleagues and provide excellent care to the patients we serve.

Sincerely,

Leanne Heppell
Executive Vice President and Chief Ambulance Officer
BC Emergency Health Services
Provincial Health Services Authority