



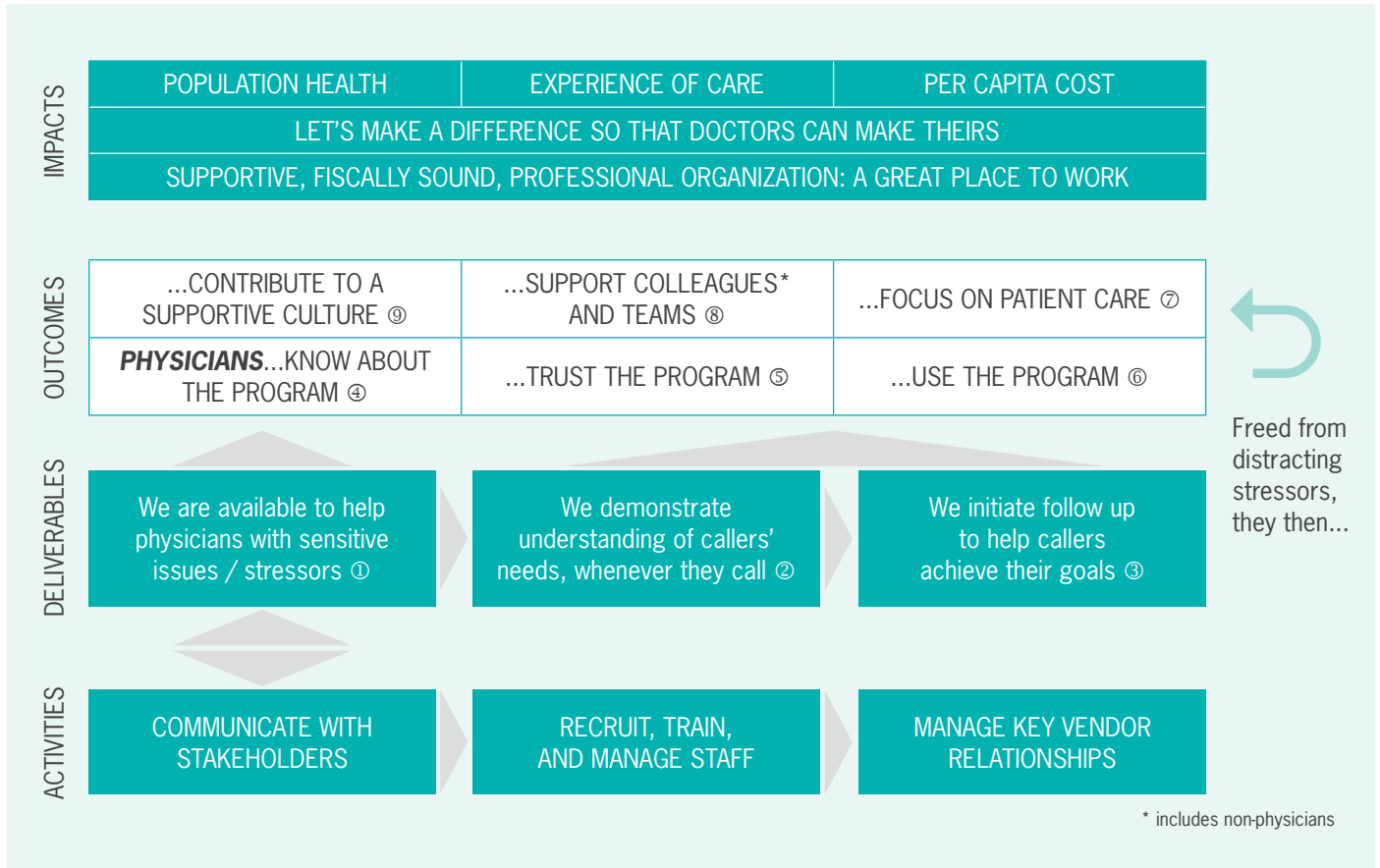
Physician  
Health Program  
British Columbia

# Annual Report 2021



# Logic Model

During 2019, a new logic model of the Program was created and reviewed by the Steering Committee. It was subsequently approved in final form in early 2020 and continues to apply.



# Governance Structure and Funding

The Physician Master Agreement (PMA) is negotiated periodically between the Government of BC and the Doctors of BC.

The Program's funding is currently described under Article 6.9 of the 2014 Benefits Subsidiary Agreement, which is part of the PMA. The Government and the Doctors of BC sign a separate Letter of Expectations, which serves as the terms of reference for the Physician Health Program Steering Committee. The Steering Committee governs the Program in a manner consistent with the oversight of other collaborations between the Government and the Doctors of BC. The Steering Committee is tasked with producing a multi-year strategic plan for the Program that aligns with the priorities of both the Doctors of BC and the Ministry of Health. It must also approve annually a work plan and budget for the upcoming year, and a report of the previous year's activities, along with policies that serve as decision-making guides for staff in the day-to-day operation of the Program.

As previously reported, a new PMA was reached in 2019 between the Doctors of BC and the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health assumes responsibility for the majority of PHP's funding needs, as it does for the Joint Clinical Committees such as the General Practice Services Committee and the Specialist Services Committee. This PMA extended until March 31, 2022.

In October 2020, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), Scotiabank and MD Financial Management Inc. (MD) announced a new CMA Physician Wellness+ Initiative directing \$15 million in funds to the health and wellness needs of physicians and medical trainees across the country. The Doctors of BC PHP was allocated \$1 million over four years (\$250 000 per year starting fall 2020) to identify current gaps in existing wellness services, and to enhance or develop new, innovative services and programs to address those gaps and ensure future needs are met.

## Committee Members

(as of December 31, 2021)

**Ashok Krishnamoorthy**  
Doctors of BC Co-Chair

**Ryan Murray**  
Ministry of Health Co-Chair

**Melanie Altas**  
Doctors of BC Representative

**Marie-Claude Grégoire**  
Doctors of BC Representative

**Selena Lawrie**  
Ministry of Health Representative

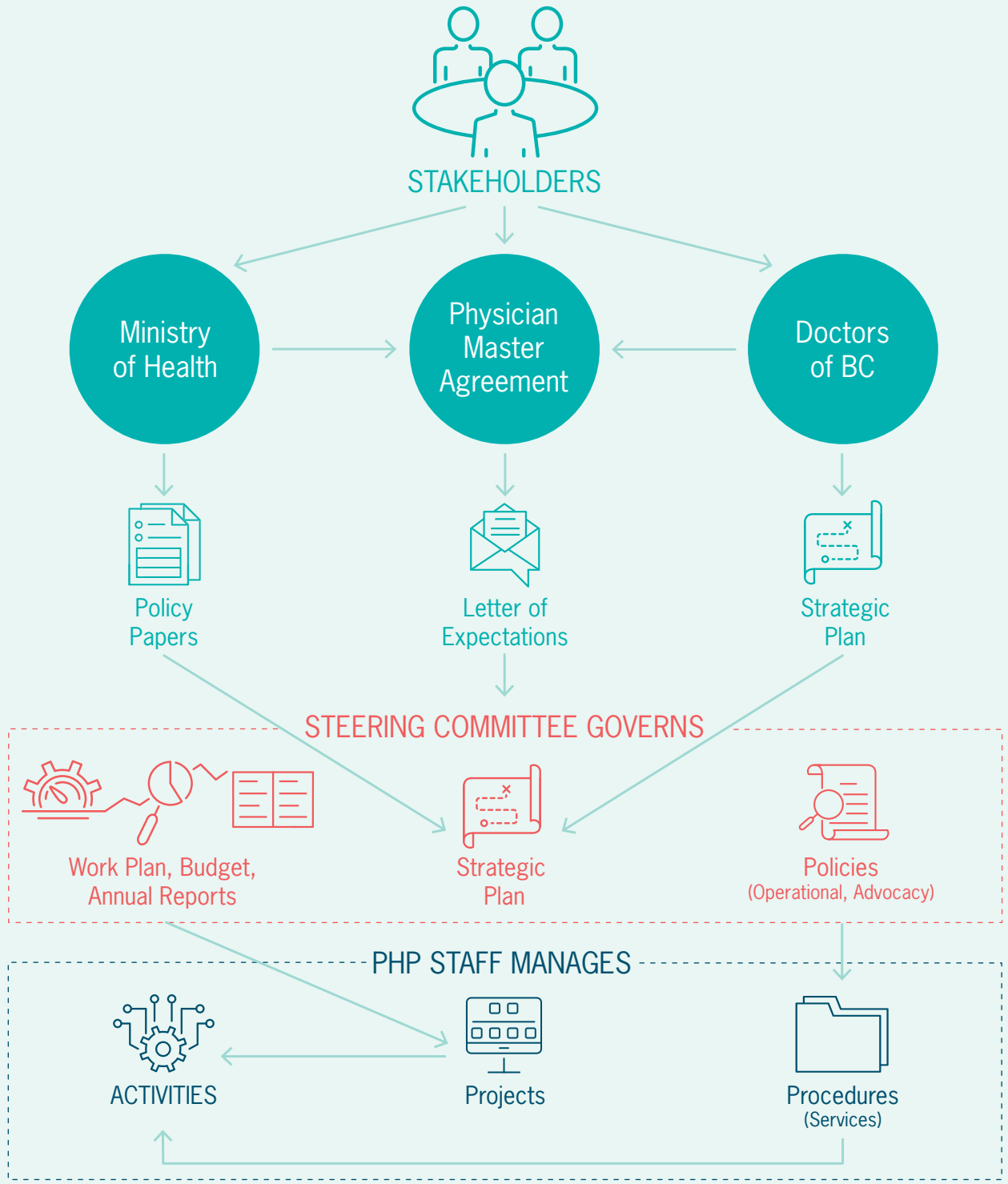
**Dorothy Williams**  
Ministry of Health Representative

## Program Staff

(As of December 31, 2021)

Executive Director:	<b>Tom Rapanakis</b>
Physician Lead:	<b>Anne Nguyen</b>
Manager of Clinical Services:	<b>Roxanne Joyce</b>
Manager of Administrative Support Services:	<b>Patzi Baranowska</b>
Physician Health and Wellness Liaison:	<b>Felicia Phan</b>
Program Physicians:	<b>Kathleen McGarvey, Doug McGhee, Peter Gibson, Maureen Mayhew, Joyce Coutts</b>
Consulting Psychiatrist:	<b>Elisabeth Baerg Hall</b>
Clinical Coordinators:	<b>Carol Faris, Gillian Inksetter, Jena Mekhlis, Kristina Auman, Julie Longo, Alice Watson</b>
Administrative Support Team:	<b>Mark Lee, Crystal Drown, Michaela Arimare</b>

# Governance Map



# Report on Activities

## Planned Work

The 2021 Work Plan for the Physician Health Program included:

- Continued provision of clinical services, meeting increasing demand
- Recruitment of a new Executive Director and Physician Lead
- Planning for and RFP for intake/counselling provider
- Planning the implementation of CMA Physician Wellness+ Initiatives
- Demonstrating collaboration with key Doctors of BC Departments, including Facility and Community Engagement; Advocacy, and Member Products and Services (Insurance)
- Reinstatement and expansion of family doctor matching program
- Maintain relationship and collaboration with CBT Skills Groups Society



# 50%

**Demand for PHP services has increased by 50% since 2020, which may in part be attributed to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and continued efforts to promote awareness of the PHP in the physician community.**

## Services Provided<sup>1</sup>

Demand for PHP services has increased by 50% since 2020, which may in part be attributed to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and continued efforts to promote awareness of the PHP in the physician community. Clinical services continue to consume the majority of the Program's resources. The following tables show the services provided, stratified by a number of dimensions.

PRINCIPAL SERVICE PROVIDED	CALENDAR YEAR						
	2021	2020	2019	2018 <sup>2</sup>	2017	2016	2015
<b>Number of new cases</b>	<b>2021</b>	2020	2019	2018 <sup>2</sup>	2017	2016	2015
Counselling	968	841	587	464	402	359	330
Family Doctor Connection	647	199	206	173	184	186	161
Occupational Health Consultation	54	47	44	50	63	79	83
Peer Support	65	65	52	49	35	33	37
Assistance Approaching a Colleague	65	44	35	28	25	27	28
Workplace Relationship Improvement	6	12	7	7	11	6	3
Assistance Returning to Work	14	14	8	4	24	12	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,819</b>	1,222	939	775	744	702	658

PRINCIPAL ISSUE AT INTAKE <sup>3</sup>	CALENDAR YEAR						
	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<b>Proportion of cases<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>2021</b>	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Individual Mental Health <sup>5</sup>	44%	52%	61%	57%	54%	55%	54%
Family & Non-Occupational Relationships	24%	23%	19%	25%	23%	28%	24%
Occupational Issues	22%	19%	15%	14%	18%	12%	15%
Physical Health Issues	3%	3%	2%	1%	5%	4%	3%
Other Issues	6%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%

CAREER STAGE OF ELIGIBLE PERSON	CALENDAR YEAR						
	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<b>Proportion of cases</b>	<b>2021</b>	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Practicing physician	73%	73%	68%	68%	62%	56%	59%
Resident/Fellow	8%	9%	17%	19%	19%	23%	22%
Medical student	12%	11%	12%	13%	17%	19%	17%
Retired	3%	2%	3%	1%	1%	3%	2%

RELATIONSHIP TO ELIGIBLE PERSON	CALENDAR YEAR						
	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<b>Proportion of cases</b>	<b>2021</b>	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Physician or Trainee	93%	89%	89%	90%	90%	90%	92%
Spouse	5%	9%	8%	7%	7%	7%	6%
Child	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Other relationship	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%

1. Includes services provided to all eligible groups: BC Physicians, BC Dentists, PEI Physicians.

2. The 2018 Annual Report incorrectly stated that services to PEI physicians were not included in the total, when in fact they were. However, the number of cases involved in the error is small in relation to the total.

3. Excludes cases where the principal service provided was connection to a family physician.

4. Proportions may not sum to 100% because of rounding for presentation.

5. Including substance use.

## Program Testimonials

Despite the increased demand for PHP services, selected testimonials below demonstrate the importance and quality of support sustained throughout the pandemic:

*“At the point I was first received PHP support I was struggling to just make it through the day. I didn’t feel like I knew myself anymore and was just trying to look one or two days ahead and make it through. When I called PHP, I was surprised with how fast, organized and thoughtful the process to connect me with the support I needed. Within a few days of my initial call I’d already felt I was on a path towards feeling well again. It’s almost a full 180 now, back to residency, enjoying life and looking ahead with confidence.”*

### — RESIDENT PHYSICIAN

*“I was feeling low in mood, not motivated in the morning, started to not enjoy going into work, and was feeling generally irritable. When I first called PHP, I appreciated the calm and caring nature of the person on the other end of the phone and that the counsellor I accessed was able to give me CBT. I now feel calmer, I look forward to each day and am able to enjoy things again, including work and my family! I would wholeheartedly recommend this as a first port of call. They are compassionate, non-judgemental and willing to provide whatever they can.”*

### — MID-CAREER PHYSICIAN

*“I am new to practice in Canada and I was concerned about a colleague and worried about anonymity and confidentiality. PHP’s staff was very understanding and knowledgeable. I was aware I did not know how to help a colleague in need and they talked me through the next steps and reassured me. They assisted in a plan that facilitated my colleague calling them on their own. They were empathetic and I really appreciated their support. I am now aware of the help available as well as the risk my speciality poses to those with mental health concerns.”*

### — EARLY CAREER PHYSICIAN

*“I didn’t expect there to be so much follow up. Like every month, I’ll get an email checking in about how things are going, whether I’m finding something helpful. That was really really nice and I could tell they really cared. I also didn’t realized that I would be connected with so many sources of support – I was connected with another physician for career and personal mentorship, another physician for academic mentorship for advice on preparing for exams, and a family doctor for medical care (I did not have one before).”*

### — MEDICAL STUDENT





## **A New Executive Director, Physician Lead and Further Expansion**

In May 2021, Tom Rapanakis was hired as the PHP's new Executive Director. Formerly the Head of Wellbeing Support at the British Medical Association, Tom has worked and specialized in physician health for over a decade. He was Chair of the Organizing Committee for the International Conference on Physician Health and led the running of dedicated psychotherapy, counselling and peer support services for physicians across the UK.

Later in the year, Dr. Anne Nguyen joined the team as Physician Lead, working with the Executive Director to bring further clinical expertise and physician leadership. As a family physician and addiction medicine specialist, Dr. Anne Nguyen spent the first ten years of her career providing low barrier primary and hospital based care in Northwestern Ontario and Victoria, BC. She also works as an addiction medicine consultant in Victoria hospitals. Anne is deeply grateful for the opportunity to work directly with physician colleagues and partner organizations to promote the health of BC's doctors.

The PHP also expanded its clinical capacity by adding extra staff to its Program Physician and Clinical Coordinator teams.



## **Family Doctor Connection Service Reinstatement**

During the onset of the pandemic in 2020, this service was temporarily halted due to the unprecedented circumstances and required resource allocation. In late January 2021, the PHP gladly reinstated its family doctor connection service in three phases. In phase one, the program's administrators connected with all physicians who had requested support in finding them a family physician during the stop period and ensured prioritization of those requests. In phase two, the matching service was opened to the entire physician population in BC via an online request form. In phase three, the service was reintegrated to be part of our outreach and informational materials. Since then, the service has quickly gained popularity among the physician community. The PHP is pleased to have connected 647 physicians across BC with a primary care provider in 2021.

## **Planning for CMA Wellness+ and JCC Collaborative Initiatives**

In 2021, the PHP developed a plan for how the CMA Wellness+ Initiative funding would be used to develop new and innovative physician wellness programs and initiatives to meet the needs of physicians in BC. To meet the high demand for the family doctor connection service, the PHP developed a plan to proactively recruit family physicians willing to treat physician patients that is intended to launch in Spring 2022. A Physician Wellness Network will be developed in Summer 2022 to bring together non-profit organizations that are leaders in physician wellness and providers of support or wellness services for physicians and medical learners. It is intended to act as a community for knowledge sharing, aligning priorities and services, and providing input on physician wellness innovations, policies and other initiatives.

A partnership was established with the Joint Collaborative Committees (JCC) to develop a provincial physician peer support initiative intended to train physicians in emotional non-clinical peer support and support physician organizations to develop local peer support programs. Additionally, PHP partnered with the Shared Care Committee on the CBT Skills Spread Initiative in an advisory capacity to support the implementation of CBT Skills training for physician wellness.

## **Increasing Awareness and Engaging With the Physician Community**

In 2021, the PHP delivered 49 community engagements which included presentations to Divisions of Family Practice and Medical Staff Associations, grand rounds presentations, hosting booths at resource fairs, delivering workshops and more. The presentation topics included providing an overview of PHP services, physician burnout, self-care and resiliency, moral distress, how to treat and support physician colleagues and substance use among physicians.

## **Offering Virtual Drop-In Peer Support Groups for Physicians**

PHP continues to provide a free, drop-in virtual peer support group for BC physicians via Zoom to connect and share hopes and struggles of being a physician. They are facilitated by Psychiatrist Dr. Jennifer Russel and PHP Manager of Clinical Services and Registered Clinical Counsellor, Roxanne Joyce. Participants may join the sessions anonymously, video is not required, and participants may just listen. The Peer Support Groups are provided twice a month. In 2021, there were a total of 123 participants\*, with approximately 6-10 participants per session.

Examples of themes discussed include occupational stress and burnout, system stressors, challenging patient encounters, coping strategies, personal and family mental health, and more.

This space enables physicians to connect with PHP without engaging in direct clinical case management.

\* Please note that this represents total participants over time, and not unique participants. Frequently, there would be participants who participate regularly each week.

## Financial Results

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>3,469,796</b>	2,735,177	2,291,355	1,843,478	1,668,537	1,436,618
<b>Expenses</b>						
Clinical Services	<b>2,333,986</b>	2,369,014	2,006,946	1,474,619	1,196,222	1,036,500
Administration	<b>632,846</b>	492,352	435,779	279,538	394,069	446,615
Outreach	<b>166,300</b>	46,337				
Governance	<b>9,764</b>					
Excess (deficiency)	<b>326,899</b>	(354,666)	(151,370)	89,321	78,246	(46,497)
Net assets, beginning of period	<b>36,557</b>	391,223	542,593	453,272	375,026	421,523
Net assets, end of period	<b>148,644</b>	36,557	391,223	542,593	453,272	375,026

*Copies of the auditors' report and full audited financial statements are available upon request.*

As per the Benefits Subsidiary Agreement (part of the Physician Master Agreement, 2019), the Program's funding increased by \$100,000 to 2.1 million in 2021 (for the period of April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021).

In 2021, the PHP recognized revenue of \$454,031 from the BC Dental Association as well as revenue of \$50,000 from the Medical Society of PEI due to on-going collaboration with these organizations. Further, the program recognized revenue of \$166,300 as funding received through the CMA Wellness+ Initiative to support outreach initiatives. The increase in demand for the program's services continued throughout 2021 and resulted in the program receiving a \$250,000 contribution from the Doctors of BC to support its delivery of services.

As of Dec 31, 2021 the program's net assets were recorded to be at \$148,644.

**Physician Health Program**

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