

In previous community updates we have mentioned funding that we have received to work in collaboration with the B.C. Association of Community Health Centres, the Campbell River Primary Care Network, and First Nation partners to develop a CHC model for the Discovery Islands.

The Community Health Centre (CHC) is one of the models for delivering primary care to British Columbians. CHCs are community-governed, interdisciplinary primary health care centres that provide integrated, people-centred medical, social, and other services. CHCs deliver services and programs that reflect the needs and priorities of the communities. CHCs in British Columbia (BC) are as diverse as the communities they serve. They are rural and urban; they serve specialized populations and anybody in the neighbourhood.

CHCs are developed by not-for-profit organizations committed to providing comprehensive, accessible, affordable, and culturally appropriate services through a collaborative team approach.

CHCs adhere to 5 key principles:

1. Provides interprofessional primary care
2. Integrates services/ programs in primary care, health promotion and community well-being
3. Is community governed and community centred
4. Actively addresses the social determinants of health
5. Demonstrates commitment to health equity and social justice

We will be working with the similarities of culture and needs in our island communities and how we can collaborate to better serve us all. We were able to get funding to start this project because the communities are already operating on some level, as community health centres, and already have some developed infrastructure. The goal will never be to move primary care away from our community but to share administrative and personnel resources between various locations in the Discovery Islands group.

We are just beginning this journey by hiring a Project Manager, Hayley Porteous, to consult with the communities involved and develop a service plan and budget over the next year to present to the Ministry of Health. We hope it will be approved for funding for the next steps.

Kirstie Stewart, Project Manager with the CR Primary Care Network, has kindly agreed to attend our AGM on May 5 to explain the project further and answer questions. Kirstie is a Quadra Islander from childhood and has a keen community understanding and interest in guiding us through this project.