



CANADIAN
PUBLIC HEALTH
ASSOCIATION

The Voice of Public Health

CANADIAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

2026-2030

**AN INDEPENDENT VOICE
A SHARED PURPOSE**

THE VOICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The Canadian Public Health Association is the independent national voice and trusted advocate for public health, speaking up for people and populations to all levels of government.

We champion health equity, social justice and evidence-informed decision-making. We leverage knowledge, identify and address emerging public health issues, and connect diverse communities of practice. We promote the public health perspective and evidence to government leaders and policy-makers. We are a catalyst for change that improves health and well-being for all.

We support the passion, knowledge and perspectives of our diverse membership through collaboration, wide-ranging discussions and information sharing.

We inspire organizations and governments to implement a range of public health policies and programs that improve health outcomes for populations in need.

OUR VISION

Healthy people and communities thriving in inclusive, equitable, sustainable environments.

OUR MISSION

To enhance the health and well-being of all people and communities in Canada, particularly those who face structural disadvantage, and to contribute to a healthier and more equitable world

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For more than a century, the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) has been the independent voice for public health in Canada—championing evidence, equity, and the common good.

Today's environment is more complex than ever. People in Canada are experiencing widening social inequities, climate-related health pressures, and increasing mis- and disinformation that erode trust in evidence-based public health. These realities make CPHA's role both essential and urgent.

To meet this moment, CPHA must be focused and strategic, directing our resources where they can make the greatest difference. This plan concentrates on three areas that best reflect CPHA's unique contribution: independent national advocacy, mobilizing credible evidence, and convening the public health community and others who share our commitment to improving health and well-being.

This plan is both a commitment and an invitation: a commitment to act with integrity, humility, and purpose; and an invitation to our members, partners, and allies to work with us toward a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable future for all people and communities in Canada.

VISION

Healthy people and communities thriving in inclusive, equitable, sustainable environments

MISSION

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CORE VALUES

As Canada's independent voice for public health, CPHA is grounded in a set of core values that guide our work, shape our relationships, and reflect our commitments to the people and communities we serve. These values express who we are, what we stand for, and how we act—within our organization and across the broader public health system:

- Respect and Cultural Humility
- Equity and Social Justice
- Collaboration and Solidarity
- Courage and Accountability
- Environmental Stewardship

They are not just words. They are the foundation for our decisions, our partnerships, and our advocacy. They reflect our belief in equity, justice, and the common good—and our responsibility to uphold these principles in pursuit of a healthier, more sustainable, and more compassionate world.

CORE VALUES

Respect and Cultural Humility

- We recognize that authentic public health practice is rooted in respect for all people, communities, and the natural world.
- We understand cultural humility as a lifelong process of critical self-reflection, openness, and learning – recognizing the limits of our own knowledge, privilege, and authority.
- We uphold dignity and mutual respect in all our relationships, act with humility, and build relationships that honour Indigenous rights, diverse worldviews, and shared accountability.
- We affirm the inherent rights, knowledge systems, and leadership of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples, and commit to advancing Truth and Reconciliation through meaningful and sustained action.

Equity and Social Justice

- We recognize that systemic racism, along with colonialism, poverty, ableism, and other forms of structural injustice, is a root cause of health inequities and must be actively confronted and dismantled.
- We understand equity as a condition in which everyone can achieve their full potential for health and well-being, free from discrimination, marginalization and disadvantage.
- We define social justice as the active pursuit of fairness, dignity, and human rights for all people.
- We strive to apply a health equity lens to all our work, and take action to dismantle racism, eliminate structural barriers, and advance justice for all.

Collaboration and Solidarity

- We believe that public health is rooted in relationships, and that collaboration strengthens our ability to address complex challenges.
- We engage people, communities, and organizations intentionally, inclusively, and respectfully to achieve shared goals.
- We value diverse knowledge systems, lived experiences, and cultural perspectives as essential to equity and impact.
- We build trust, share power, and act in solidarity across sectors, disciplines, and communities.

Courage and Accountability

- We lead with courage, confronting injustice, misinformation, and systems of harm.
- We act with integrity by aligning our decisions with our values, evidence, and ethics.
- We remain transparent and accountable to our members, partners, and the public.
- We welcome dialogue, invite critique, and use what we learn to strengthen our work.

Environmental Stewardship

- We recognize that human health is inseparable from the health of the planet.
- We affirm that Indigenous knowledge systems are foundational to human and ecosystem health.
- We view environmental stewardship as a shared responsibility to protect and sustain the ecosystems that support life.
- We embrace a planetary health approach that links environmental, social, and economic well-being.
- We embed environmental responsibility into our work to advance climate and health justice for current and future generations.

PRIORITIES

Advocate for Healthy Public Policy

Goal

Influence policy decisions that advance health equity, uphold human rights, and protect and promote health and well-being.

Strategic Actions

- Advocate for upstream, evidence-based policies that address interrelated social, ecological, structural, and commercial determinants of health.
- Promote anti-oppressive legislation and policies, including distinctions-based approaches that respect First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples' self-determination.
- Advance reforms that protect and strengthen public health systems and governance, and support workforce development and sustainability.
- Champion the responsible collection, governance, and use of disaggregated data and equity-focused metrics to inform public policy.
- Amplify the voices of communities that face structural disadvantage.
- Prioritize policy advocacy where CPHA's intervention is timely, relevant, and influential—for example, where public discourse is evolving, policy decisions are imminent, new realities or evidence has emerged, or CPHA's recommendations are likely to be considered by decision-makers.

Desired Outcome

CPHA's evidence-informed perspectives help shape national and provincial policy debates, with decision-makers, media, and partners consistently referencing and integrating CPHA analyses and recommendations.

Mobilize Evidence

Goal

Translate knowledge into action by integrating research, lived experience, and public health practice.

Strategic Actions

- Develop accessible tools, briefs, and commentary that synthesize evidence for public health audiences, policymakers, and the public.
- Strengthen CPHA's role as a trusted source of evidence-informed insight through timely, relevant, and equity-focused content.
- Support and promote the *Canadian Journal of Public Health* (CJPH) as a leading platform for advancing public health scholarship and practice.*
- Share evidence and knowledge from trusted partners.
- Elevate underrepresented voices, including Indigenous knowledge holders, and structurally disadvantaged communities through CPHA's platforms and publications.
- Respond to emerging public health threats by rapidly mobilizing credible, contextualized information.

Desired Outcome

CPHA is widely recognized as a trusted, accessible source of timely, equity-focused public health evidence used by practitioners, policymakers, and community partners.

* The CJPH is managed by an independent Editorial Board that establishes its own performance indicators.

PRIORITIES

Advance Planetary Health

Goal

Advocate for public policies that address the interdependence of human and ecological health.

Strategic Actions

- Position planetary health as a critical public health issue.
- Support Indigenous-led environmental stewardship and advance ecological justice through public health advocacy and partnership.
- Promote policies that reduce population-level exposures to environmental toxins, pollution, and climate-related hazards.
- Advocate for a just and sustained transition away from extractive industries, prioritizing the health and rights of affected workers and communities.
- Advance intergenerational health equity by supporting long-term ecological and climate resilience in public health policy.

Desired Outcome

A national shift toward climate- and environment-responsive public policy is evident, with CPHA recognized as one of the voices helping to centre long-term ecological and intergenerational health in these discussions.

Convene the Public Health Community

Goal

Create inclusive spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and shared action on public health priorities, and contribute public health perspectives to broader policy agendas.

Strategic Actions

- Deepen collaboration with other public health-focused organizations to strengthen collective advocacy, knowledge exchange, and community resilience across Canada.
- Host conferences and other forums that centre equity, Truth and Reconciliation, and intersectoral collaboration.
- Strengthen partnerships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis organizations, as well as with communities facing structural disadvantage.
- Facilitate conversations on complex, contested, or emerging public health issues—including those neglected and systemically excluded from the mainstream discourse.
- Expand CPHA's digital and community engagement strategies to build public support for evidence-based public health.
- Position CPHA as a national leader in convening discussion positioning public health concerns in dialogue with concerns and perspectives of wider policy spheres.

Desired Outcome

CPHA's convening activities are recognized as essential spaces for collaboration, relationship-building, and cross-sector dialogue on public health priorities.

PRIORITIES

Strengthen Public Health Systems and Leadership

Goal

Strengthen public health leadership at all levels to advance health equity, uphold public health ethics, and respond to emerging challenges.

Strategic Actions

- Foster inclusive leadership development and mentorship opportunities for students and early-career professionals.
- Amplify diverse voices in CPHA's advocacy, governance, and programming to ensure leadership reflects the communities that public health serves.
- Provide platforms for public health professionals to contribute to national dialogues, policy debates, and knowledge exchange.
- Explore the implications and opportunities presented by the updated Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada, including CPHA's

role supporting their implementation through education, convening, and advocacy.

- Advocate for a national competency-based accreditation or credentialing framework to strengthen consistency, accountability, and recognition across the public health workforce.
- Reimagine CPHA's membership and engagement models to better support leadership development and connection across disciplines and career stages.

Desired Outcome

Canada's public health workforce demonstrates stronger and more consistent leadership capacity across jurisdictions, with CPHA helping to advance common competencies, shared expectations, and more equitable pathways for leadership development.

CROSS-CUTTING ENABLERS

To maximize impact and ensure coherence, it is essential that CPHA embeds a set of foundational activities across all aspects of its work. These enablers are not optional add-ons—they are core to advancing each strategic priority effectively and sustainably.

Organizational sustainability

To uphold its independent voice, CPHA will enhance internal capacity through diversified funding, expanded and inclusive membership, and digital transformation. A robust and adaptive organization is essential to sustaining CPHA’s mission in a complex public health environment.

Desired Outcome

CPHA has a more stable and diversified revenue base, strengthened digital capacity, and a membership model that sustains its independent advocacy.

Truth & Reconciliation and distinctions-based partnerships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples

We recognize that true health equity requires honouring Indigenous rights, knowledge systems, and leadership. CPHA commits to embedding distinctions-based reconciliation—respecting nation-to-nation relationships—in governance, advocacy, and programming.

Desired Outcome

CPHA is regarded by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples and organizations as a trusted and respectful collaborator.

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism

CPHA commits to being an anti-racist organization, proactively identifying and dismantling systemic racism and bias in its own structures and within the broader public health ecosystem. This means understanding the history and legacy of colonization, slavery, and indentured servitude in Canada, disrupting racism, and embedding equity and inclusion in governance, staffing, partnerships, and communications; and centring the experiences of people who face structural disadvantage across all activities.

Desired Outcome

CPHA’s work is visibly guided by anti-racist and equity-centred practices, with intentional and consistent engagement with people who face structural disadvantage.

CROSS-CUTTING ENABLERS

Evidence-informed advocacy grounded in community realities and rigorous analysis

CPHA's core strength lies in advocating credibly, strategically, and independently for evidence-informed public health policies. This requires scientific rigour and deep engagement with community realities and lived experience, particularly those of structurally disadvantaged populations. CPHA focuses its policy efforts where its voice is timely and influential. We combine expert analysis with community-grounded knowledge to advance meaningful, practical recommendations that address structural inequities and improve population health.

Desired Outcome

CPHA's advocacy consistently integrates rigorous evidence with community-grounded knowledge, resulting in recommendations that are credible, practical, and reflective of lived experience.

ABOUT THE COVER IMAGE

The image on the cover reflects the spirit of this Strategic Plan. Each bird moves independently, yet in shared formation—distinct voices aligned toward a common direction. The horizon ahead suggests clarity, purpose, and forward momentum in a complex landscape.

Together, these elements symbolize CPHA's role as an independent national voice for public health, advancing collective action while remaining grounded in place, stewardship, and long-term responsibility.



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