

2025 Annual Report



Honouring the land, advancing reconciliation

**“We are as much alive as
we keep the Earth alive.”**

Chief Dan George, Tsleil-Waututh
leader, actor and poet

Indigenous Peoples have been stewards and caretakers of the lands, waters and ice, and leaders in ecosystem stewardship since time immemorial. Efforts toward truth and reconciliation are directly tied to the land. We acknowledge that First Nations have unique connections to the land, water, air and non-human beings, grounded in thousands of years of living in reciprocity and balance with the land.

Over the past year, the Green+Leaders program has continued to advance this commitment by seeking more opportunities for Indigenous voices, perspectives and teachings to shape our program. Through events, learning opportunities and partnerships, we have been honoured to learn from Indigenous knowledge stewards, staff and community members while recognizing our shared responsibility to carry these teachings forward through action.

Throughout this report, you will find examples of how Indigenous knowledge, leadership and ways of knowing have been woven into our programs, events and initiatives as we continue this important journey.

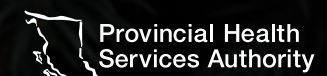


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“ How we treat the environment ends up affecting us as humans and our health.”

Dr. Shaqil Peermohamed,
Infectious Disease Specialist,
Vancouver Coastal Health



Welcome to this year's Green+Leaders Annual Report

Sometimes the most important step forward is taking a step back.

This past year invited us to do something a little different: to pause, look beyond our own program, and better understand the broader community advancing sustainability and planetary health across our organizations. By mapping the sustainability landscape through conversations and partnerships, we've discovered a breadth of individuals and teams embedding sustainability into everyday practice in unique and meaningful ways.

Throughout this report, you'll meet staff who are integrating sustainability and planetary health into their roles, improving patient care while reducing environmental impact and, in many cases, finding cost savings. You'll also discover colleagues who are bringing their personal passions into the workplace: creating healing gardens, supporting biodiversity, celebrating Indigenous knowledge, promoting active transportation and fostering staff well-being. While every story is different, they share a common thread: meaningful change begins with people who see an opportunity to make a difference and take it.

One of the greatest insights from this work has been recognizing that we are part of something much larger than any one program or team. Across our organizations, health-care staff and medical staff are finding creative ways to care for people and the planet, reducing unnecessary resource use and bringing fresh ideas inspired by their unique roles. By taking time to better understand this landscape, we've also uncovered opportunities to strengthen connections, build new partnerships and expand into areas where even greater impact is possible.

As you explore these pages, I hope you'll be inspired not only by what has already been accomplished, but by the possibilities ahead. Perhaps you'll discover a project that could be adapted to your own workplace, connect with others doing similar work, or be inspired to take the first step toward an idea of your own. Perhaps you'll find a new lens to bring back to your work: where could we increase efficiency and redirect time and savings back toward patient care? Every initiative featured here started with someone asking, "What if?"

Thank you for being part of this remarkable community. Your creativity, compassion and commitment continue to demonstrate that sustainability isn't an additional task. It's a way of thinking, collaborating and caring for one another. Together, we are building a healthier, more resilient health-care system. One idea, one partnership and one action at a time.



Nina Akhtar
Green+Leaders Community Lead,
EES team

Green+Leaders program overview

Green+Leaders is a diverse community of health-care and medical staff taking action for environmental sustainability and transforming health care for people, place and planet. They understand the connection between human and planetary health and are passionate about increasing efficiency, reducing their environmental footprint and preserving precious health-care resources.

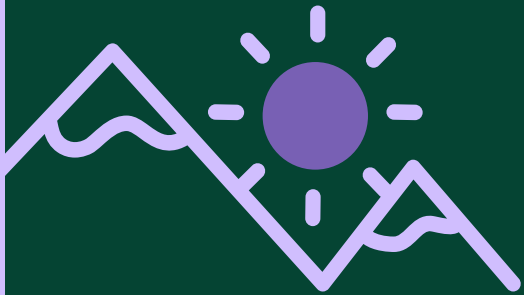
When they join the community, new Green+Leaders have the opportunity to meet others who share their passions and to get started building a team or launching a sustainability project. By connecting with other like-minded colleagues, they can build a community of practice across different work sites and health organizations.

This work is also part of a bigger picture. It's about equipping our health-care sector with the skills, capacity and resources needed to meet a changing climate. Green+Leaders has been building toward this for years, and we're continuing to grow our efforts to strengthen leadership, deepen engagement and prepare our teams for the potential challenges they'll face.

This community inspires and informs their colleagues, creating a ripple effect across B.C.'s health-care system and communities. Projects support a wide range of priorities, including mental health, culturally safe communities and equity, reflecting the multifaceted nature of health.

To support this incredible work, Green+Leaders receive quarterly e-newsletters that share Green+Leaders stories, practical resources, sustainability tips and more. This past year, Green+Leaders received sustainability grants, launched various initiatives and participated in a range of learning events.

The Energy and Environmental Sustainability (EES) team is always here to help with questions, address concerns, connect you with others and support your projects. We listen closely to the needs of our Green+Leaders and adapt our offerings to help them succeed.



Know someone who's ready to gear up for the sustainability ascent?

Invite them to join the community.

[+ CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

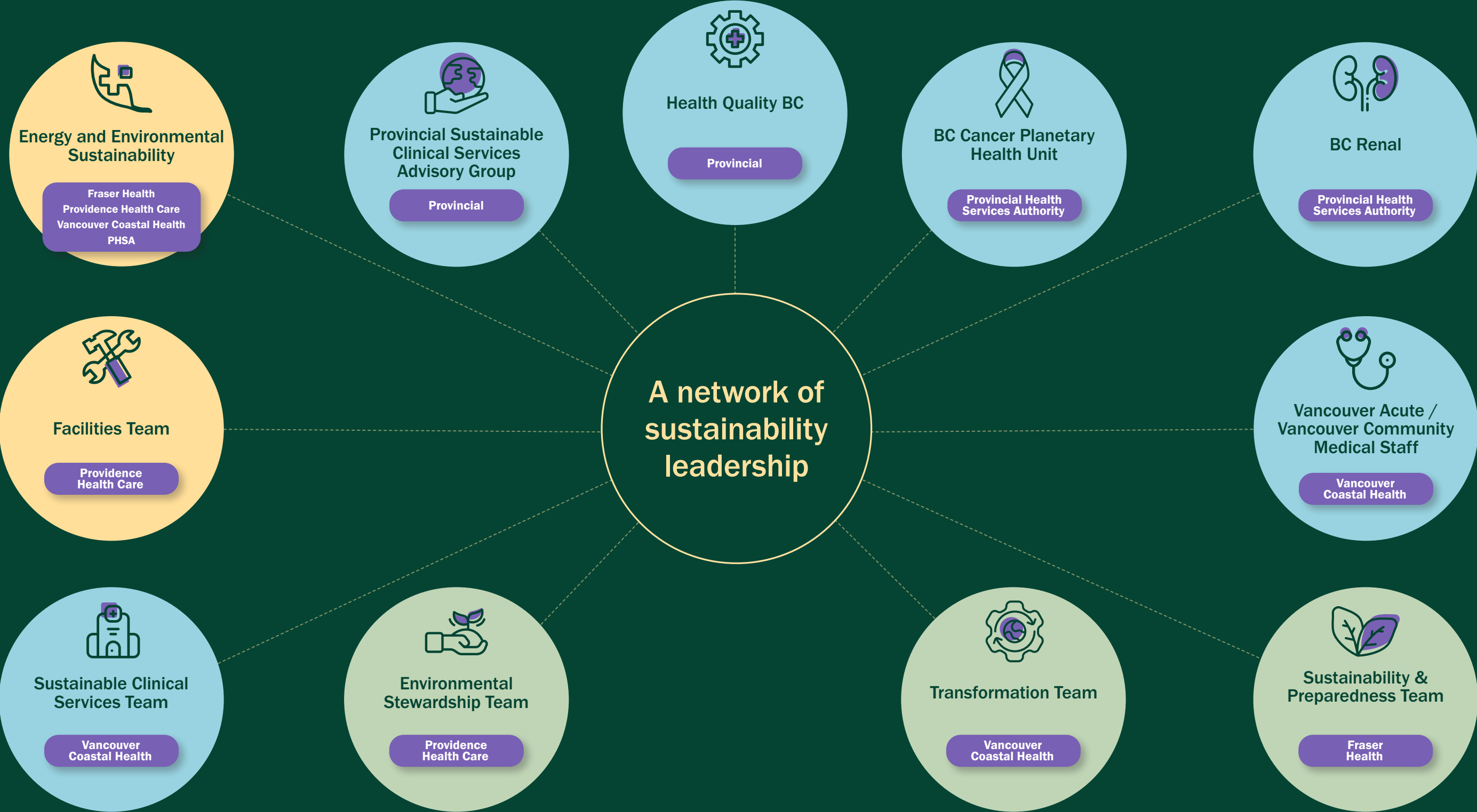
Discover more about the program.

[+ CLICK HERE TO SEE](#)

A growing sustainability landscape

Across our health organizations, a range of groups are bringing staff and medical staff together around sustainability and planetary health. Their work reflects the many ways sustainability and planetary health are becoming part of conversations and action across the health-care system.

i The groups represented are those the EES team has engaged with over the past year. The list is not exhaustive, and other groups may be active or emerging across our health organizations.



Leading green: Embedding sustainability into everyday work

A look at some of the ordinary people taking extraordinary initiative

Across our health organizations, Green+Leaders come from every corner of the health-care system: nurses and pharmacists, facilities staff and administrators, people whose job titles seemingly have nothing to do with sustainability at all. What they share is a willingness to act: they spotted an opportunity to reduce their environmental footprint or improve planetary health, and they took it. Over time, that initiative has grown into something embedded in their everyday work.

This year, for the first time, we're telling some of those stories through video. We wanted to put faces and voices to this work so that more people can see themselves in it. Because the truth behind every story in this series is the same: anyone, in any role, can make a difference. We just need to plant the seed.



WATCH OUR VIDEO
SERIES TO LEARN MORE



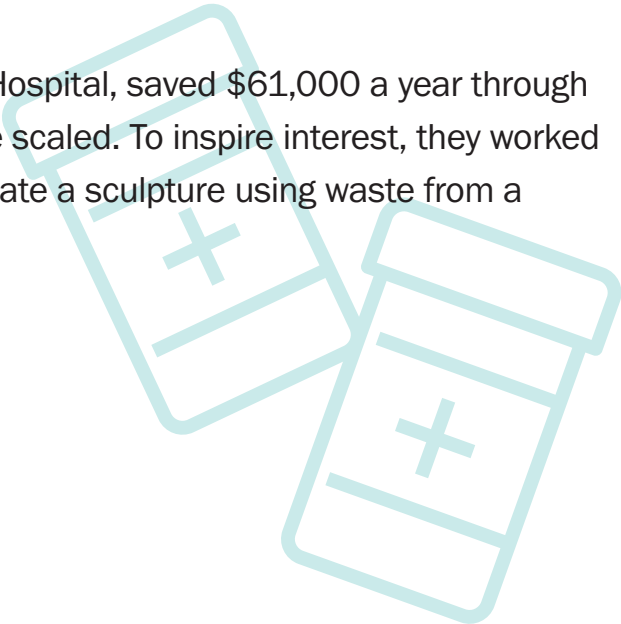
From IV to oral: Increasing patient comfort while reducing plastic

An infectious disease physician and pharmacist might not be the team you'd imagine leading a plastics reduction project, but Drs. Shaqil Peermohamed and Rosanne Thalakada are bucking the trend. The pair designed a way to reduce the need for IV antimicrobials by offering patients an oral option instead. Not only does it save patients from unnecessary discomfort and potential complications, it also reduces plastic waste and greenhouse gas emissions.

The initiative, piloted at Vancouver General Hospital, saved \$61,000 a year through reduced material use and is now ready to be scaled. To inspire interest, they worked with Tofino-based artist Pete Clarkson to create a sculpture using waste from a standard IV setup.



WATCH THE VIDEO





Cooking up change: Sustainability efforts abound in this hospital kitchen

For Noordin Karmali, sustainability in the kitchen is food for thought. As food operations manager for Fraser Health, he’s been able to find myriad ways to incorporate it into his work: upgrading appliances for energy efficiency, sourcing 28–30 per cent of the total food purchases locally.

More than anything, though, what matters is patient care. If food is delicious and patients enjoy it, they consume more, nourishing their bodies and reducing waste. The work is a team effort, from the hard-working kitchen staff to the dietitians who support patient nutrition.

[+ WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

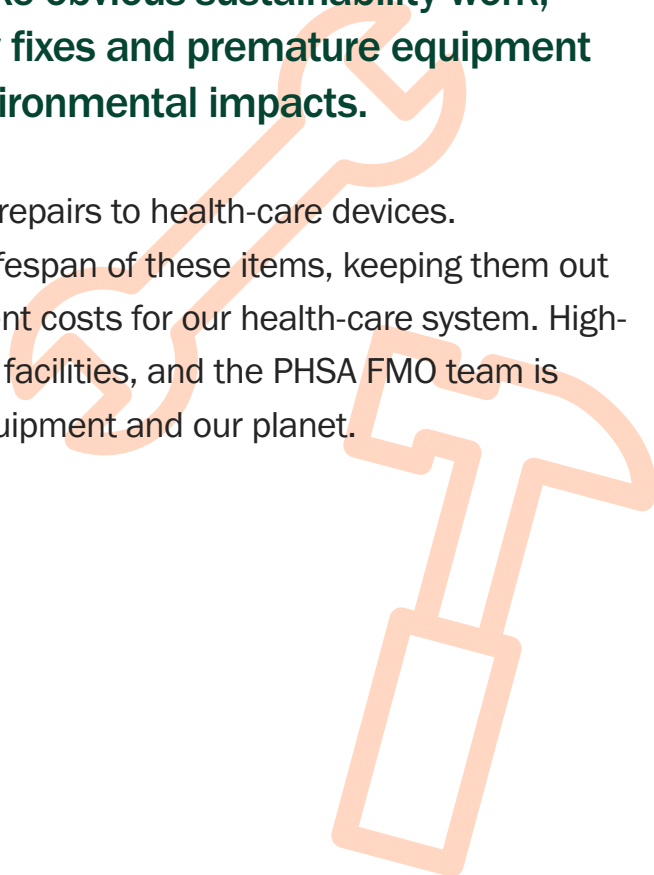


Day-to-day work: The quiet powerhouse of sustainability

Colin Chan, executive director of Facilities Maintenance and Operations (FMO) at Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), points out that facilities workers are health-care workers, too. For facilities workers, patients are the buildings and equipment. Providing solid maintenance day in and day out might not seem like obvious sustainability work, but it’s critical to avoiding emergency fixes and premature equipment replacement, both of which have environmental impacts.

One example is the FMO team’s mechanical repairs to health-care devices. Maintenance and minor repairs extend the lifespan of these items, keeping them out of landfills for longer and delaying replacement costs for our health-care system. High-quality patient care requires well-maintained facilities, and the PHSA FMO team is dedicated to the care of our facilities, our equipment and our planet.

[+ WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



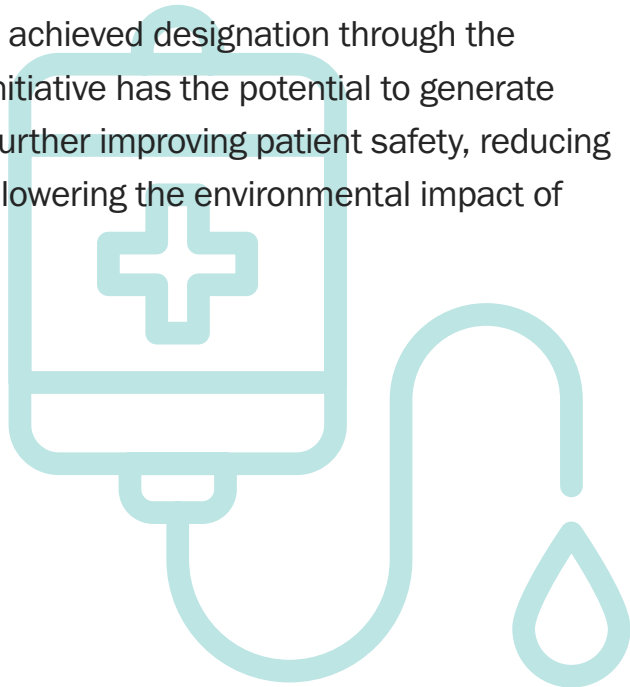


The pulse of the hospital: Transfusion medicine and using blood wisely

For Dr. Matthew Yan, sustainability and patient care go hand in hand because environmental sustainability affects patient health. As a transfusion medicine physician at Fraser Health, Dr. Yan works closely with the tight-knit, forward-thinking transfusion specialists across the country. That's how he came to be involved with Using Blood Wisely, a program that helps hospitals promote appropriate blood use to improve patient safety and reduce waste.

Several hospitals across Fraser Health have achieved designation through the program, with more working toward it. The initiative has the potential to generate more than \$2 million in cost savings, while further improving patient safety, reducing demands on clinical staff and patients, and lowering the environmental impact of blood transfusions.

[+ WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

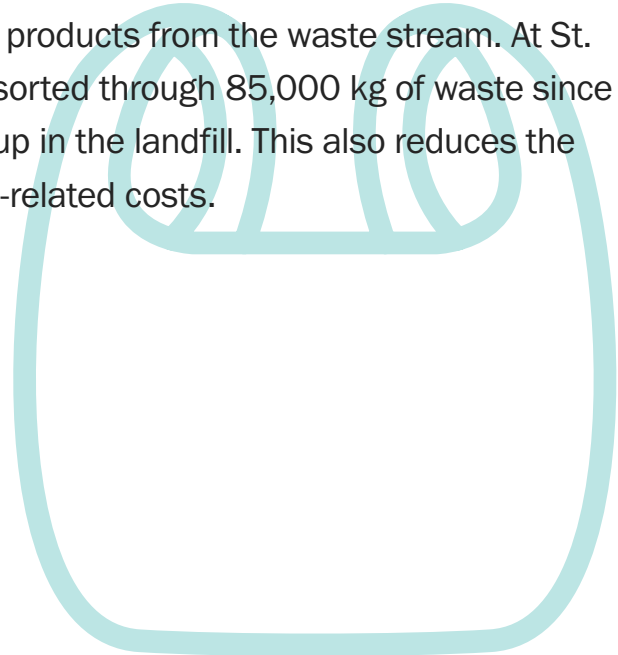


Waste diversion: Social and environmental impacts for the community

Kathy Kohli's job might be focused on reducing waste, but she knows that the key to making it happen starts by understanding the people she works with. As coordinator for waste management and contract performance at Providence Health Care, Kathy has initiated multiple waste-reduction measures. However, one such project not only has a positive environmental impact but also supports a local social enterprise.

The Binner's Project is an initiative that hires low-barrier workers in the community to sort through waste and divert recycling-eligible products from the waste stream. At St. Paul's Hospital, Binner's Project workers have sorted through 85,000 kg of waste since 2025, ensuring recyclable products don't end up in the landfill. This also reduces the number of garbage truck trips and other waste-related costs.

[+ WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



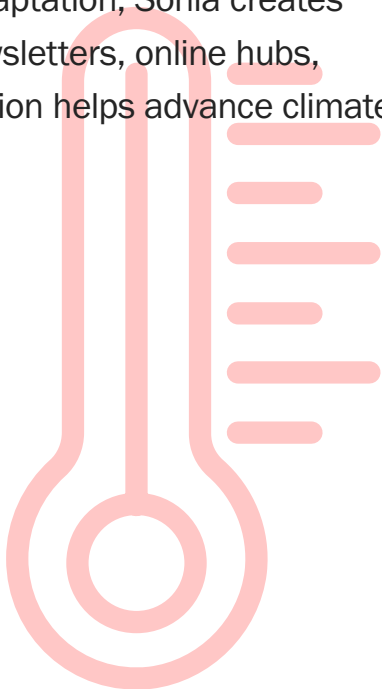


Shared learning for climate adaptation: Connecting climate professionals

In a changing climate, learning to adapt is a critical health-care priority. The key to managing adaptation measures starts with communication. Sonia Botchev works on the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation team with the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control and the Provincial Health Services Authority, helping to share important research, data and findings.

To support timely action on health-care-related climate adaptation, Sonia creates opportunities for experts to share information through newsletters, online hubs, events and forums. This knowledge sharing and collaboration helps advance climate adaptation science and practice.

[+ WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

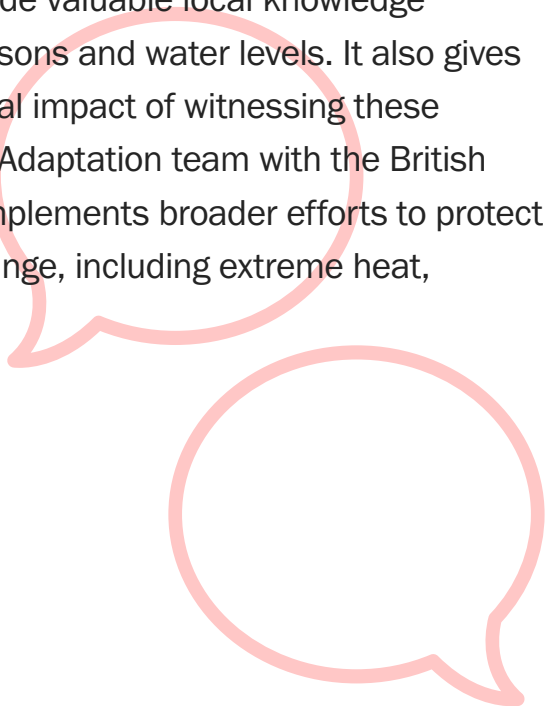


The softer side of a changing climate: Community storytelling and adaptation

While much of climate adaptation focuses on practical measures to reduce health-related risks, Adam Cassady is exploring another dimension: the emotional and mental health implications. Ecolens, an online interactive hub, allows community members to upload photos, comments and stories reflecting their lived experiences with climate change.

Collecting these stories and observations can provide valuable local knowledge about environmental changes, such as shifting seasons and water levels. It also gives participants an opportunity to process the emotional impact of witnessing these changes. As part of the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation team with the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, this work complements broader efforts to protect British Columbians from the impacts of climate change, including extreme heat, flooding and wildfires.

[+ WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



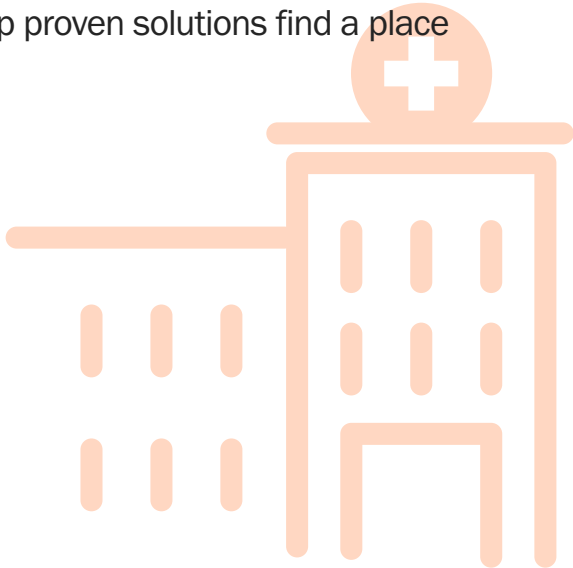


Not just green: Well-being and collaboration power these facilities

When we look at things holistically, opportunities emerge. That’s the perspective SJ Yoo, project manager of Capital Projects at Vancouver Coastal Health, brings to his work. He draws on a range of perspectives and expertise to find the best solutions while ensuring that people are part of the process.

This collaborative approach led to the introduction of heat pump technology at Vancouver General Hospital. The new system will reduce greenhouse gas emissions while improving facility reliability and reducing costs. For SJ, putting people at the centre of the conversation can help proven solutions find a place in the health-care system.

[+ WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



And in their own words...

“ When it comes to balancing sustainability and patient care, they should always go hand in hand because sustainability affects your patient's health.”

Dr. Matthew Yan, Transfusion Medicine Physician, Fraser Health

“ We understand that we work in a fast-paced environment, especially in acute sites, and patients always come first. But we always have to think about whether we're doing the right thing behind the scenes that's affecting our planet as a whole.”

Kathy Kohli, Waste Management and Contract Performance Coordinator, Providence Health Care

“ We all need to leave a mark on this Earth: to take care of the Earth and whatever the Earth offers us, and what we already have, maintain it, keep it and preserve it for the next generation to come.

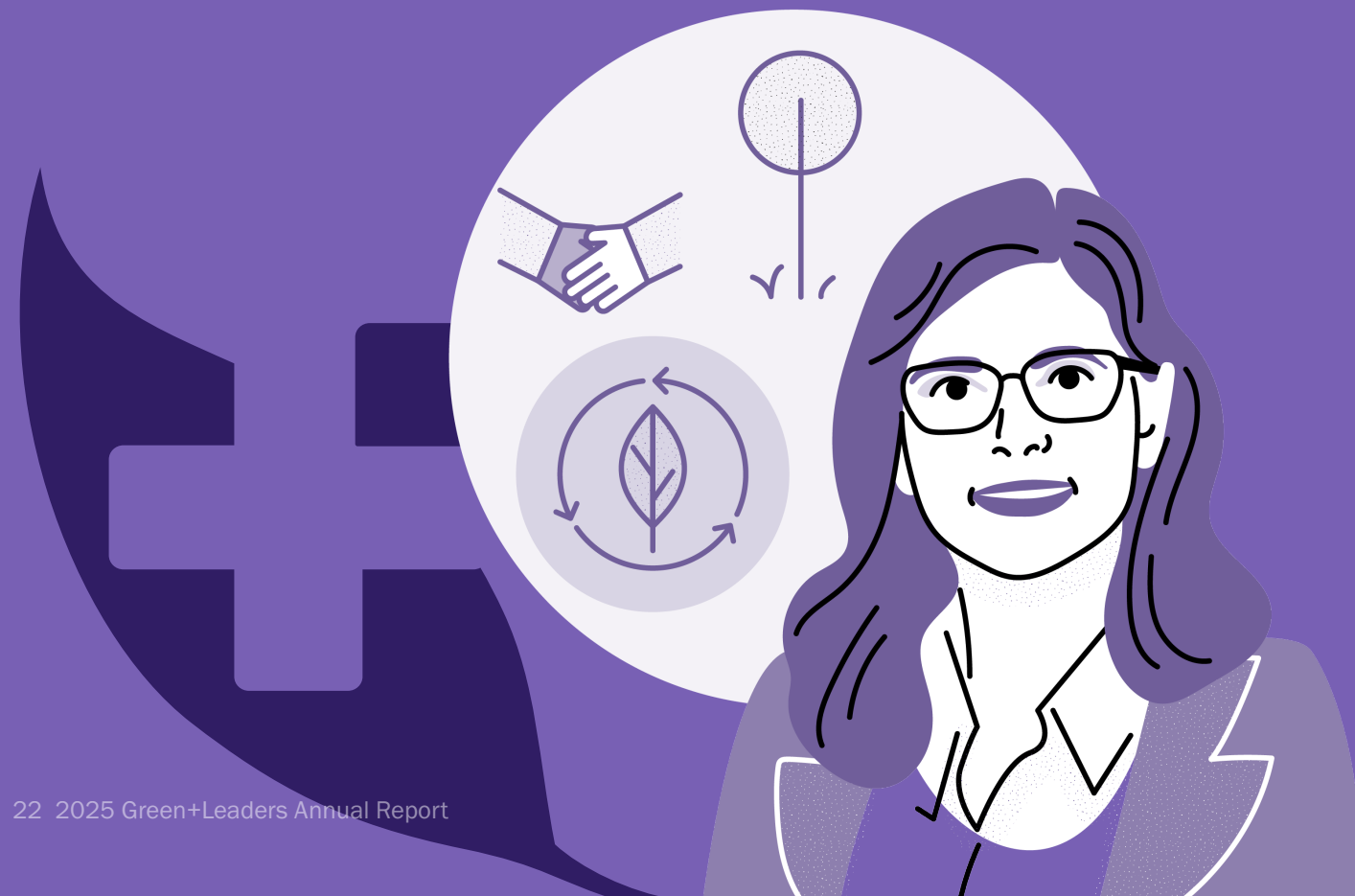
Noordin Karmali, Food Operations Manager, Fraser Health

“ I found that bringing people together really helps build a shared understanding of problems and helps lead us to better and balanced solutions.”

SJ Yoo, Project Manager, Capital Projects, Vancouver Coastal Health

From seed to bloom: Staff-led sustainability in action

Across the province, staff are contributing their own ideas and time to sustainability. Through seed funding, a multitude of projects take root, sprouting from lunchroom conversations, cultural teachings and personal passions into initiatives that now shape their workplaces. From pollinator gardens to cultural food teachings, these stories show what grows when curiosity, care and a small amount of support meet: healthier ecosystems, stronger communities and workplaces that reflect the people in them.

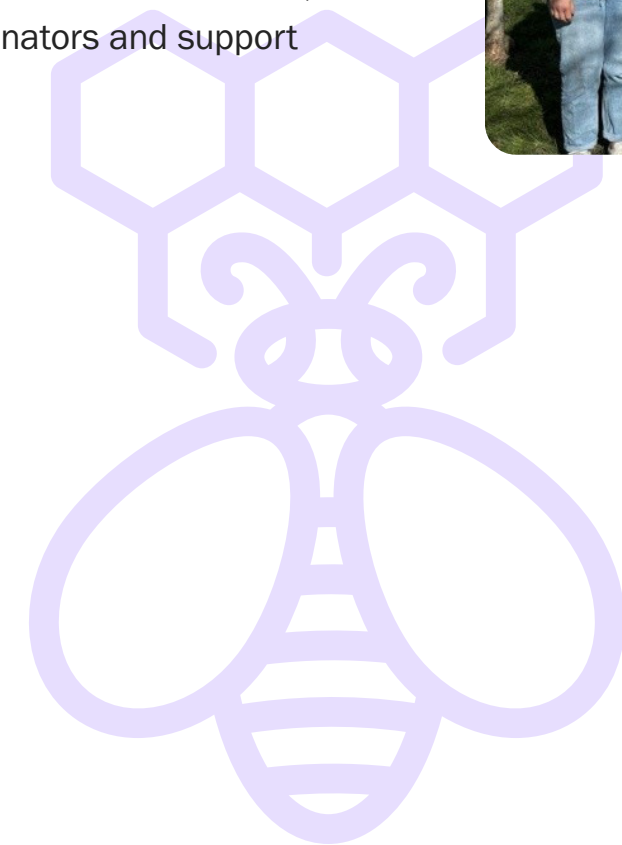


A project worth buzzing about

Carla Willems is bringing her love of pollinators into the workplace, inviting staff to engage in hands-on activities that support both wellness and local ecosystems.

As an administrative assistant, she transformed lunchtime pollinator workshops into a thriving beekeepers club. For Carla, supporting pollinators is also a way to support people by creating calm, mindful spaces that foster well-being and environmental stewardship. She hopes to establish on-site beehives and inspire a community of hive volunteers to connect, learn about native pollinators and support local biodiversity.

[+ LEARN MORE](#)





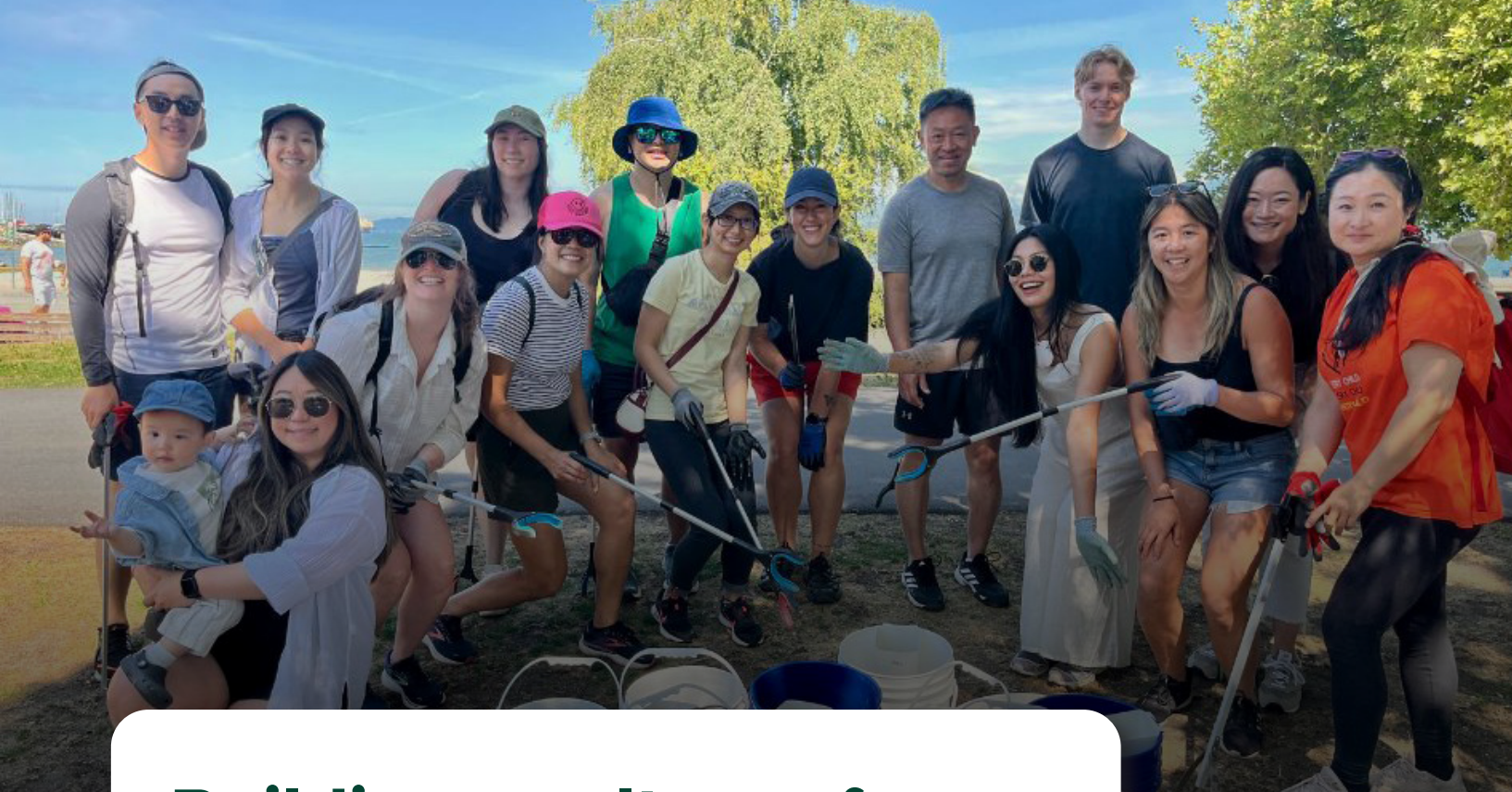
Nourishing community through food teachings

Emily Chan and Sonya Kung are passionate about bringing together cultural wellness and sustainability through staff engagement.

As members of the Provincial Health System team, they created a culturally centred staff luncheon inspired by the *Food is Medicine* recipe book. Guided by gifted Coast Salish teachings, the event invited staff to explore Indigenous harvesting, cooking and cultural practices while strengthening community and connection. Their initiative shows how Indigenous knowledge can enrich workplace culture, deepen cultural understanding and inspire environmental stewardship.



[+ LEARN MORE](#)

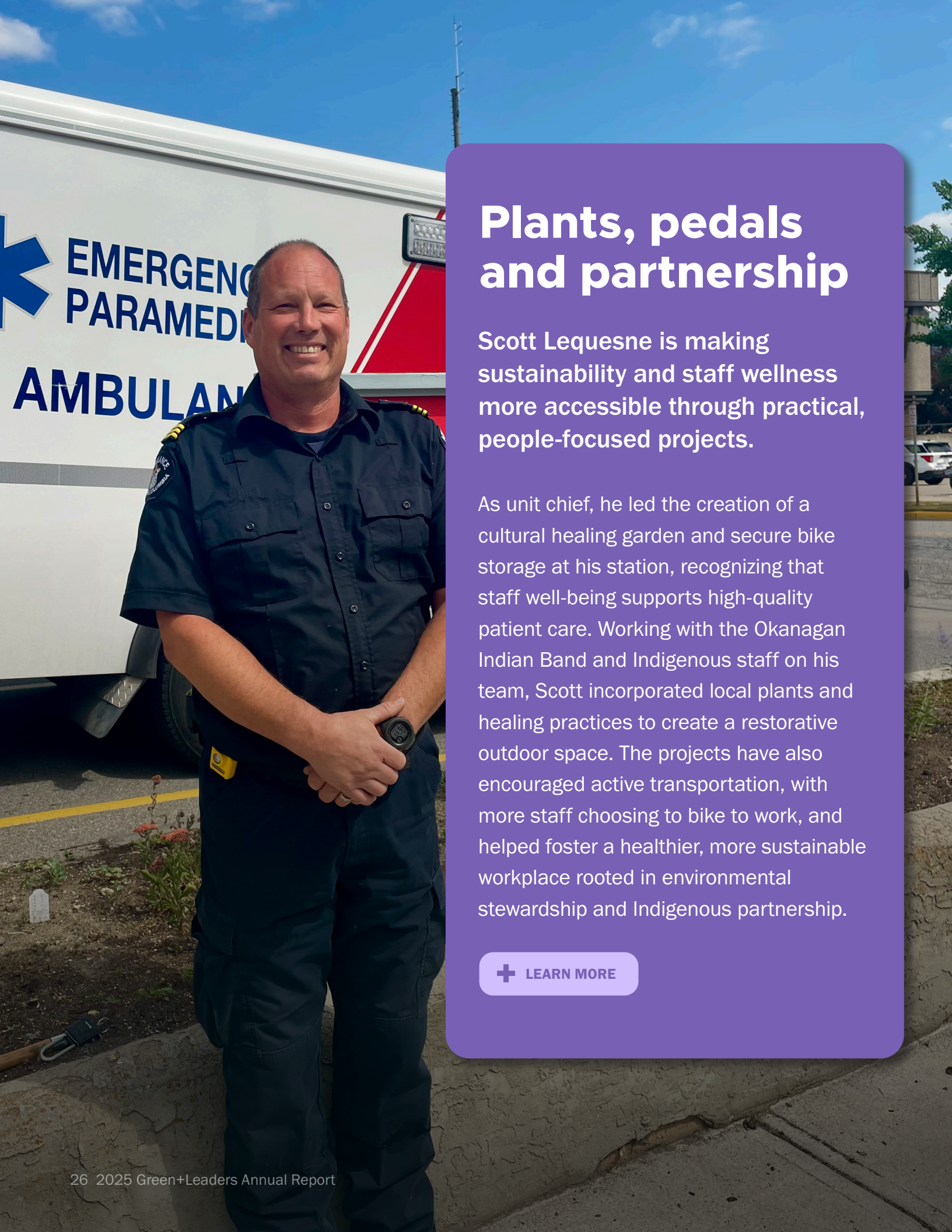


Building a culture of community, one cleanup at a time

Tanis Wong and Katy Chandler are passionate about making sustainability a visible and achievable part of everyday work.

As project managers, they’ve helped grow their Green Team from a small idea into a thriving cross-departmental network. Together, they established regular meetings, introduced practical sustainability initiatives and encouraged low-impact habits, including reducing single-use items at team events. Their efforts also led to a team beach cleanup, demonstrating how staff-led action can strengthen workplace culture and encourage greater environmental awareness.

[+ LEARN MORE](#)



Plants, pedals and partnership

Scott Lequesne is making sustainability and staff wellness more accessible through practical, people-focused projects.

As unit chief, he led the creation of a cultural healing garden and secure bike storage at his station, recognizing that staff well-being supports high-quality patient care. Working with the Okanagan Indian Band and Indigenous staff on his team, Scott incorporated local plants and healing practices to create a restorative outdoor space. The projects have also encouraged active transportation, with more staff choosing to bike to work, and helped foster a healthier, more sustainable workplace rooted in environmental stewardship and Indigenous partnership.

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Sustainability taking root

Margaret Symon is expanding the thriving community garden at her BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) station, going well beyond her regular duties as a paramedic to support sustainability and staff well-being.

After building the initial garden with her team, Margaret led an expansion that strengthened fencing, improved composting and created more space for staff to grow fresh produce for themselves and the local food bank. The garden has become a place for connection, teamwork and mindfulness, with staff and community members regularly commenting on its progress.

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Steeping sustainability

Linh Ho channelled her interest in Indigenous teachings into a team tea-blending workshop that fostered learning, connection and well-being.

As a business operations coordinator, she brought staff together with an Indigenous ethnobotanist to blend medicinal teas while exploring ecology, sustainable harvesting and Indigenous knowledge. The workshop offered a calming space for reflection, and participants shared plans to incorporate the teachings and tea blends into their daily routines to support balance and well-being. By centring Indigenous perspectives, the experience deepened cultural understanding and advanced meaningful reconciliation.

[+ LEARN MORE](#)



Planting meaning and mentorship

Shelley Kellner and Makayla Rittinger are passionate about weaving sustainability into nursing education through initiatives that recognize nursing preceptors.

As clinical nurse educators, they developed a team-building activity, with support from their nursing resource team program manager, that invited preceptors to plant propagated cuttings as a symbolic reflection of the mentorship journey. Guided by six gifted Coast Salish teachings, the sessions offered busy bedside staff a moment of pause, emotional nourishment and connection, demonstrating how sustainability can cultivate well-being, strengthen workplace relationships and honour those who help others grow.

[+ LEARN MORE](#)





Looking ahead

Stepping back this year allowed us to see the big picture in a meaningful way. Once you can see the whole landscape, it's easier to spot where things are thriving and where there's still room to grow.

Green+Leaders have inspired sustainability and planetary health initiatives across diverse clinical and non-clinical areas of health care. As we reflect on impact over the years, we recognize the importance of tailoring our approach to better support the unique needs of different staff groups. This includes expanding outreach to facilities and operational teams while strengthening partnerships with clinical participants who are ready to deepen their sustainability leadership. Just as there is no single way to contribute to sustainability, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to supporting Green+Leaders. By recognizing the diverse roles, opportunities and challenges across our workforce, we can provide more meaningful support where it is needed most.

“ Meaningful change often begins with simple ideas that gain momentum through collaboration and support.”

Scott Lequesne,
Station Unit Chief, BC Emergency Health Services

Advancing Indigenous reconciliation remains a key priority within the program. We continue to deepen our understanding, strengthen relationships and ensure our work is guided by Indigenous knowledge and perspectives. Looking ahead, one initiative we have planned for 2026 is a series of nature walks during Environment Week to strengthen our Green+Leaders' connection to nature, culture and community. The walks will be led by Indigenous Cultural Land Ambassadors who will share knowledge and perspectives grounded in a deep relationship with the land. This is another way to encourage our participants to think more deeply, consider different perspectives and build strong connections.

As we reflect on these insights, we will continue to support our Green+Leaders in their excellent work. The leaders who take the time to nurture projects from ideation to pilot, share their learnings, and scale successful initiatives, deserve

to be applauded. Their work helps build collective understanding and a shared sense of responsibility across our organizations. That will be no different in the year ahead.

As you finish these pages, we hope you'll carry this question with you: what if the next idea comes from your team? What if the next partnership starts with a conversation you haven't had yet? What if you brought a different lens to your work? The stories shared in this report show just how much is possible.

Thank you for helping this landscape grow. Let's keep discovering what's possible together.

Did we spark your interest?

Thank you for reading this year's report. We appreciate your interest in and commitment to environmental sustainability, planetary health and leadership in your workplace.



Become a Green+Leader

If you aren't already a Green+Leader, we encourage you to join. It's a great way to make a difference in your workplace and contribute to a healthier, more sustainable future.

[+ JOIN NOW](#)



Tell Us What You Think

We're always looking for ways to grow, improve and connect. If you have questions or comments, we'd value hearing from you.

[+ CONTACT US](#)



Learn More about GreenCare

GreenCare is B.C.'s health-care hub for environmentally sustainable and resilient care, featuring stories, progress, resources and events for staff and medical staff interested to reduce the environmental impact of health care.

[+ VISIT THE WEBSITE](#)

References

Below is the list of acronyms used throughout the report.

- **EES:** Energy and Environmental Sustainability
- **FH:** Fraser Health
- **PHC:** Providence Health Care
- **PHSA:** Provincial Health Services Authority
- **VCH:** Vancouver Coastal Health

On the cover (from left to right)

Top: De-Ann Chan, Clinical Coordinator, Vancouver Coastal Health; Maura Brown, Diagnostic Radiologist, BC Cancer

Middle: VJ Bernales, Project Coordinator, PHSA; Sonia Botchev, Coordinator, British Columbia Centre for Disease Control; Adam Cassady, Project Manager, British Columbia Centre for Disease Control

Bottom: Sarita Stad, Administrative Assistant, Fraser Health; Ian Murray, Regional Coordinator, Morgue Services, Fraser Health; Jessica Cowen, Public Health Nurse, Vancouver Coastal Health





A special thanks to [Be the Change Group](#)
for their work in creating this year's report.

