

DECEMBER
2016

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY
OF CANADA'S
REPORT ON

PUBLIC SERVICE RENEWAL

Excellence
THROUGH
Innovation



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Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

Canada

Public Health Agency of Canada's REPORT TO THE CLERK ON PUBLIC SERVICE RENEWAL

EXCELLENCE THROUGH INNOVATION



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I welcome this opportunity to highlight the progress of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) on public service renewal initiatives in 2016, and the positive impacts they are having on both employees and Canadians. The attached report and [video](#) highlight our efforts to create a more respectful workplace, bring new energy to recruitment and transform the way we work to better serve Canadians.

At PHAC, we know that to maintain a high standard of excellence in our work, we must focus on creating healthy, respectful and safe workplaces where employees can thrive. Respect underpins our Triple Point Plan, under which we are implementing the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. Through workshops, training and new resources, we are equipping managers and employees with the tools they need to improve our work environment.

Through an ambitious Post-Secondary Recruitment Strategy, we are bringing new talent to the Agency to complement our highly skilled workforce. These graduates tell us they are attracted to the public service because it is a place where they can apply their cutting-edge knowledge and skills to work that is having a direct impact on Canadians.

PHAC employees and managers have embraced the renewal challenge and are constantly finding new ways to innovate and make government service more meaningful for Canadians. We are making good progress, recognizing that sustained change takes time. So we continue to check back with employees, analyze our results, and modify our approach as we receive feedback from our employees. We are proud of our efforts to make a difference in the workplace.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Siddika Mithani".

Siddika Mithani, Ph.D.

President

Public Health Agency of Canada



RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES

RENEWAL AT PHAC is happening at every level of our organization and centres around creating healthy, safe and respectful workplaces.

We recently marked Year 2 of the implementation of our **Multi-Year Mental Health and Wellness in the Workplace Strategy**. The strategy focuses on training, awareness and implementation of the **National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace**.



Since 2014, PHAC and Health Canada (HC) have offered a steady stream of courses, workshops, webinars, discussions and tools to employees and managers, including a mandatory course called **Building Blocks for a Respectful Workplace** and an awareness campaign that tackled harassment and bullying in the workplace. And during our first annual **National Respect in the Workplace Week** in October, we talked about what respectful behaviours look like and what we need to do to strengthen civil, non-discriminatory and harassment-free behaviour in our organization.

Our **Triple Point Plan**, a key element of our Wellness Strategy, is **profiling** Branches, people and initiatives through monthly communications with employees, supporting the **practice** of positive mental health by connecting and

WORKPLACE WELLNESS HIGHLIGHTS for PHAC and HC

- > **100+** Mental Health First Aid sessions for managers since 2015
- > **48** mental health-related workshops (on stress management, resiliency, emotional intelligence)
- > **400** PHAC employees trained in Mental Health First Aid
- > **1000** employees received a Workplace Wellness Toolkit

engaging with employees, and **proactively** supporting learning through a new series of learning events.

Through our Wellness Library, we provide staff with 24/7 mobile access to **LifeSpeak**, a confidential, bilingual, e-learning platform for employees, their families and friends to help improve their physical and psychological health. To show that physical fitness is connected to mental health and overall well-being, we are piloting a number of **mobile workstations** featuring both walking and cycling desks that can be booked by employees in the NCR and some regional offices. Employees can also borrow wellness tools and portable equipment from our **mobile tool library**.



A HIGHLIGHT OF 2016

was the creation of the Ombudsman, Integrity and Resolution Office. It provides an independent, safe and confidential place where employees can raise sensitive workplace issues without fear of reprisal. The Office provides guidance on informal conflict management, and promotes understanding of values and ethics in the workplace.



Discussions related to wellness take different forms. For example, a workshop on **Civility and Respect in the Workplace** was held to raise awareness of incivility and its causes, and to discuss strategies to inspire respectful behaviours. A successful **Managers' Network event** also took place, exploring wellness from different perspectives: personal, team and organizational. Some 250 managers from the Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada gathered for this full-day session, which focused on finding better ways to support the health and well-being of our people and our workplaces.

The **Not Myself Today** campaign with its Myth Busters about mental illness resonated with staff across our organization. This campaign is led by Partners for Mental Health and was launched by The Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada during Mental Health Week in 2015. Across both organizations, some 10,000 mood buttons have since been distributed and continue to be worn by employees and managers to show their support for open and stigma-free dialogue. In November 2015, the Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada were honoured with the *Partners for Mental Health – Not Myself Today Campaign* award.



The people behind planning for the Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada Managers' Forum on Wellness, February 2016.



RECRUITMENT AND ONBOARDING

PHAC has a highly skilled workforce and a specialized brand as an employer. To maintain this position in an increasingly competitive job market, we need to tell our compelling story to young people entering the job market.

In 2016, we launched a **Post-Secondary Recruitment Campaign** focused on outreach and targeted recruitment, and on building relationships with universities and colleges. We are placing special emphasis on recruiting Indigenous students and graduates, and students with disabilities. After 15 campus visits and 31 career fairs, we brought in 28 students! This year we also held the first annual CO-OP fair at PHAC.

PHAC implemented a fresh approach to welcoming new employees this past year. Orientation sessions, surveys and other activities such as the **Onboarding Game Show** are among the many ways we acclimatize new employees to our workplace. In 2016, we surveyed new recruits, who shared a number of ideas to enhance the onboarding experience, such as networking opportunities with senior executives and Branch onboarding ambassadors. We are working to incorporate many of these ideas into our program.

We have talented employees throughout the Agency whose growth and development we aim to nurture. This past year, we took a more **inclusive approach to talent management**, providing managers and employees with tools to have more productive talent conversations and to develop more effective talent management plans. Our efforts are helping us to make better staffing decisions, retain our employees longer and provide new learning and career opportunities for staff within our organization, such as micro-missions and job rotations.



The Aboriginal Employees Network developed an Aboriginal Peoples Strategy, which focuses on recruiting, developing and retaining Aboriginal employees. The Network grew to 13 members this year, or 20% of PHAC's Aboriginal employees.



RENEWING THE PUBLIC SERVICE *TO BETTER SERVE CANADIANS*

PUTTING EMPLOYEES FIRST

In 2014, through the Public Service Employee Survey (PSES), employees told us where we needed to focus our renewal efforts. We listened and are addressing their concerns through our **Putting Employees First in a High Performing Organization** plan.

This plan lays out a clear strategy with concrete deliverables aligned with respect in the workplace, values and ethics, learning and

career development for our employees, streamlining processes, more meaningful approaches to employee recognition, and enhancing leadership skills.

We have made considerable progress in meeting the commitments we set out for ourselves in this plan.

To better support our **employees' career development and learning**, we met and surpassed the targets we set for ourselves through our joint PHAC/HC **Career ConneXions** initiative. What started as a Blueprint 2020 Dragons' Den pitch on how we could give

STREAMLINING APPROVALS AND BUSINESS PROCESSES continues to be an area of focus and while we recognize there are no easy fixes, we are making headway in some areas. Our **PHAC Blueprint 2020 Approvals Team** worked with employees representing the Persons With Disabilities Network, Human Resources, and Information Management Services, to streamline the process enabling employees with disabilities to gain access to adaptive technologies. After a series of consultations, the group recommended ways to reduce delays often faced by employees in this area. These recommendations have been endorsed by PHAC's Executive Committee.



The team behind improving access to adaptive technologies for employees with disabilities.





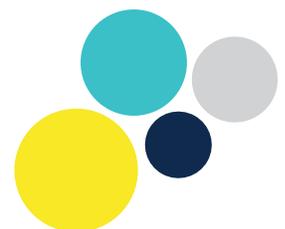
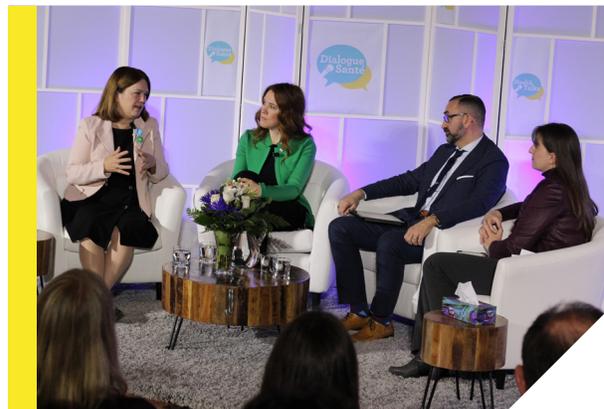
The **Take Me With You** campaign encourages employees to ask their managers and peers to attend meetings related to their interests, their career development goals, and the files they are working on. First launched at Natural Resources Canada, the campaign was brought to the Public Health Agency of Canada during National Public Service Week 2016. The campaign has been adopted by 15 departments and continues to spread across the public service.

employees more learning and development opportunities has become an institutionalized, permanent part of our organization. The Career ConneXions Centre is designed to give employees more access to learning and job opportunities such as rotations, shadowing and micro-mission assignments, and managers more access to employees looking for them. We set a target of 120 participants in the first year. We reached 485! A successful partnership with Treasury Board Secretariat resulted in the launch of the Career ConneXions Platform on GCconnex to connect managers and employees across government.

Through learning sessions, tip sheets and other tools for senior leaders, managers and employees, we are enhancing our collective knowledge of the public service **values and ethics** code and how we conduct ourselves in our day-to-day interactions and business practices.

Managers are more frequently acknowledging their **employees' achievements** through instant awards, and employees are finding new ways to recognize each other through peer-to-peer pats on the back and High-5 boards. We plan to explore new approaches to recognition in the coming year by tapping into the ideas of our employees.

Health Talks is a new initiative designed to foster more information-sharing and dialogue between managers and employees. It starts with a live talk-show style broadcast where senior leaders and special guests discuss specific topics and answer questions from employees and is designed to lead to a series of cascading discussions across the Agency. In November, hundreds of employees from PHAC and Health Canada tuned in to watch Minister Philpott and six-time Olympic medalist Clara Hughes – a strong advocate for mental health – talk about the importance of mental wellness.



LEADERSHIP FOR ALL

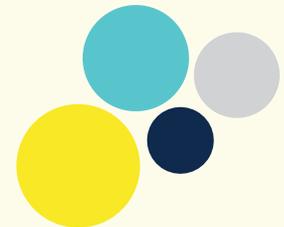
PHAC is encouraging leadership at all levels across the organization. Through workshops, panel discussions, and new approaches to mentoring, employees are demonstrating new ways of showing leadership every day. The Blueprint 2020 **Leadership for All** initiative continues to thrive and attract attention from other departments and agencies across government. This initiative provides employees and managers with a variety of tools and learning opportunities to enhance their leadership skills.

2016 HIGHLIGHTS

- > A **One-Week Leadership Challenge** was held and close to 3000 cards were issued, challenging PHAC/HC employees to practise 5 leadership skills within a week.
- > A **Leadership Learning Roadmap for Non-Executives** now provides employees with a list of formal and informal learning opportunities.
- > A **Redefining Leadership** event featured leaders at all levels discussing their own perspectives and best practices – 300 employees participated in person and via WebEx.
- > The Leadership for All group on **GCconnex** has garnered more than 1,300 members.



Employees came out to share insights and advice at a workshop on networking, one of a series of sessions hosted at PHAC to support career development.



INNOVATING TO BETTER SERVE CANADIANS

We continue to seek innovative ways to protect and promote the health of Canadians. We are increasingly working with new technologies. And through new multi-sectoral partnerships, we are reaching more Canadians with timely and relevant information to help them make healthy choices.

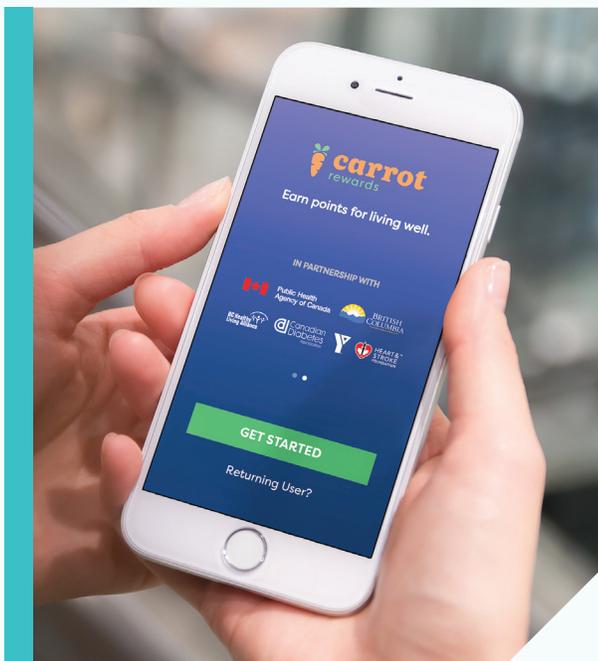
This past year we partnered with a number of private sector and non-profit organizations to develop various online and smartphone applications. A free mobile **concussion app** was developed with expertise from Parachute and the Canadian Concussion Collaborative to provide information and resources on how to prevent, recognize and manage concussions.

We also funded an update to the **ImmunizeCA** app to help Canadians keep track of immunizations. Phase 2 will launch a digital platform to allow secure access through a personal computer as well as a mobile phone, integration with provincial immunization records and greater customization.



The **Carrot App**, another innovative use of mobile application technology, was launched in British Columbia this past year. This mobile app rewards users' healthy behaviours with popular loyalty points. People who sign up earn brand-name loyalty points for completing activities representing healthy lifestyle choices such as going to a gym or buying fresh produce.

We are also working with partners to reach Canadians in their communities. The APPLE schools project, designed to improve physical activity, nutrition and mental health for children and youth in remote communities, has been expanded to target children from Indigenous and immigrant populations in rural Alberta, Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. Since the program's inception in Alberta in 2008, **healthy eating and lifestyle habits** have been taught to more than 16,500 children. These children are eating more fruits and vegetables, are 35% more active and 40% less likely to be obese than other students in the province.



Our scientific leadership continues to be recognized on the world stage and 2016 was no exception. Our National Microbiology Laboratory has been recognized for its expertise in responding to emerging public health threats. This past year, staff at the laboratory took quick action to develop diagnostic methods and risk models to assess the potential for Zika transmission within Canada.

PHAC was part of the enormous Canadian effort to welcome 25,000 Syrian refugees this year. A series of five webinars featuring international public health experts educated more than 1800 health professionals from across Canada on the unique health needs of this population, and on culturally appropriate approaches to better support the integration of the refugees into the Canadian health system. Participants ranged from public health practitioners, health care providers, non-governmental organizations, policy makers from provincial, territorial and municipal governments, and academia.

SYMPTOMS OF ZIKA

- low-grade fever
- rash
- red eyes
- muscle or joint pain
- lack of energy
- headaches

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LIVE IT! OWN IT! *SHARE IT!*

We are proud of our progress this past year tackling workplace challenges, in particular those related to mental health and well-being.

Measuring the impact of these activities next year through PSES 2017 and other employee feedback tools will reveal just how well we are doing.

Our progress toward public service renewal is steady. We are determined to continue challenging ourselves to find new ways to renew our organization, and to play a key role in the ongoing transformation of the Public Service of Canada.

For more information on initiatives in this report or others pertaining to public service renewal contact The Blueprint Group at: hc-phac.bp.sc-aspc@canada.ca

