



Policy Watch

The Oct. 24 election provides an opportunity to continue the momentum across all parties, toward a BC social policy framework that articulates values that transcend election cycles. Social care urgently needs that consistency.

There's been some good work done around the new Social Services Sector Roundtable in the past year. We talked about common problems and concerns, and how we might go about improving them in ways that work for everybody. That's a pretty good start to a partnership.

We're counting on that work to continue after the election. But as always, the lack of a foundation for social care in BC is a critical concern.

Like our own sector, health and education are also human-services sectors. But in health and education, many tenets, policies and processes are "fixed." They're values-based and considered fundamental. For social services, it's muddier.

Breast cancer is treated the same way regardless of who is governing BC. Kids learn from the same curriculum. Public infrastructure gets built. Social care needs that same non-partisan structure underneath it.

Please talk to your candidates about what your organization does, and why social health matters. And please talk about the creation of a social policy framework for BC that will provide a solid base to build on.

- Jody Paterson, Executive Director

What you need to know...

A new report detailing British Columbians' priorities for recovery from the pandemic highlights just how multi-faceted a response people want.

"What We Heard" confirms that health, the economy and the cost of living are on everyone's minds. But the sheer diversity of worries is evident in survey results.

For instance, the top three priorities for additional spending among those who did an online survey were: Addiction and mental health; affordable housing; and supporting local farms to ensure the food supply. The top three priorities for those responding via a "telephone town hall" were: Getting people back to work; slowing the spread of COVID; and making life more affordable. No priority attracted more than 21 per cent support.

So much of the report is about social care and the work our sector does. But it's clear that British Columbians still don't understand that. Only six per cent identified well-funded social programs as a priority, even while confirming support for affordable housing, better care for seniors, access to parks and outdoor space, and food security.

They love us, but they still don't know who we are!

October is the last month for submitting applications for [pandemic pay](#), so be sure you get those forms in by Oct. 31.

Eligible employees must have:

- Worked straight-time hours at any point during the 16-week period starting on March 15, 2020 and ending July 4, 2020
- Worked in an eligible sector, workplace and role that traditionally deliver in-person, front-line care in health, social services and corrections where social distancing was challenging, which may include sites that had to transition from an on-site workplace to a remote format.

One week left to apply for [grants to expand bed-based recovery and treatment services](#).

These are three-year provincial grants administered by the Canadian Mental Health Association, with funding based on bed numbers. Deadline is Oct. 7.

Let's connect! Look for Board Voice on these social media platforms:



Queries, questions, concerns, ideas:

Jody Paterson, ED
jpaterson@boardvoice.ca