

Local Government Healthcare Support Strategy Concept

Introduction

This document provides an overview of the elements a local government can consider including in a Healthcare Support Strategy (HSS).

A HSS is a framework for action that supports the selection of a comprehensive range of initiatives that a local government can undertake to support and attract healthcare and emergency workers for the community.

Scope of considerations

The scope of elements for consideration include most anything in the Health Care System Support Playbook. The following are considerations for developing an overall strategy for action:

- **EXPLORE AND DETERMINE THE SCOPE OF ISSUES AND EFFORT AND OUTCOMES DESIRED.**
 - The first step is to articulate the key issues you want to address and what outcomes you want to achieve. There is a significant range of activities you can pursue, and its important to have clarity on priorities so you can match your ambition with your resources – targeted at your highest priorities.
 - Review the Playbook’s range of possible initiatives and determine which ones will address your highest priority issues effectively.

- **ESTABLISH THE CORE TEAM, WORKPLAN, PROTOCOLS AND RESOURCES.**
 - Nothing happens without someone taking the lead and gathering others to assist – formally or informally. Many of these initiatives can start informally, but for them to be sustained, a formal structure and resources is typically required.
 - Review your priority action items or outcomes and consider the individuals, expertise, stakeholder representatives, and support staff that will be required
 - See the Healthcare Committee Terms of Reference in the Toolkit for an outline of considerations.

- **A QUICK START - PLANNING SHORT, MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM SUCCESSES.**
 - You will want some “quick wins” to build profile and momentum for this initiative. You will also want longer term projects to achieve sustained progress and success.
 - Consider your priorities and the initiatives that will help you achieve those goals, and determine which ones are short, medium and long term.

- Develop a workplan that breaks down the path for each initiative into a series of smaller steps with milestones that can demonstrate progress and success.
- Considerations for quick wins and milestones may include:
 - **Make a Proclamation** of your intent to engage and support healthcare workers
 - See the draft Proclamation in the Toolkit.
 - **Adopt a more formal policy to support healthcare and healthcare workers** as a standalone policy or as an addition to your Official Community Plan.
 - See the draft OCP policy package in the Toolkit.
 - **Set up your Healthcare Committee** so you have a team of well connected and capable people formally committed to helping move the initiative forward.
 - **Commit to one or a few specific initiatives** that you know you can achieve in the near term – possibly based on the issues or opportunities that were highlighted as of key importance early in discussions on this topic.
 - There are many strategies in the Playbook to consider.
 - **Host a forum** where people can speak about their issues and concerns regarding healthcare and the health of healthcare workers.
 - **Note:** To make this meeting productive, have it facilitated with the intent to focus on what the community can do to help, versus giving voice to complaints and tragic stories.
 - **Meet with the Ministry / Health Authority to start a dialogue** and gather information and ideas for how the local community can help.
 - **Meet with representatives of healthcare worker groups** (Nurses, emergency responders, others) to better understand local needs. Choose a strategy, then gather resources and volunteers to help respond.
 - **Give Presentations on healthcare challenges and ideas** to local community, business, real estate and other groups.
 - **Provide a Welcome Wagon delivery** to a new doctor, nurse, locum, emergency worker, or others who are new to the community.
 - **Others**
- **IDENTIFY PRIORITIES AND DEVELOP A STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**
 - To create an overall picture of what you want to achieve, consider developing a concise **“Healthcare Worker Support Strategy”** document for formal adoption.
 - This can be a high-level document that outlines your vision, goals, objectives and priority streams of action, as well as highlighting other associated initiatives that you want others to participate in (businesses, developers, community organizations, others).
 - Provide only high-level information in this document as the implementation of each initiative will be organic. It can feel overwhelming to articulate each stream of action in detail.

- Some considerations for the overall strategy include:
 - **Include basic information** on the healthcare challenges your community is facing (statistics, stories, etc...)
 - **Identify the range of goals and objectives** for your community initiative, such as:
 - To better understand the healthcare challenges and opportunities in our community.
 - To retain our existing healthcare workers by supporting their wellbeing and that of their family.
 - To attract new healthcare workers to our community.
 - To help expand our healthcare facilities in our community.
 - To be proactive in attracting attention, funding and assistance from BC Ministry of Health, the Health Authority and other ministries.
 - To create positive dialogue with key healthcare groups such as Primary Care Networks and others.
 - **Identify assets you have in your community** that can assist with various initiatives:
 - Local government tools – policy, regulations, staff, facilities, resources, lobbying power, and others.
 - Community and business groups who can take on projects.
 - Real estate developers who can assist in meeting housing and medical facility objectives.
 - **Identify priority areas for action.**
 - Provide a high-level description of opportunities and issues prioritized action, It's not necessary to get into the details for this higher level strategy.
 - For top priority initiatives, identify the core team on each, and work with them to develop an Action Plan for that specific initiative. That Action Plan then becomes the “project management” reference for that team.
- **COMMUNICATE INTENT AND INFORMATION TO KEY AUDIENCES**
 - Supporting local healthcare workers is a community-wide endeavour, and there are many who will likely join in, volunteer and bring resources to the table if an organized and effective action plan and coordinating team is proposed. Presenting a compelling concept and initiatives to community and business groups will help raise awareness and support and resources. This can be done as an exploratory / co-creation initiative, or as a set program that people are invited to support and participate in.
 - Potential information to provide:
 - **Website** – Consider adding a page to your website outlining your position, goals and initiatives, with supporting information and a way for people to find out more / get engaged.

- **Social media** – Information on your initiative can be sent out on social media.
 - **Media releases** – Information can be provided to the media to stimulate interest and attention. Have key community leaders and participants ready to be interviewed by the media.
 - **Presentations** – Presentations can be offered to key groups in the community to raise awareness and interest.
 - **Open houses** – An open house (online / in person) can be held to discuss issues and opportunities together as a community.
 - **Others.**
 - Once initiatives are underway, it is important to communicate and celebrate the work and any successes achieved to build momentum, enthusiasm, and commitment.
- **DEVELOP A SET OF ACTION PLANS FOR SPECIFIC INITIATIVES**
 - Identify a short list of priority projects and match them to a core team or person who will lead the work on each initiative. There will be a limit of capacity and resources available to undertake and sustain a range of initiatives. The number of people/time available will shape both the scope and the projects prioritized for action.
 - Match projects to those with a “passion” for that initiative. They are likely to recruit others who are similarly passionate to work with them on a defined initiative.
 - Administrative support may be needed to help action teams achieve their goals.
- **MONITORING, CELEBRATING AND REPORTING**
 - Coordinate gatherings of projects groups on a periodic basis to share their successes and challenges.
 - Keep a record of the successes and ensure they are promoted in communications to build positivity, commitment and momentum.
 - Provide an annual short report on progress, successes, challenges and needs for the local government, community and Health agencies.