

# WELLNESS MATTERS 2026 REGIONAL FORUM EVENT REPORT



KGH MEDICAL STAFF  
WELLNESS COMMITTEE



KGH MEDICAL STAFF  
ASSOCIATION



Central Okanagan  
Division of Family Practice  
An FPSC initiative



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Southern Medical Program



FACILITY  
ENGAGEMENT  
Specialist Services Committee

Connect,  
Collaborate,  
Elevate

JCC  
Joint  
Collaborative  
Committees

doctors  
of bc

**Kelowna General Hospital**  
**January 16, 2026**

*Meaning, Mindfulness and Medicine*  
*- Building a Healthier Future*

Prepared by Dr. Deema Jassi  
on behalf of the KGH Wellness Committee

## Executive Summary

The Wellness Matters 2026 Regional Forum was a physician-led, regionally focused event designed to advance system-level medical staff wellness through collaboration, leadership, and shared learning. Held January 16, 2026, at Kelowna General Hospital (KGH), the forum built directly upon lessons learned from the inaugural 2025 Wellness Matters Forum, which called for broader, more inclusive, and less polarizing programming that addressed the *organizational, structural, and cultural dimensions* of medical staff wellness.

In response, the KGH Medical Staff Association (MSA) Wellness Committee expanded the 2026 forum to elevate conversations around reducing administrative burden, strengthening medical staff-Health Authority relationships, and cultivating compassionate, sustainable medical cultures. The event drew medical staff, Health Authority leaders, Facility Engagement partners, and professional organizations from across the Interior Health region in a hybrid format.

Wellness Matters 2 was made possible through strong regional partnerships—principally KGH MSA, Doctors of BC Regional Funding, Health Sciences Research (HSR), and the UBC Southern Medical Program (SMP)—ensuring equitable hybrid participation, speaker honoraria, and full-day sessional coverage for in-person physicians.

The results were significant:

- 70+ in-person participants and 90+ virtual attendees
- 70% of respondents were physicians, representing family medicine, emergency medicine, psychiatry, internal medicine, and leadership roles
- 97% reported satisfaction or high satisfaction with the event

The forum coincided with the two-year anniversary of the KGH MSA Wellness Committee, marked by a celebratory midday gathering.

*“This was incredibly inspiring, refreshing, and useful.”*

*“Best education day in 20 years.”*

*“Thank you for focusing on leadership, connection, and humanity in medicine.”*

Overall, Wellness Matters 2 demonstrated that physician-led, regionally grounded wellness initiatives can operate as system learning platforms, connecting innovation, leadership, and collective culture change across the Interior Health region and beyond.

## 1. Background

Medical Staff wellness is increasingly recognized as a system-level responsibility shaped by organizational culture, administrative structure, leadership engagement, and system collaboration.

Insights from the 2025 Wellness Matters Forum revealed a strong desire to move *beyond personal resilience models* toward *addressing systemic contributors* to burnout, engagement, and sustainability. Medical Staff asked for learning and dialogue that reflect the complexity of healthcare—to go beyond self-care toward actionable system change.

The 2026 planning team therefore prioritized:

- Inclusive, regional representation
- Topics spanning system and personal wellness dimensions
- Opportunities for real collaboration between Interior Health and medical staff
- Recognition of existing physician leadership in quality improvement and governance

The forum was also a celebration of the collective leadership emerging from SAUDER Physician Leadership, NAVIG8, PQI, Joy in Work, and Facility Engagement initiatives.

## 2. Methods

### Forum Design and Planning

The KGH MSA Wellness Committee applied a feedback-informed and iterative planning approach, integrating lessons from evaluations of the 2025 forum. The event was designed to reduce administrative burden for speakers and presenters through structured internal coordination and centralized communication.

Speakers were invited based on demonstrated regional or provincial leadership impact and alignment with system-level medical staff wellness.

Thematic areas included:

- Organizational culture, civility, and team dynamics
- Administrative burden and digital innovation
- Leadership resilience and meaning in medicine
- Environmental sustainability and planetary health
- Storytelling and lived experience

*“Excellent variety of talks – so inspiring.”*

Committee operations were guided by a shared real-time planning tool to support role clarity and accountability.

### 3. Audience Reach and Engagement

Invitations extended to:

- All KGH medical staff and allied health professionals
- Interior Health specialty and community practices
- Divisions of Family Practice and Physician Wellness Network members
- Graduates of Leadership programs including NAVIG8, PQI, and SAUDER
- Regional and provincial medical leaders

### 4. Participation Outcomes:

- 154 combined online and in person guests at the highest attendance
- 70 combined online and in person guests for the lowest attendance
- 200 registered guests
- 74 formal survey responses
- 54% in-person, 43% virtual, 3% hybrid participation
- Respondents included physicians (59%), nurse practitioners (8%), RNs (8%), leadership roles (7%), learners (3%), and others (15%)

*“Although I was not the intended audience for the day, I found the sessions engaging and took lessons back for our Foundation team.”*

This mix affirmed that the forum achieved its intent to be inclusive and interdisciplinary, extending the conversation about physician wellness across the healthcare continuum.

### 5. Funding and Participation Strategy

Funding was secured from multiple regional sources (KGH MSA, Doctors of BC Regional Funding, HSR, UBC SMP, CODFP, MSSW). This multi-source funding enabled:

- Speaker honoraria and travel
- Hybrid technology and AV integration
- Sessional coverage for eligible physician participants

Although funding was sufficient for success, limitations in funding architecture remain a system-level barrier. Participants expressed that *coordination of provincial funding supports*

*for regional physician-led wellness initiatives would promote sustainability and focus physician leaders on outcomes rather than administration.*

## 6. Administrative and Operational Support

Administrative support was a critical enabler of the forum's success. Two administrators supported event coordination:

- One administrator managed invitations, registration tracking, and attendee correspondence
- One administrator coordinated speaker communication and materials

Administrative contributions included:

- Broad dissemination of invitations across Interior Health and provincial networks
- Creation of a single master slide deck to streamline transitions
- Coordination with on-site audiovisual teams
- Support for hybrid delivery and Zoom integration

An on-site physician Zoom moderator supported virtual engagement and managed online questions, while an in-person physician moderator facilitated live sessions and speaker transitions. A professional videographer recorded all presentations and produced a highlight reel, extending the reach and longevity of the forum.

Event materials included a professionally designed brochure highlighting speakers, forum priorities, sessional claiming instructions, and a QR-linked post-event survey. Custom signage enhanced branding and visibility, and healthy, nutritious meal options aligned with wellness principles.

## Forum Overview and Purpose

The 2026 forum's theme centered on system-level wellbeing through collaboration, leadership, and sustainability, shifting the narrative from *"self-care"* to *"system care."*

Individual wellness was positioned as foundational but dependent on system conditions—workload design, relationships, safety culture, and leadership empathy.

The event also celebrated two years of continuous physician-led wellness leadership through the KGH MSA Wellness Committee, reinforcing credibility and momentum.

### 1. Objectives

- Strengthen partnerships between physicians and Interior Health
- Explore innovations reducing administrative burden

- Highlight successful physician–Health Authority collaborations
- Foster a culture of civility, compassion, and meaning
- Create shared spaces to accelerate scalable system solutions

## 2. Alignment with Doctors of BC and JCC Priorities

Wellness Matters 2 directly advanced Joint Collaborative Committee (JCC) priorities by:

- Supporting system-level physician wellness and engagement
- Enhancing collaborative leadership capacity
- Reducing administrative burden through innovation
- Promoting interdisciplinary collaboration
- Building from HA-supported leadership programs

*“Leadership is a lever for wellness.”*

## 3. Key Speakers and Topics

Keynote and feature speakers demonstrated measurable system impact, including:

- Dr. Cecile Andreas: *Personal Wellness Using Frameworks from Positive Psychology* (93% satisfied)
- Dr. Jared Baylis: *Facilitating Civility and Understanding in Emergency Medicine* (88%)
- Dr. Kyle Merritt: *Planetary Health — Anxiolysis through Action* (82%)
- Dr. Mark Sherman: *Medicine as an Act of Love: Mindfulness and Meaning* (85%)
- Dr. Aaron Stone: *Improving Wellness with AI Scribes*
- Dr. Christian Wigmore: *Improving Wellness through Financial Planning*
- Dr. Tina Alibhai: *Addressing Mental Health and Burnout through the process of Storytelling and lived experiences*
- Dr. Marian Morgan: *Joy in Work*

*“Mark’s talk was phenomenal — moved me to tears.”*

*“Strong speakers – loved the breadth and theme diversity.”*

Sessions addressing relational wellness, civility, and meaning in practice resonated most deeply. Feedback suggested high engagement in first-person, authentic presentations that connected inner resilience with system change.

Sessions on financial literacy and CMPA-related education were valuable but rated slightly lower when perceived as less tailored to immediate wellness contexts.

## Outcomes, Evaluation, and Survey Analysis

### Overall Satisfaction

- 97% satisfied, 1% neutral, 0% dissatisfied
- 88% would attend *Wellness Matters 3*
- Rated highly for organization, communication (70%), and venue experience (58%)

*“Well organized; great speakers.”*

*“Fantastic presentations – very engaging and authentic.”*

### 1. Key Learning Outcomes

Participants reported significant learning in the following areas:

#### System Level Focus

	Agreement
Learned actionable strategies to improve engagement & wellness	93%
Recognized physician–Health Authority collaborations	86%
Identified solutions for physical, psychological & organizational wellness	93%

Most common personal takeaways:

- “Pause before responding.”
- “Active listening and mindfulness.”
- “Say no until you have a firm yes.”
- “Work on self-compassion and joy in work.”
- “Use the Team Wellbeing Matrix.”

*“Pause before reacting — mindfulness in everyday activities can transform the team environment.”*

### System-Level Change and Recommendations

Participants expressed a strong shift toward system-driven approaches to wellness.

Top requests and observations included:

- Reduce hallway pressures and administrative inefficiencies
- Improve civility and psychological safety in communications

- Increase system accountability for cultural tone and workload design
- Leverage digital tools (AI scribes, integrated documentation systems)

*“Stop framing hallway care as a physician efficiency issue.”*

*“Focus on compassion, connection, and meaning — not more metrics.”*

### **Top Three Strategic Priorities for the Next Three Years**

1. Improve psychological safety and civility (59%)
2. Enhance interdepartmental relationships (38%)
3. Reduce administrative burden (32%)

Additional emerging priorities: improved wellness supports across departments, environmental sustainability in practice, and expansion of leadership and mentorship programming.

## **2. Event Strengths**

- Strong hybrid accessibility (publicized region-wide)
- Rich diversity of roles and specialties represented
- High perceived value and relevance (“took away more than anticipated”)
- Reinforced identity and belonging across Interior Health sites
- Affirmed proof of concept for regional physician-led wellness platforms

## **3. Areas for Refinement**

- Enhanced hybrid audiovisual visibility
- Slightly extended networking and lunch breaks
- More interactive engagement for virtual attendees

*“Would be nice to have longer breaks for networking and reflection.”*

## **4. Lessons Learned and Future Direction**

The forum confirmed ≥ three core truths about sustainable medical staff wellness:

1. Wellness is a system metric: Organizational culture, not individual resilience, determines sustainability.
2. Civility and relationships are foundational: Psychological safety underpins all dimensions of care quality.

3. Structured investment creates impact: Sustainable funding enables meaningful regional collaboration without increasing administrative load.

Participants overwhelmingly expressed interest in continuing annual or semi-annual regional summits, potentially under a *Wellness, Leadership, and Quality Integration Summit* bringing together MSA Wellness, Facility Engagement, NAVIG8, PQI, and UBC SMP.

*“Keep going – make this twice a year, even if virtual.”*

*“We need to co-create system wellness, not just personal resilience.”*

Planning reflections from Wellness Matters 2 suggest several opportunities to strengthen future iterations of the forum.

First, the planning committee will **consider hosting future forums in February rather than January**, recognizing that January timing is close to the winter holiday period and may limit participation, energy, and administrative capacity. A February date may improve attendance, speaker availability, and overall engagement while maintaining momentum early in the calendar year.

Second, to elevate the experience next year, we are hopeful for **a more interactive forum format**, including structured dialogue sessions, moderated panel discussions, and facilitated conversations with both medical staff and Health Authority leaders (Leader + dyad). Shifting from primarily didactic sessions toward **two-way dialogue** would allow deeper exploration of system challenges and co-creation of solutions around issues most relevant to medical staff practice.

Suggested priority topics for future interactive sessions include those frequently raised in Physician Wellness Officer brown bag lunches and informal forums, such as:

- Hallway medicine and capacity pressures
- Regional call coverage and equity across sites
- Interoperability and digital system challenges
- Emergency department closures and service disruptions
- Service delivery models and sustainability
- Wait lists, access issues, and resource scarcity

Finally, we suggest **broader regional collaboration across Medical Staff Associations**. Future forums could be co-hosted by regional MSAs to **highlight and celebrate Facility Engagement (FE) projects across multiple sites**, extending beyond physician wellness alone. This would create space to share innovations in quality improvement, access, leadership, service redesign, and system integration, reinforcing the role of physician-led initiatives as drivers of system learning and improvement across the region.

Collectively, these next steps position Wellness Matters as an evolving regional platform—one that continues to integrate wellness, leadership, quality, and system transformation through collaboration, dialogue, and shared purpose.

## 5. Patient Engagement and Inclusion

An invited patient advocate attended the event and later reflected on the unique value of witnessing physician-led system-improvement efforts. Her feedback affirmed that medical staff wellness is *inseparable* from patient experience and outcomes, highlighting the interconnected nature of provider health and system compassion.

## Conclusion

Wellness Matters 2026 was a milestone in advancing system-level medical staff wellness within the Interior Health region. It spotlighted the collective leadership emerging within medical staff groups, showcased practical system innovations, and rekindled optimism through shared storytelling, mindfulness, and respect.

Key Takeaways:

- Medical Staff wellness equals system sustainability.
- Collaborative leadership and civility are powerful determinants of quality care.
- Continued regional and provincial investment is essential for lasting change.

*“This was the most meaningful professional day I’ve spent in years.”*

*“Inspired, connected, and reminded of why I love medicine.”*

The KGH MSA Wellness Committee thanks all participants, partners, and funders for their steadfast commitment to advancing physician wellness through action, innovation, and shared purpose. The committee will continue to deepen collaboration with Interior Health, Doctors of BC, and academic and community partners to grow this movement sustainably.

# WELLNESS MATTERS 2 REGIONAL FORUM

*Meaning, Mindfulness and Medicine – Building a Healthier Future*



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Specialist Services Committee



**doctors  
of bc**

KGH UBC Clinical Academic  
Lecture Theatre/Zoom  
Friday, January 16, 2026  
8:30am to 4:00pm

**This year's event aims to elevate  
regional physician initiatives and  
build community across the Interior**

# FORUM OVERVIEW

## Welcome to the Wellness Matters 2 Regional Forum 2026

The KGH Medical Staff Association – Wellness Committee is committed to supporting the well-being of medical staff through informed, meaningful initiatives. This forum serves as a platform to explore factors that influence occupational wellness and to highlight the work being done across our community to address these dimensions.

We gather to recognize, celebrate, and elevate the efforts of our colleagues, to learn from one another, and to inspire positive change. Our goal is to strengthen our sense of community and to foster a healthier, more connected workplace for all.



## WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEMBERS



f.l.t.r. Dr. Ben Wierstra, Dr. Stephan Mostowy, Jennifer Bishop, NP, Dr. Deema Jassi, Dr. Ewelina Zaremba, Liechen Naude



## KGH MEDICAL STAFF WELLNESS COMMITTEE



Dr. Helen Bibby



Dr. Ainsley McCaskill



### LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Sylix/Okanagan People

## WELLNESS MATTERS FORUM

KGH UBC Clinical Academic Centre - Lecture Theatre /Zoom  
Friday, January 16, 2026 | 8:30am to 4:00pm PST

<https://ubc.zoom.us>

Meeting ID: 95476 500519  
Passcode: 500519

### PROGRAM AGENDA



<b>08:30am - 08:50am</b>	<b>Arrival and Registration</b>
<b>08:50am - 09:50am</b>	<b>CMPA Workshop – “Effective Team Interactions” Presented by Dr Lisa Thurgur &amp; Erica Battram</b>
<b>09:50am - 10:10am</b>	<b>Light Refreshments, Videography, and Forum Registration</b>
<b>10:10am - 10:20am</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Acknowledgement and Opening Remarks – Dr Deema Jassi</li> <li>• Introduction to the JP Center – Deanne Taylor, PhD</li> <li>• Introduction to Navig8 – Dr Cara Wall, Interior Health</li> </ul>
<b>10:20am - 11:20am</b>	<b>Dr. Cecile Andreas – “(Re)Imagining Possibility...Sustaining yourself in challenging times”</b>
<b>11:20am - 11:50am</b>	<b>Dr. Jared Baylis – “Same Team, Different Pressures. Civility Across Specialities”</b>
<b>11:50am - 12:20pm</b>	<b>Dr. Kyle Merritt – “Planetary Health – Anxiolysis through action”</b>
<b>12:20pm - 12:50pm</b>	<b>Lunch, Cupcakes and Coffee – Healthy Catered Lunch Provided</b>
<b>12:50pm - 1:50pm</b>	<b>Dr. Mark Sherman – “Medicine as an Act of Love – Mindfulness and meaning amidst the messiness”</b>
<b>1:50pm - 2:20pm</b>	<b>Dr. Tina Allibhai – “To live in your truth”</b>
<b>2:20pm - 2:50pm</b>	<b>Dr. Marianne Morgan/Jessica Barker – “Creating Team Joy and Wellbeing”</b>
<b>2:50pm - 3:20pm</b>	<b>Dr. Christian Wigmore – “Financial Wellness in Medicine”</b>
<b>3:20pm - 3:50pm</b>	<b>Dr. Aaron Stone – “Improving Wellness with AI scribes”</b>
<b>3:50pm - 4:00pm</b>	<b>Closing Remarks and Acknowledgements – Dr Deema Jassi</b>

### PHOTOGRAPHY DISCLAIMER

This event will be photographed and images may be posted on our website. If you would prefer not to be photographed, please inform the photographer. These images are collected under section 26 of the British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.