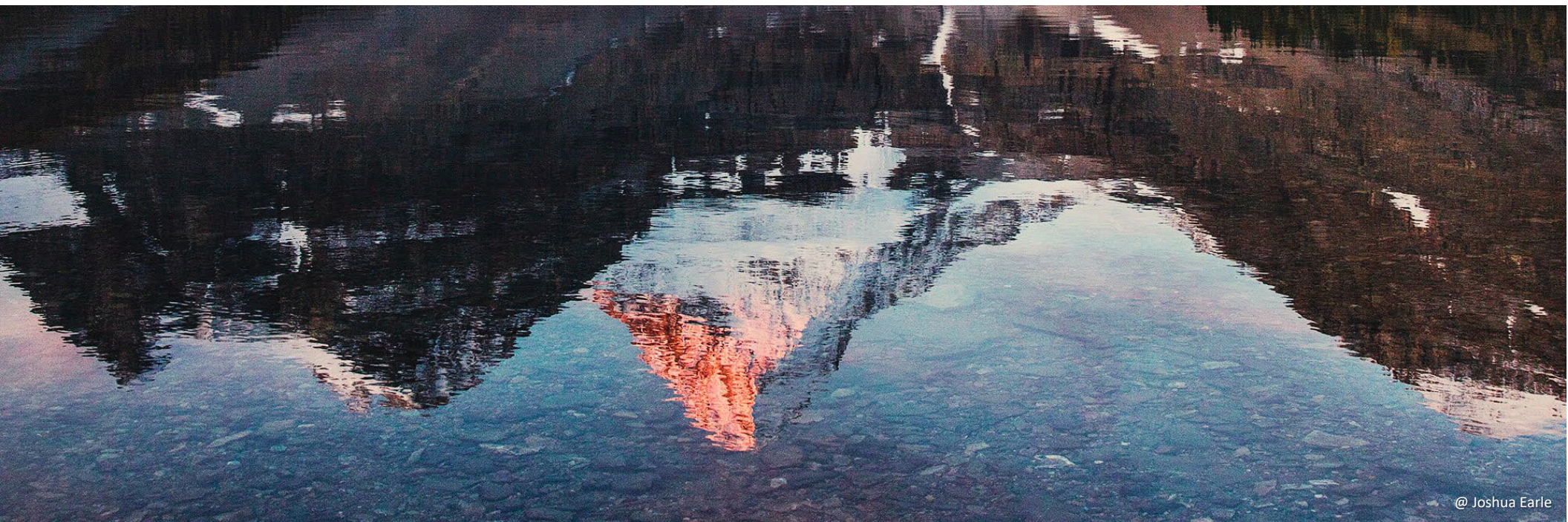


**East Kootenay**  
**Division of Family Practice**  
A GPSC initiative

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022**

For the period ending March 31, 2022





Cranbrook  
44

Creston  
22

Sparwood  
4

Elkford  
1

Kimberley  
12

## WE ARE 138 MEMBERS STRONG ACROSS 8 COMMUNITIES

### VISION

Progressive, fulfilled, healthy family physicians who are empowered and equipped to practice optimal primary care in support of healthy communities across the East Kootenay

### MISSION

To empower and support family physicians as they work to optimize the health and wellness of their patients

Fernie  
25

Invermere  
14

Golden  
16



# LEADERSHIP REPORT

These are challenging times in primary health care, yet East Kootenay physicians continue to work through the challenges for the health of their patients. In the Division's efforts to support physicians and advocate for improved system change, we recognize your strength and resiliency as the backbone of the health care system. We are grateful for your engagement, insights, leadership and dedication to making primary care better.

It is difficult to summarize the range of projects and system change that physicians have led through the Division this year. Below are a few highlights:

- Successfully accessing the most Shared Care Project funding in the province to benefit family and specialist physicians in the region
- Developing successful proposals for the In-Patient Care Bridge Funding (\$1,090,000 across the EK)
- Continuing to integrate PCN services across all communities
- Engaging with physician wellness supports (Professional Resiliency Workshops and Flourishing Physicians Peer Support)
- Increasing physician recruitment supports and services (e.g., locum travel supports)
- EK MOA Network expansion and partnership with the Practice Support Program
- Interprofessional development – training for clinic staff
- Virtual care supports
- EK CPD Program
- Long Term Care Initiative
- Supporting the development of the Encompass Pregnancy Care clinic in Cranbrook
- Ongoing recruitment of new physicians to the region
- Leadership opportunities for physicians on committees and projects
- Cultural safety training for PCN providers

We are committed to elevating the concerns and priorities of family physicians. Below are a few examples of active advocacy work that we are bringing to decision making tables at the provincial and regional levels:

- Sustained, long term, in-patient care compensation
- Improved IMG and PRA processes for recruitment
- Stabilizing maternity care in vulnerable communities
- Working with partner agencies and funders to ensure pregnant patients can access medical travel supports
- Interior Divisions Network - connection and collaboration across the Interior Divisions
- Informing the provincial planning for future health human resource needs (estimated number of physicians)

We continue to work toward our Vision for “progressive, fulfilled, healthy family physicians who are empowered and equipped to practice optimal primary care in support of healthy communities across the East Kootenay.”

Thank you to all the board members and Division staff, who have been creative and adaptable in working to meet the needs of the physician members. Thank you to our members for continuing to guide the direction and engage with the organization, and ensure it is meeting your needs.

Dr. Shaun van Zyl, Chair  
Dr. Nerine Kleinhans, Physician Lead  
Megan Purcell, Executive Director





# PHYSICIAN SURVEY

In 2022 a Physician Survey was conducted to better understand our membership and their needs, as well as to gather baseline information for an evaluation of the Primary Care Network (PCN).

Between June 8-22, 43 per cent of East Kootenay family physicians completed the survey. Some key findings included:

- Physicians are seeking more support for locum physician services and physician recruitment, which are seen as solutions to address problems with burnout, workload, and community expectations.
- Respondent's visions for sustainable primary care involves family physician directed, team-based care with the optimal alignment of tasks; cross coverage and shared practice; and a modified compensation model.
- 48 per cent of respondents were happy with their involvement in PCN and 56 per cent report having more support in caring for complex patients.
- An overwhelming majority embrace culturally safe care and combining cultural practices and conventional medicine.
- Physicians see their workload, in terms of patient complexity, volume, and hours worked increasing constantly, whereas their compensation has remained constant.
- The top three reasons East Kootenay family physicians recommend practicing in the region are:
  - lifestyle and outdoor recreation opportunities;
  - great colleagues and a sense of small-town community, and;
  - the variety of work opportunities and scope of practice.





# PHYSICIAN WELLNESS

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The past year continued to bring many challenges to our physicians as they dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic, rapidly changing guidelines, adjusting to virtual care, and a lack of public confidence in the medical profession. In addition to these stressors, physicians have been dealing with a recruitment crisis and the pressures of a growing unattached population. These factors have contributed to burnout and compassion fatigue. 'Do more with less' has become a familiar cry. Physicians reported feeling undervalued and under-supported.

One response was to offer resiliency training and a peer support group.

## **Professional Resiliency Workshops**

The EK Division hosted three UBC accredited Professional Resiliency Workshops in 2020/2021. The workshops were facilitated by Dr. Tyla Charbonneau and Dr. Ron Nash. The curriculum is based on The Forward-Facing® Professional Resilience: Prevention and Resolution of Burnout, Toxic Stress and Compassion Fatigue Program developed by Dr. Eric Gentry. Each workshop included three virtual sessions.

## **Flourishing Physicians**

The EK Division hosted a peer support program for physicians called "Flourishing Physicians" facilitated by Dr. Tyla Charbonneau. The Flourishing Physicians support group was open to all East Kootenay Physicians. Facilitated meetings centered around a specific topic were held virtually every six weeks. Time was dedicated to learning, resource sharing, open dialogue, and networking. Examples of topics included parenting; trauma; substance use; sleep; healthy eating; conflict resolution; grief, mindfulness, and vulnerability.



@ Jean Da Silva



# RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

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The EK Division is continuously working on ways to attract, recruit, and integrate new family doctors to the East Kootenay. We also are focused on supporting our current physicians by providing resources that help them to develop thriving practices.

We take a regional approach to recruitment, working closely with local community-based recruiters and resources to find the best fit for the physicians and the communities. The pandemic and the provincial shortage of family physicians continued to affect the volume and number of enquiries.

The EK Division is also involved on a leadership level in the Interior Physicians Recruitment and Retention (IPRR) Network. The IPRR highlighted systemic challenges and successfully advocated for local recruitment resources for Divisions to offer its members.

# GPSC MATERNITY CARE INITIATIVE

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The GPSC provided funding for maternity care in vulnerable communities across BC to strengthen supports for family doctors who deliver and care for newborns over the past year.

In the East Kootenay, the focus of the work varied across the communities

- Cranbrook and Kimberley: Improved professional collaboration through identifying the need for a shared call and a shared maternity space. The project developed the model and plan for the Encompass Pregnancy Care clinic.
- Creston: Supported the travel and accommodation needs of pregnant patients traveling from Creston to Cranbrook for specialist care.
- Fernie: Developed an MOU that helped integrate a midwife into the maternity team, developed an onboarding plan for Elk Valley Hospital maternity staff, and purchased a maternity cart.
- Golden: Explored a shared obstetrical space for surgical consults, lactation consults, group prenatal care, individual consults, and education, and purchased a handheld ultrasound device.



@ Christopher Czermak

We were fortunate to welcome 13 new family physicians to our region this year.

Drs. Joy Mijares, Alma Bencivenga, Clay Hammett, Haakon Lenes, Rob Riddell, Luke Turanich, Celia Sprague, Christy Trafananko, Amira Khalil, Lauren Minty, Paula Dubois, Celine Akyurekli, Stephan Trebble



@ Jon Flobrant



# SHARED CARE

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The East Kootenay has a robust Shared Care Program. Our Shared Care initiatives help build and strengthen relationships between family and specialist physicians and improve the delivery of care to vulnerable populations. Shared Care projects are patient-centered, collaborative, focus on quality improvement, and support a coordinated health care experience for patients.

East Kootenay Shared Care initiatives Included:

**The EK Shared Care Steering Committee** - Co-chaired by Dr. Greg Andreas and Dr. Lori Wik.

**Gender Affirming Care Project** - To improve and better coordinate gender affirming care in the EK.

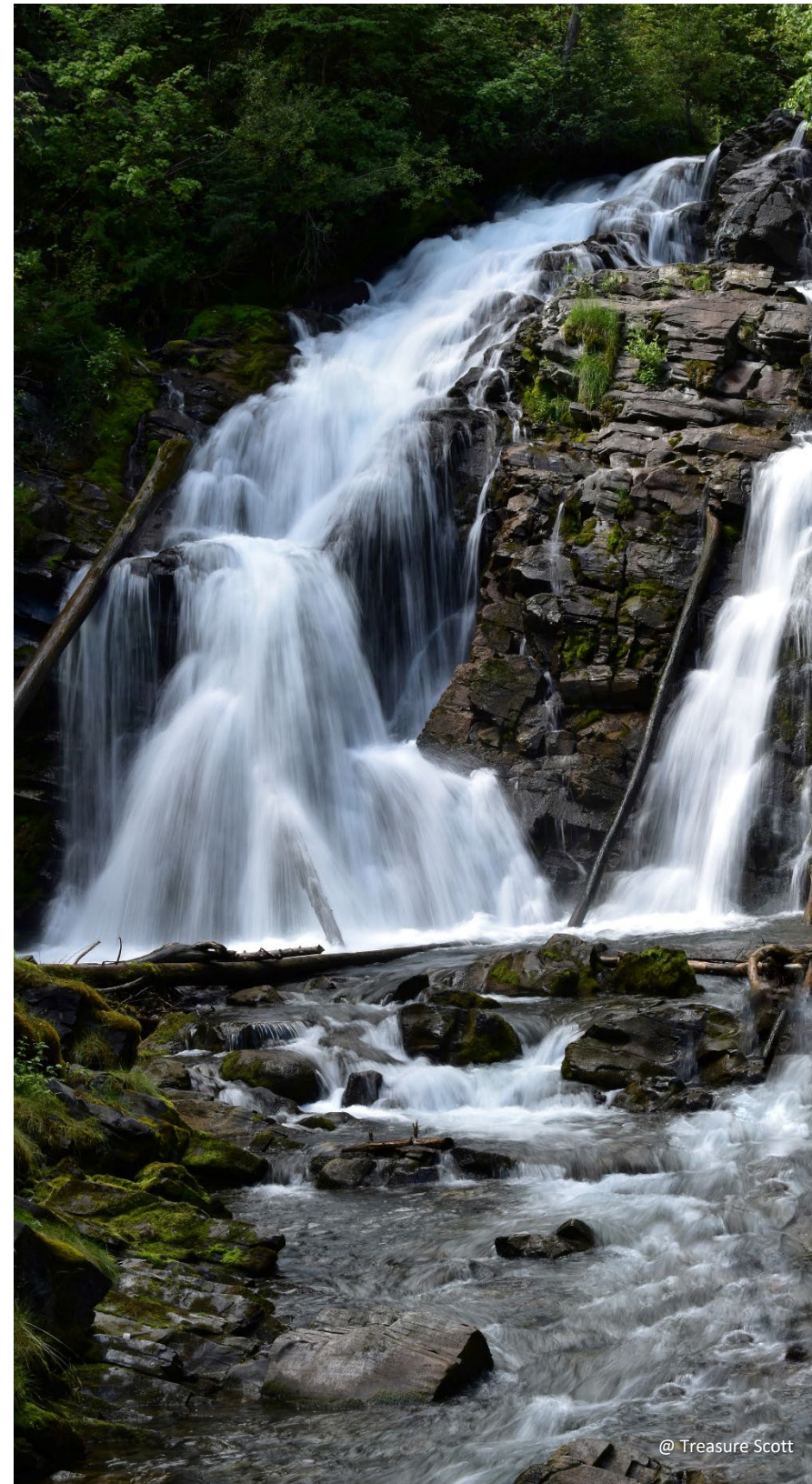
**Acute Care Transitions** - To address relationships and develop a Memorandum of Understanding between Family Physicians (FPs) and ER Physicians in the Cranbrook area.

**Maternity Network - Cranbrook/Kimberley** - To improve access to maternity care and the quality of maternity care in Cranbrook and Kimberley through the Encompass Pregnancy Care clinic.

**Access to Liver Care in the EK** - To improve access to specialist care for people with liver disease in the East Kootenay.

**Adult Mental Health and Substance Use** - To develop a system of care that enables better access and services to anyone seeking addiction and mental health care in the East Kootenay.

**MBMD/Interior EASE (Microblogging MD) Project** - To improve interprofessional communication through Interior Health's secure communication tool.





# PATHWAYS

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Have you added Pathways to your toolkit yet? Pathways is a one-stop physicians resource website with the added function of enabling you to email resources to patients.

More East Kootenay physicians are using Pathways than ever before. Page views have increased by 27% with the biggest growth seen in physician and patient resources. 250 of our 363 accounts are actively being used and 29 of our Specialist Physicians have their referral information on Pathways.

Physicians who use Pathways save time and printing costs. The Pathways provincial team regularly reviews all website content and resources so you can trust that the links and patient information files are up to date.

Pathways supports the Primary Care Network (PCN). Allied Health Care Providers hired into the PCN have limited access to Pathways and referral information for the PCN allied staff can be found on Pathways.

The Medical Care directory has expanded with the addition of a Maternity Care Provider search bar that is accessible to the public. If you are a Maternity Care provider and you would like to add your information to Pathways please let us know.

For more information on Pathways or access to Pathways, please contact Hanlie Du Plessis ([eastkootenay@pathwaysbc.ca](mailto:eastkootenay@pathwaysbc.ca)), EK Pathways Administrator, or Dr. Ross Dawson ([dr.rossdawson@pathwaysbc.ca](mailto:dr.rossdawson@pathwaysbc.ca)), Physician Lead.



@ Algi



# CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The last year was an exciting year for the EK CPD Program. We continued to expand our services despite the ongoing and unique challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Keeping connected virtually and in-person became our new theme as we worked to provide new tools and learning opportunities for East Kootenay physicians. We are proud to share a few of the highlights of the EK CPD Program.

## Monthly Happy Hour and Learn Webinars

Presented by local specialists.

Topics included:

- Pediatrics
- Palliative care
- Urology
- Internal medicine
- ENT
- Child and Youth Mental Health
- Concussion

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual EK CME Day

We changed gears to deliver our annual EK CME Day in a hybrid in-person/virtual format. It was great to have colleagues together again for networking and learning.

- 33 physicians attended in person
- 21 physicians attended via Zoom
- 7 local specialists presented
- Topics included: pediatrics, dermatology, POCUS, rheumatology, pathology, and internal medicine.

## ALARM (Advances in Labour and Risk Management)

- 21 Maternity Care providers attended

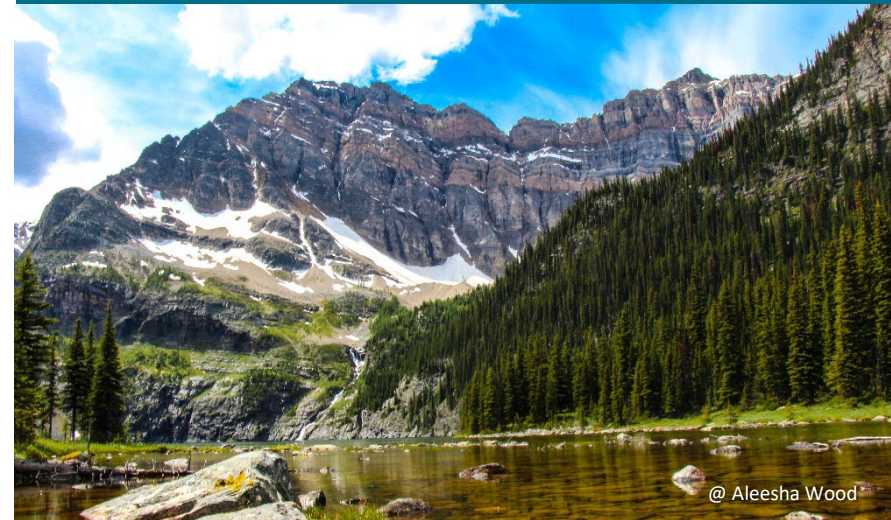
## Additional learning opportunities

- COVID Updates and Resources
- HIV PrEP



We extend our gratitude to the following physicians who served on the EK CPD Steering Committee.

Dr. Kimberley Barden  
Dr. Kate Buddo  
Dr. Tara Chalmers-Nixon  
Dr. Sarah Chesney  
Dr. Peter Chong  
Dr. Bruce Johnson  
Dr. Atma Persad  
Dr. Christopher Pienaar  
Dr. Virginia Robinson





# PRIMARY CARE NETWORK

The EK PCN is working to improve the health of the population through timely access to comprehensive, person-centred, team-based care that is equitable and culturally safe. Some highlights of our work over the last year include:

- Hired and integrated 20 new PCN team members (14.6 FTE) throughout the region
  - Continued advocacy for appropriate physician and midwife contracts
  - Obtained an additional New to Practice contract for a physician in Cranbrook
- Launched the Cranbrook UPCC
- Supported the development of Encompass Pregnancy Care clinic
- PCN support coaches focused on supporting integration of new and existing PCN/primary care team members into clinics; they worked closely with physician lead and clinic staff
  - Conducted a formal review of the current scope of PCN support coach's role; work to expand this role is planned for the upcoming year
- Hired a PCN cultural safety framework educator through the Ktunaxa Nation. This role supports the development and delivery of cultural safety education and practice integration
- Advocated for local input into Interior Health's PCN related space renovations to ensure optimal team-based care integration and workflow
- Implemented PCN TBC Clinic Stipends (overhead) to offset some of the costs associated with integration of PCN team members into clinics
  - Continued to advocate for more MoH funding to compensate clinics for costs
- Implemented the GPSC Team Chart Agreement





# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## East Kootenay Division of Family Practice Society

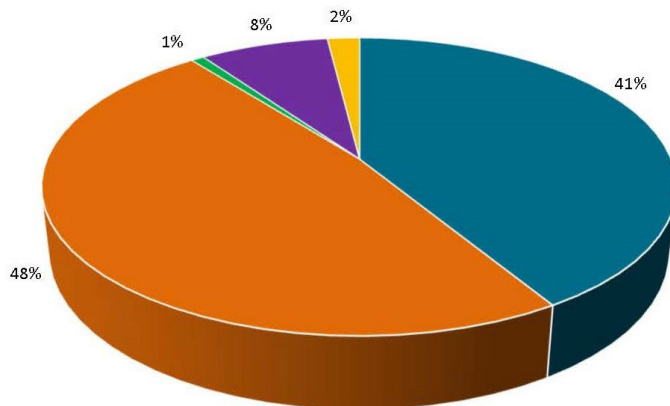
### Summary of Income and Expense Statement for Year Ending March 31 2022

#### Income

2021-22 Funding Received including interest	\$2,191,453.00
Plus: 2020-21 Funding Carried Forward	\$1,214,478.00
Less: Funding to be Carried Forward to 2022-23	(\$947,635.00)
Less: Funding to be Repaid	(\$284,600.00)
<b>Total Income after adjustments</b>	<b>\$2,173,696.00</b>

#### Expenses

Physician Sessional	\$857,260.00
Employee and Contractor costs	\$998,823.00
Travel	\$16,470.00
Facilities and Operations	\$162,084.00
Meeting Costs	\$40,672.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,075,309.00</b>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	\$98,387.00
<b>Total Expenses and Unused Funds</b>	<b>\$2,173,696.00</b>



#### Expenses Summary

- Physician Sessional
- Employee and Contractor Costs
- Travel
- Facilities and Operations
- Meeting Costs







### Board of Directors

Dr. Shaun van Zyl, Kimberley - Chair  
Dr. Nerine Kleinhans, Creston - Physician Lead  
Dr. Madeline Oosthuizen, Cranbrook - Director  
Helena Oosthoek, Golden - Vice-Chair  
Mike Adams, Cranbrook - Treasurer/Secretary  
Greg Wanke, Creston - Director  
Jo Ann Lamb, Kimberley - Director

### Regional Physician Representative Committee

Dr. Katherine Wight, Cranbrook  
Dr. Suzanne Hopkins, Creston  
Dr. Shaun van Zyl, Kimberley  
Dr. Allison Clare, Golden  
Dr. Gareth Mannheimer, Invermere  
Dr. Lori Gadsden, Fernie  
Dr. Greg Andreas, Cranbrook  
Dr. Michael J. Walsh, Invermere

### Staff and Contractors

Megan Purcell, Executive Director  
Laura Vanlerberg, Operations Lead  
Jacqui van Zyl, Program Manager  
Tina Hochart, Finance Coordinator  
Hanlie du Plessis, Pathways and CME Coordinator  
Kerry Stanley, Administrative Support  
Kelsey Brown, Evaluation Lead  
Kevin Wilson, Interim Evaluation Lead  
Jody Jacob, Communication Lead

### Shared Care Project Leads

Dr. Greg Andreas and Dr. Lori Wik; Steering Committee  
Dr. Jessica Chiles and Louise Vaile; Golden Gender Affirming Care  
Dr. Madeline Oosthuizen, Dr. Tanya Burch, Dr. Alisa Sanregret and Michelle Mueller; Cranbrook and Kimberley Maternity Care  
Dr. Katherine Wight, Dr. Mia Tait, Dr. Sophia Bianchi and Dellanee Kahlke; Cranbrook Acute Care Transitions  
Dr. Tara Chalmers-Nixon and Dellanee Kahlke, EK Access to Liver Care  
Dr. JoyAnne Krupa; Adult Mental Health and Substance Use  
Dr. Anneline du Preez, MicroBlogging MD

### PCN Team

Sarah Loehr, PCN Strategic Manager  
Tracy Brown, Support Coach  
Caitlyn Flint, Support Coach  
Rachelle Robichaud, Support Coach



The Divisions of Family Practice Initiative is sponsored by the General Practice Services Committee, a joint committee of the BC Ministry of Health and Doctors of BC.



[divisionsbc.ca/east-kootenay](https://divisionsbc.ca/east-kootenay)



[eastkootenay@ekdivision.ca](mailto:eastkootenay@ekdivision.ca)



[@EKDoFP](https://www.facebook.com/EKDoFP)



[East Kootenay Division of Family Practice](https://www.youtube.com/EastKootenayDivisionofFamilyPractice)