

BCMHSUS Foundation appoints four new board members

Date: September, 2024

The BC Mental Health Foundation is pleased to announce the appointment of four new board members who will help lead the organization. Our new board members are experienced leaders who will advance the foundation’s mission, vision, and values, and support [BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services \(BCMHSUS\)](#) and the services it provides.

“We’re so pleased to welcome these four outstanding individuals to our board,” said Susan Wannamaker, Foundation board member, and executive vice president, Clinical Service Delivery, PHSA. “They will help drive the BC Mental Health Foundation in everything it does – from supporting patient and client care, to funding research innovations, to helping eradicate stigma faced by people with mental health and substance use concerns.”

BC Mental Health Foundation New Board members:

Andrew Leonard (Chair) – Andrew Leonard currently serves as the mayor of Bowen Island Municipality, where he also holds appointments to the Metro Vancouver Regional District board and the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation for TransLink. His focus in local government has been to adapt to the change and challenges faced by communities, particularly with respect to growth and socio-ecological pressures. He has championed the inclusion of UN sustainable development goals and Indigenous reconciliation in municipal planning, as well as tight transparency in capital project management. In addition to his work on the BC Mental Health Foundation board, Andrew also serves on the board of the Canadian Mental Health Association’s North and West Vancouver Branch, and volunteers taking front-line suicide and crisis intervention calls with the Crisis Centre of BC.

Azra Hussain (Treasurer) – Azra Hussain is currently the Chief Financial & Administration Officer of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Greater Vancouver, a charitable organization that supports some of society’s most vulnerable populations. Azra is a distinguished leader with more than 20 years of executive experience in the non-profit sector, where she has demonstrated a deep-seated commitment to fostering community health and sustainable growth. With professional designations as a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) and Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE), she brings to her roles a unique blend of expertise in strategy, fundraising, financial oversight, governance, and operations. Azra has also served as Chief Operating Officer at the Surrey Hospitals Foundation. Azra's contributions to the community and non-profit sector have been recognized in a number of ways, including by Canada’s Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Award by the Women’s Executive Network in 2021, and the YWCA Metro Vancouver’s Woman of Distinction in the non-profit category in 2023.



Sarah Bragg (Director) - Sarah Bragg has built her career around health care, organizational leadership, fundraising, and volunteering in service of others. In the past decade, Sarah has led two BC hospital foundations, bringing a strong commitment to excellence in all areas of her work. Sarah cares deeply about the people she works with and the people who are served by her efforts, in mission-driven organizations. Sarah followed in her parents' footsteps in health care, studying nursing in Winnipeg, Manitoba and then spent her early career as a surgical nurse in a large operating room in London, Ontario. Sarah says it is an honour to join the BC Mental Health Foundation as a director and support the amazing work the organization does to improve lives and support people struggling with mental health and substance issues.

Lisa Hibbeln (Director) - Lisa Hibbeln has extensive experience in non-profit management, leadership, and program development, with a focus on anti-human trafficking. She has provided direct services to survivors and developed community programs to address exploitation and victimization. Lisa delivers professional training to equip individuals and organizations to address the complex challenges of trafficking, with a focus on the intersections of mental health and substance use. She is also the founder of a consulting group that works on projects related to gender-based violence, access to justice, and community capacity building. Currently, Lisa is pursuing a master's degree in neuroscience and psychology. Her research centers on the intersections of mental health, trauma, and social justice, deepening her commitment to creating solutions for vulnerable populations.

The newly appointed board members will join Susan Wannamaker as the Foundation's five-person board.

Susan Wannamaker (Director) – Susan Wannamaker, Executive vice president, Clinical Service Delivery at PHSA leads clinical delivery programs that support direct patient and client care, including BC Mental Health & Substance Use Services, BC Children's Hospital and BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre. Her portfolio also includes Health Emergency Management BC.

Susan has held diverse executive roles in her 40-year career in health care, including clinical background as a nurse, operational experience in running hospitals, leading significant transformation initiatives and 20 years in leadership roles at Vancouver Coastal Health. Susan has been "hands-on" at virtually every level of the B.C. health-care system; as a result, she has a deep understanding of how different roles and professions work together and appreciates how important relationships within and across health authorities are to achieving lasting, positive outcomes.

She played a significant role in shaping B.C.'s 10-year cancer care action plan announced in February 2023 and immediately prior to her current role, she was president of BC Children's Hospital and BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre. Before that, she was senior vice president at Joseph Brant Hospital in Burlington, Ontario, responsible for all hospital operations and ensuring operational readiness for a new hospital expansion.

The BC Mental Health Foundation is a provincial fundraising organization created in 2005 to support BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services, part of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

Learn more, including how to donate: <https://www.bcmhf.ca/>