

HM|HC Regional Forum 2026 Final Report

Tend to where you are: People. Places. Planet.

Advancing health promoting campuses together

An HM|HC learning event

As a student, the regional forum inspired more thinking and mindfulness about healthy campuses and the wellbeing of not just myself and other students, but faculty and other members of campus as well.

Overview

Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses along with University of Victoria, Camosun College, and Royal Roads University hosted a Vancouver Island Regional Forum at the John Horgan Campus in Langford on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, from 9:30am-1:00pm. The theme of the event was **Tend to where you are: People. Places. Planet. Advancing health promoting campuses together**, grounded in [the Limerick Framework for Action](#). We wanted to take this time to find ways to ‘respond to current and future challenges and support collective, system-wide action to strengthen wellbeing in higher education.’

This Regional Forum convened fifty-one Vancouver Island local campus stakeholders (e.g., students, staff, faculty, administrators, community organizations) from five campuses to showcase the amazing wellbeing initiatives already underway—and to dive into a shared path forward. Our keynote speaker was Patty Hambler, Associate Vice President, Student Affairs at Douglas College and the Chair of the Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network.

Order of events

- Welcome from Elder Dr. Clarence “Butch” Dick
- Keynote Presentation by Patty Hambler
- Breakout rooms for discussion
- Reporting back to larger group
- Wrap up



Presentation with Patty Hambler



Patty’s talk was titled “*From mycelium to momentum: applying the Limerick Framework for Action through a forest systems lens.*” In a creative way Patty took us on a forest walk (figuratively) complete with gorgeous photos and educational videos and poems about how forest systems work and linked all of that to the 10 Actions from the Limerick Framework for Action.

Ethos: The Ecosystem Conditions

Ethos represents the underlying conditions that shape what is possible on your campus: values, culture, leadership commitments, and shared priorities.

Follow the Mycelium: Networks & Relationships

In forests, mycelium networks connect trees and move nutrients through the ecosystem. On campuses, relationships and partnerships allow ideas, resources, and support to move across the system.

Root in the Nurse Logs: Institutional Memory & Structures

Nurse logs are fallen trees that slowly decompose and provide nutrients and structure for new seedlings. In institutions, policies, past initiatives, research, and accumulated experience create substrate for future work.

Stand Where the Light Breaks Through: Opportunities for Action

In forests, canopy openings allow sunlight to reach the forest floor, creating conditions where new growth accelerates. On campuses, moments of readiness, energy, or transition can create similar opportunities.

Patty’s handout with thought-provoking questions from each of the four areas is included at the end of this report.

What stayed with me most was the framing that health is not something you layer on top of programming as a box to tick. It belongs inside everything, from the very beginning. Hearing that articulated so thoughtfully in the keynote, and then getting to be in a room full of people who clearly live that belief, was really something.

Breakout sessions with prompting questions

Discussion questions were posed for each of the four breakout groups (Teams Awesome, Terrific, Wonderful, and Amazing):

Q1. What do healthy learning and working environments look like?

Q2. What can I do to help create that?

Q3. What might I need help or support with to make that happen? Where might that help/support come from?

In response, a number of common themes/words/phrases emerged across all of the groups. This summary will only give a small taste of the rich conversations.

Broadly - **Community, Respect, Inclusion, Gratitude, We're all human**

- Walking - get moving or keep moving and encourage others to do so
 - Being in nature resets our system
- Have patience
- We need champions/role models and support from leaders at all levels
- Model what we want to see or hope to see from others
 - Daily
 - Support each other
 - Also have the ability to seek support
- Make excellent mistakes
- Ensure spaces are welcoming to all humans
- Encourage all voices
- Use active listening to hear what's being said

- Take care of self
- Be willing to have difficult conversations
- Be willing to talk about the current realities of the world we live in
- Build trust and psychological safety
- Build community
 - Decrease silos
 - Make new connections
 - Work on belonging and shared experiences
- Any wellbeing framework for any campus should include everyone! A campus-wide approach is needed.
- There are some low barrier actions to take to create healthy learning and working environments
- Finally - health should be embedded and not bolted on



Post-Session Survey Summary

People were generally pleased with the Regional Forum. Survey respondents stated the following aspects of opportunity were valuable for them: to be in-person, to be able to engage in networking, to meet colleagues from other institutions, to take part in thoughtful dialogue and to hear diverse perspectives.

Survey respondents also described personal reflections and various actions they are already taking or intend to take as a result of their participation in this Regional Forum: planning to take breaks, set up walks and walking meetings, brainstorming and trying new

ideas, finding more collaborative partnerships on campus, and seeking ways to engage students more both in community building and in giving their input.

The Regional Forum inspired our team to take a few more risks, try some different things to see what we can learn from our attempts. It also inspired us to think about how we could collaborate more with faculty and HR to deliver wellbeing to students.

Post-session Survey - feedback/suggestions for future events

- Maybe host a full-day event
 - o Though some felt the timing was good as is
- Have a larger conversation around the social impact of community and how community building activities on campuses contribute to wellbeing
- More time to hear about what is happening on different campuses
 - o Generally a sharing of ideas and initiatives
 - o Hear more examples of what post-secondary institutions have done/are doing
 - o Hear more about how to make meaningful impacts on our campuses
 - o What's working and what's not
 - o What are some creative approaches to this work?
- Healthy Learning design in courses
- How to create a whole-campus approach to health promotion
 - o Including our online environments
- How to manage the emotional labour of the work we do, especially in the midst of cutbacks and increased societal distress
- How to work most effectively with community organizations for student support

Limitations

There was a short window of time between deciding to offer a Regional Forum and the actual event. This may have created a barrier for some in terms of being able to plan for time away from their campuses.

The organizing team recognizes there was limited capacity on the team's part to be able to host a full-day event.

It was significant that there was representation from all five post-secondary institutions on Vancouver Island, especially given current realities of funding. At any future events it would also be a benefit to have more student and faculty participation from each institution.

Reflections

Creating, designing, implementing, embedding, and evaluating health promoting campuses all takes a community.

There is a hunger for people to be able to be in each other's presence, to have meaningful (and sometimes difficult) conversations, to share the joys and burdens of doing the work, to build collective knowledge, to face current realities, and to know we are not alone in 'tending to where we are'.

Acknowledgements

Localized learning events can be an avenue for meaningful engagement, cross-learning and increased collaboration among neighbouring institutions and organizations. In regard to this Regional Forum in particular, HM|HC is very grateful for the generous support and participation of the University of Victoria, Camosun College, and Royal Roads University, and appreciates as well the additional support from UVic's School of Public Health & Social Policy (PHSP) and Faculty of Health.

Huge thanks to the Forum's organizing team – Natalie Frandsen, Kyla McLeod, Liisa Robinson, and Dawn Schell, plus we would like to express our deep appreciation to the HM|HC Support team – Mahboubah Asgari, Bakht Anwar, and Tim Dyck.

Exploring campus wellbeing and the Limerick Framework for Action through a forest systems lens (Patty Hambler)

Ethos: The Ecosystem Conditions

Ethos represents the underlying conditions that shape what is possible on your campus: values, culture, leadership commitments, and shared priorities.

- Where do you see commitments to wellbeing, equity, or sustainability reflected in your institution's values or strategic priorities?
- What signals from leadership suggest that wellbeing is (or is not) a priority?
- What cultural norms support collaboration and collective responsibility?
- What conditions would strengthen a shared ethos of stewardship for people, places, and planet?

Follow the Mycelium: Networks & Relationships

In forests, mycelium networks connect trees and move nutrients through the ecosystem. On campuses, relationships and partnerships allow ideas, resources, and support to move across the system.

- Who are the key champions or connectors advancing wellbeing on your campus?
- What networks, committees, or communities of practice already exist?
- Where do partnerships with community, government, or other institutions strengthen this work?
- What relationships could be strengthened to move energy and resources across campus?

Root in the Nurse Logs: Institutional Memory & Structures

Nurse logs are fallen trees that slowly decompose and provide nutrients and structure for new seedlings. In institutions, policies, past initiatives, research, and accumulated experience create substrate for future work.

- What previous initiatives, strategies, or projects related to wellbeing exist at your institution?
- What policies or planning frameworks could support this work?
- What research, evaluation, or data already exists that could inform future action?
- How can you build on existing structures rather than starting from scratch?

Stand Where the Light Breaks Through: Opportunities for Action

In forests, canopy openings allow sunlight to reach the forest floor, creating conditions where new growth accelerates. On campuses, moments of readiness, energy, or transition can create similar opportunities.

- Where do you see momentum for wellbeing initiatives right now?
- What upcoming decisions, policies, or institutional transitions might create opportunity?
- How can students be engaged as change agents?
- What progress could be celebrated to build momentum?

Reflection

Looking across these four areas, what is one action you could take to strengthen wellbeing at your institution?