

September 1, 2018

In response to community feedback the Gwaii Trust Wellness Committee held a second Wellness Forum in Masset on May 27<sup>th</sup> 2017 to expand on the discussion and information that arose from our inaugural Wellness Forum held December of 2016, in Skidegate; both forums were facilitated by local independent facilitator, Co+Host.

Attendance for the Forums significantly represented all the allied health professionals on the islands as well as a strong contingent of local public voices. Stemming from these discussions the five areas of local priority, in no particular order, were:

1. Safe affordable housing
2. Food security
3. Elder care
4. A safe daytox (daytox is an 'outpatient,' meaning non-residential, service designed to help people to work on making changes in their alcohol and substance use)
5. Better recruitment and retention of Service Providers

In the year since this forum we have seen broad community change on the wellness frontier. A variety of positive initiatives are underway, or are in the process of beginning; some of which are:

- The completion of the new south end hospital
- Accommodations and care for elders
- Increased affordable housing
- Increased programs and funding for teen centers and island recreation
- The proposed Skidegate Wellness Centre
- A mental health first aid initiative for all communities is underway
- The introduction of a new on island service provider, Community Living British Columbia, (CLBC) now has contracts on Haida Gwaii linking persons with disabilities with local resources and services, to promote social connectedness, developing potential new skills for community attachment and employment

To better understand the impact and implications of these changes, particularly the recruitment and retention of longer-term employees on Haida Gwaii, the Trust is currently involved in an additional labour market research project. This research coupled with the ideas and suggestions from our two island wellness forums has helped shape the Trust's own strategic five-year plan, linking healthy individuals to healthy communities to a healthy island.

We see the need to continue to spread this work outwards, linking island community leaders, Provincial and Federal representatives, Health Service Professionals, Service Providers, and Non-Profit Administrators to collaborate and develop ideas for services throughout our island communities.

By creating the links between these dedicated collaborators and connecting them with the appropriate funding opportunities, it is the Trust's vision that the direction, innovation and ownership of Island Wellness always be carried in the hands of island residents, ensuring that local needs and voices remain the primary drivers of all future decision making.

The Trust's Wellness Committee has identified the need for future forums to monitor the changing Island's health care landscape, gather local opinion, and to continue to identify partnership and implementation opportunities.

Respectfully submitted by the Gwaii Trust Wellness Committee