

Community Physician Health and Safety (CPHS) Program

Addressing Occupational Health and Safety in Community Medical Practices

The CPHS program, developed by SWITCH BC, Doctors of BC, and the Ministry of Health, takes the guesswork out of workplace health and safety for physicians and their staff. This free, voluntary, and confidential program provides physicians with tools and resources to enhance the health and safety of their workplace, streamline administrative tasks, and meet regulatory requirements.



Web Portal

- Ready-to-use checklists, policies, and procedure templates for all occupational health and safety topics.
- Reduced administrative burdens with easy access to necessary resources in one central location.
- Progress tracking to build a health and safety program that is unique to each clinic.

Clinic Assessments

- In-person expert advice from experienced health and safety advisors.
- Actionable recommendations unique to clinic needs.
- Business protection, ensuring compliance with WorkSafeBC regulations.
- Ongoing workplace health and safety support.

De-escalation Tools

- Free printable guides, reference sheets, dos and don'ts posters, a patient code of conduct, audio clips, and learning resources.
- Designed to help Medical Office Staff in managing challenging encounters while promoting healthier, safer, and more inclusive clinic environments.

2025-2026 Key Accomplishments

Community physicians are required by WorkSafeBC to support the safety of their staff. New tools, released July 2025, are now available on the Community Physician Health and Safety (CPHS) web portal, designed to equip medical office staff (MOS) with information and strategies to help reduce workplace stress, conflict, and potential violence in community medical settings.

The MOS De-escalation Tools consist of free printable guides, reference sheets, dos and don'ts posters, a patient code of conduct, and learning resources. These are designed to help MOS in managing challenging patient encounters while promoting safer, more inclusive clinic environments. Nineteen MOS across urban, rural, and remote regions piloted the tools and community physicians from around the province provided direct input, ensuring community needs were met. By implementing effective communication and proper incident documentation processes, staff will be able to focus more on care and spend less time managing conflicts.

MOS REPORTED PILOT STATISTICS

86%

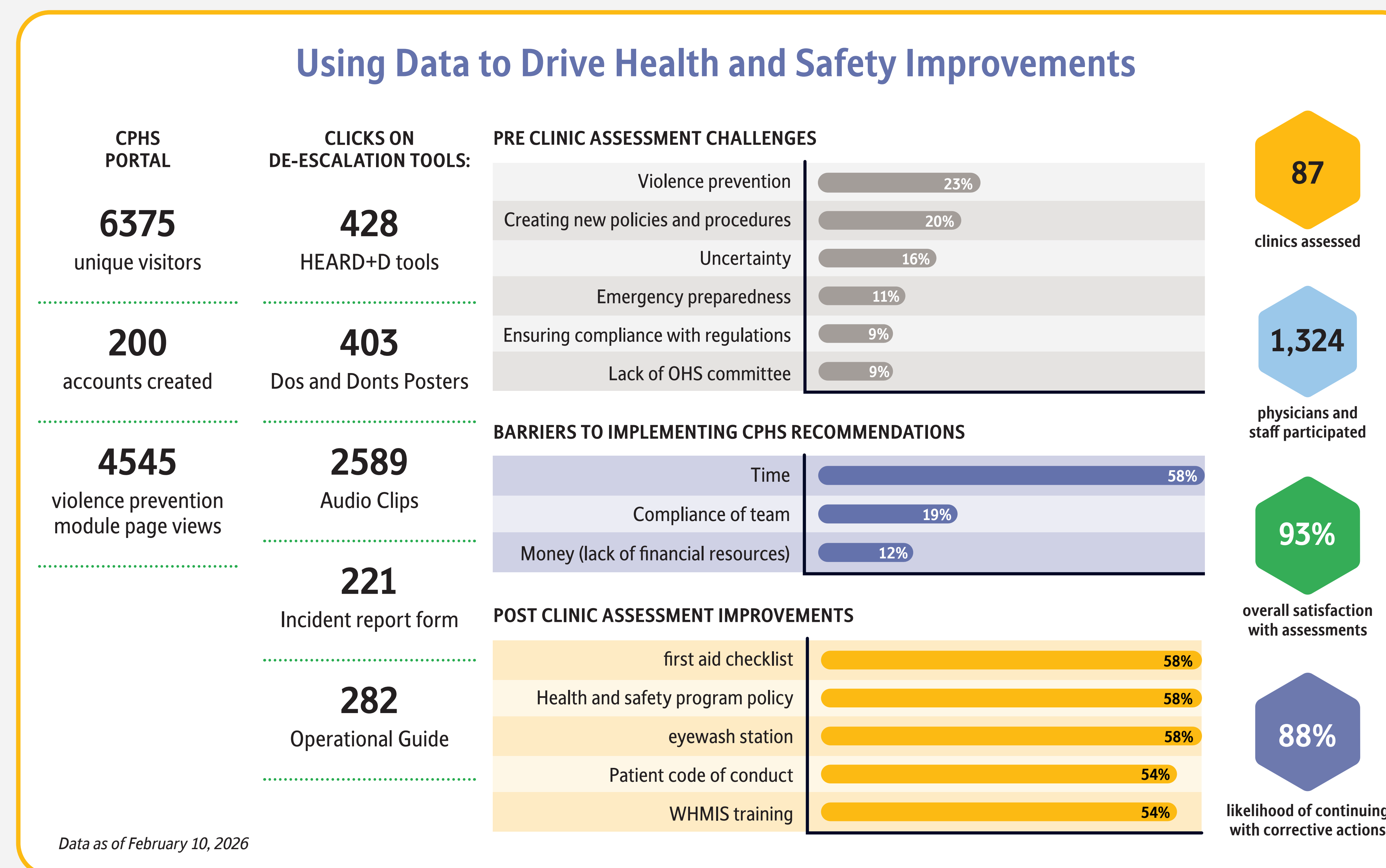
Confidence in de-escalating

89%

Satisfaction with HEARD+D tool

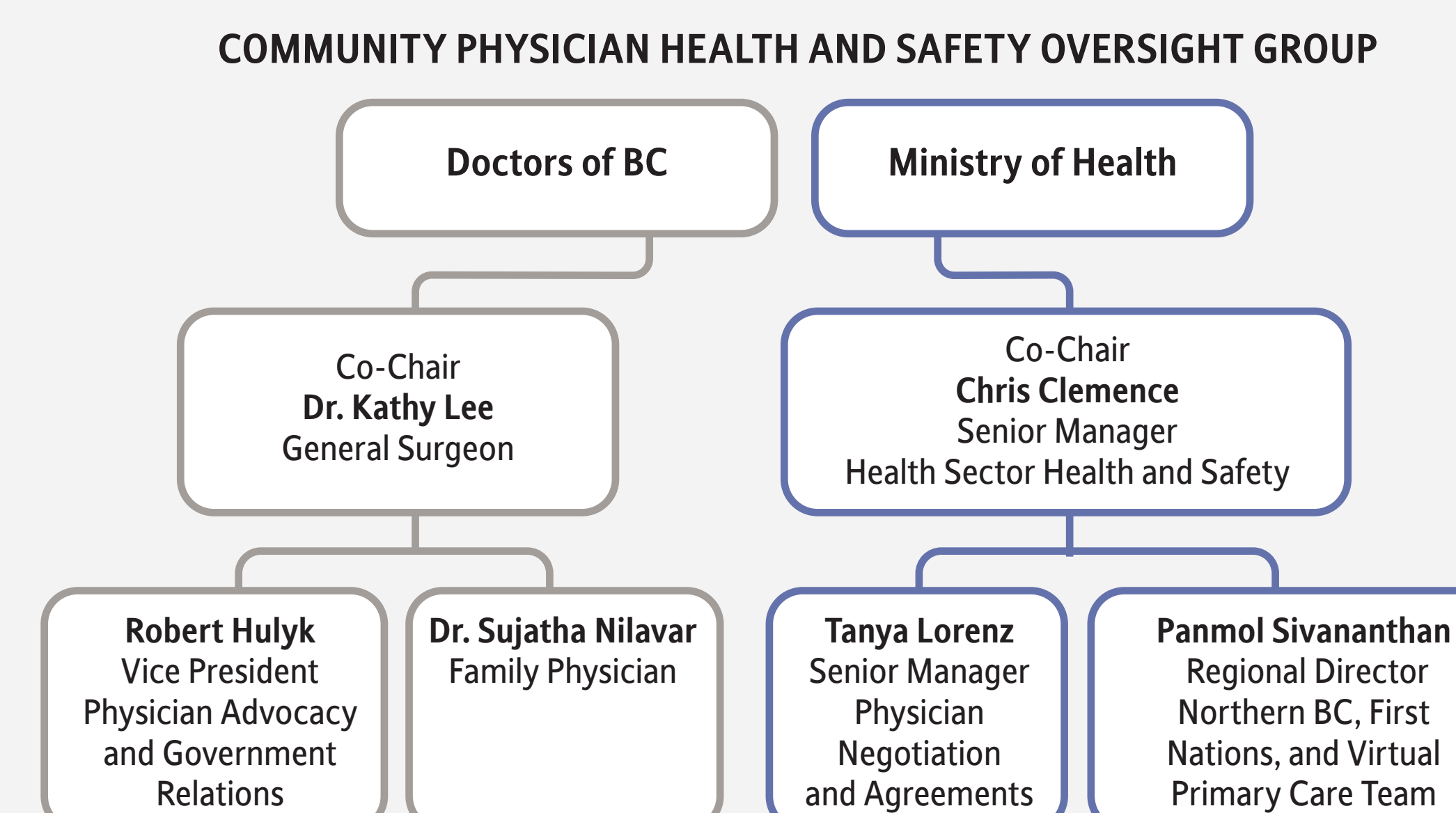
What Changed This Year

- Focus on supporting violence prevention and de-escalation in community medical clinics.
- Guest lectures on de-escalation tools to post-secondary Medical Office Assistant students.
- Increased clinic assessment participation in northern B.C.
- 3-part accredited webinar series on CPHS web portal's health and safety topics.



Governance and Physician Involvement

The 2022 Physician Health and Safety Agreement establishes the Community Physician Health and Safety Oversight Group. This Group is composed of representatives from the Doctors of BC and the Ministry of Health and provides governance and oversight to SWITCH BC to develop and manage the program. A physician task group composed of Doctors of BC members, that includes both family physicians and specialists, informed development of the program, including new de-escalation tools. Community physicians and staff are invited to review and pilot new resources, and provide ongoing program feedback.



Reflections and Looking Ahead: 2026 – 2027 Priorities

- Increase clinic assessments provincewide including specialist clinics and rural and remote locations.
- Gather feedback from physician interviews for clinic assessment quality improvement.
- Web portal enhancements and additions including clinic policies, procedures, safe work practices, and more.
- Guest lectures with faculties of medicine as well as post-secondary medical office staff programs on violence prevention and de-escalation tools.
- Requested by task group: new incident management and customized de-escalation tools tailored for physicians.
- Increase program awareness through regional presentations to physicians coordinated through Divisions of Family Practice.

"The program was really helpful for us. They gave us a great report on both things we were doing well, but also things we could work on to improve over time. It hasn't caused us a lot more work, and I believe we are a better employer as a result".

– Community Physician



Collaborate with our team at cphs@switchbc.ca

SWITCH BC humbly and respectfully acknowledges the unceded and traditional lands of approximately 200 distinct First Nations and the self-governing treaty territories in British Columbia.

