Thank you for continuing to be part of our FHS community in 2019. The focus of this year has been to consolidate and implement our Research and Academic Strategic Plans. Our annual report highlights how FHS faculty, students, and our local, national and international partners have coalesced around six core research areas, grounded in our values of social justice and reduction of health inequalities, to find real-world solutions to challenges in mental health and addictions, infectious diseases, health systems and policy, developmental trajectories of health and disease across the human life course. We are in a period of faculty renewal and welcomed two indigenous health scholars, a cancer surveillance researcher, and a social epidemiologist in 2019. Our hiring will continue in 2020.

We have completed our consultation on the new FHS Student Commons and are excited that construction will begin in January 2020. The space will enhance the student experience, with career and synergistic non-academic programming aimed to connect and build community. We will have the grand opening in fall 2020, to align with the 15th anniversary of the faculty and hope our alumni and community will join us. As always, please keep in touch and share your updates, career moves, and successes.

Tania Bubela
Professor and Dean
At this year’s Surrey Fire Fighters Lecture, experts from the BC Centre for Substance Use and Canadian Drug Policy Coalition discussed the implications of the legalization of cannabis and how it can play a role in addressing the overdose crisis. Evidence-based drug education is key to protecting youth.

Charlotte Waddell and the Children’s Health Policy Centre marked the closure of research interviews for the BC Healthy Connections Project in December. The randomized controlled trial assessing the Nurse-Family Partnership program involves intensive home visits by nurses to 739 young mothers and their 744 children, which continue until children’s second birthday. The goal of the project is to learn how we can improve children’s mental health and development.

For mental health patients who have been involuntarily hospitalized, not being able to understand English can be a huge barrier to getting the information they need about their rights. Iva Cheung and a team of SFU researchers created a new guide published in eight different languages to help patients receive better care in the long term.

Prenatal stress experienced by the mother during pregnancy - and even before they conceive - not only impacts the mother’s health but can also impact her developing fetus. Research by Nadine Provençal and Pablo Nepomnaschy shows that maternal stress can affect how people respond to stress later in life.

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Joy Johnson and Tania Bubela were elected as 2019 Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada. A leader in sex and gender research, Johnson is shaping Canada’s health research landscape to better represent women. Bubela combines her legal and life sciences training to study the impact and regulation of health biotechnology innovations.

Emily Li and her classmates created a radon testing awareness campaign called The Bark Side of Radon in Anne-Marie Nicol’s HSCI 412 class. The group’s work compelled industry partner Radon Environmental to hire Li over the summer to develop the project into a national campaign.

Trudeau Scholar Kody Doxtater’s research aims to reduce commercial tobacco use and addiction in Indigenous communities. Using traditional Indigenous tobacco culture, he hopes to re-create the conditions to establish healthy relationships with the tobacco plant as an agent of health and well-being.

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