

Peer Health Educators 2023-2024

Volunteer Position Description

Working within the Student Health & Wellbeing portfolio (which includes Student Health Services, Counselling Services, Health Promotion and Education, and the Student Recovery Community), the Health Promotion & Education team is responsible for initiatives that enhance student health and wellbeing for individuals and communities at UBC. The [Wellness Centre](#) and the Peer Health Educators are two of these initiatives.

Program Overview

Through weekly training sessions, Peer Health Educators (PHEs) will learn about:

- Health education, facilitation, and wellbeing topics relevant for students,
- Develop and practice skills of presenting for diverse groups,
- Contribute to annual wellbeing campaigns and events, and
- Expand their understanding of health equity, social justice and decolonization.

Volunteers are expected to contribute 5-6 hours per week, which includes weekly 1.5 hour in-person training.

Students will join a diverse community of volunteers who share their interests in health & wellbeing and work together to provide outreach and education to the UBC student community. Students will learn from the Health Promotion & Education staff through ongoing support, training, and feedback. Students will also contribute to our campus health education and give back to the UBC student community!

Equity Statement

We want our program to reflect the diversity and experiences of students across campus. We encourage students from underrepresented groups to apply, including but not limited to Indigenous students, international students, students with disabilities, people of colour, Black students, 2SLGBTQIA+ (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual) students and people from other historically, persistently and systemically marginalized communities. We welcome you to self-identify if you belong to any of these groups.

We also recognize that volunteering is a privilege. The expected 5-6 hours/week time commitment may not be feasible for some students who need accommodations based on chronic health conditions, disabilities, mental health, and/or other lived experiences. If you have specific accommodations with regards to your ability to participate and contribute to the 5-6 hours/week time commitment, we will work with successful applicants to co-develop a specific plan for their participation in the program.

COVID-19 impacts

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, the details of this role may change based on public health recommendations. We anticipate that this role will take place mostly in person, with some online hybrid options.

What you will do in this program

1. Program-specific tasks

All Peer Health Educators will receive general training on student health and wellbeing, health promotion, and campus resources. PHEs will also role model student leadership to the UBC campus community.

Peer Health Educators may do the following based on their topic-specific team:

- Facilitate workshops & lead skill-building sessions with campus groups to help UBC students to develop wellbeing skills
- Engage with and educate students through interactive booths
- Plan and implement wellbeing events and activities
- Design social media content for the UBC Wellness Centre

2. Topic-specific tasks

In addition to the above, all Peer Health Educators will join a topic-specific team and will receive training and contribute to activities related to the following health streams:

Sexual Health & Relationships:

- This team runs the Wellness Centre's [Sexual Health Shop](#) - this includes weekly shifts, sales, and education about safer sex and sexual health.
- Topics covered: Safer sex, healthy relationships with self and others, STIs, contraception, consent, 2SLGBTQIA+ identities, reproductive health, pleasure and sex toys, body image and diet culture, sexual assault and violence.

Substance Use Health:

- This team will offer harm reduction supplies and education, including fentanyl test strips and naloxone training through weekly shifts in the Wellness Centre.
- Topics covered: Harm reduction, anti-stigma, health & recovery supports, drug literacy, naloxone & drug testing education, intersections with sexual violence.

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

- This team will facilitate skill-building workshops by request to community partners.
- Topics covered: mental health literacy, mental health resources, understanding stress and burnout, setting boundaries with self and others, holistic approaches to understanding mental health, relationship with technology, the intersections of physical and social wellbeing with mental health (sleep, physical activity, eating well, social connections, and giving back).

Time commitments

The Peer Health Educator program's expected commitment will mostly take place from August 2023-April 2024, the expectation is 5-6 hours of commitment including the 1.5-hour weekly training. See the equity statement above regarding specific accommodations you may need for your participation.

Training

Expected training for the 2023-2024 academic year includes:

- **Peer Health Educators Meet and Greet** – April 5th, 2023 from 4:45-5:30pm
- **Peer Programs Welcome** – April 12th, 2023 from 11am-1pm
- **Summer Online Training:**
 - **Asynchronous Online:** Canvas content and other program readings to be completed between May and August 2023. These will be reviewed at the PHE Training in August.
 - **Synchronous Online Training:** August 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th 2023 Wednesdays from 5-6:30pm, weekly sessions to prepare you for the role in the upcoming school year. Summer training will be online only.
- **Term In-Person Training:**
 - **In person PHE Core Training Part 1:** Saturday, September 9th, 2023 from 9am-12pm
 - **In person PHE Core Training Part 2:** Saturday, January 13th, 2024 from 9am-12pm
 - **90-minute weekly Wednesday training**
 - **Term 1:** Every Wednesday from 5-6:30pm, Sept 6th to Nov 29th, 2023
 - **Term 2:** Every Wednesday from 5-6:30pm, beginning January 10th to April 3rd, 2024

Please note: The expectation is for students to attend all training sessions. Successful applicants are asked to have no other commitments (e.g. class, other extracurricular commitments) during these training times to ensure that PHEs are part of the community and are prepared for the role.

Summary of Weekly Time Commitment

Our Peer Health Educators receive a variety of learning opportunities & training through the program. We ask that the successful applicant dedicate sufficient time to this position to learn, grow, and succeed, and as such we expect the following:

Beginning in September, a minimum contribution of 5-6 hours per week is expected from volunteers as follows:

- 90-minute weekly Wednesday training
- Weekly shifts in the Wellness Centre depending on the topic team
- Planning and preparation for events and activities
- Social content creation
- Facilitation of education, booths, presentations and services based on topic team.

These hours are variable and will become available for sign up based on event and outreach schedules and times. Events and outreach will happen in person and online and can take place during the day, in the evenings, and on weekends.

Desired Skills and Strengths

The Peer Health Educator volunteer position would be a good fit for those with some of the following:

- Passionate about student health and wellbeing, sexual health, substance use health, mental health & wellbeing
- Interest in exploring the intersections of systemic oppression, equity, diversity and inclusion with health and wellbeing
- A desire to learn and develop new skills through experiential learning
- Interest in developing presentation and facilitation skills
- Be flexible and open to change and receptive to constructive feedback
- Strong organizational and time management skills
- Enjoy meeting new people and leading groups
- Enjoy working collaboratively with others on projects
- Take initiative and is self-motivated

Contact Details

For questions about the Peer Health Educator program, please contact Henry Lai, Health Promotion Specialist, at henry.lai@ubc.ca.