



# Annual Report 2022-2023

# Creating Connections

# Table of Contents

About the Alliance	1/2
Message from the Board Chair	3
Message from the Executive Director	4
Our Work: Convening the Community	5/6/7
Our Work: Knowledge Mobilization	8/9/10
Our Work: Focusing Action for Positive Change Grant Program	11/12/13
A Look Ahead to 2023-2024	14
Connect with Us	15

# About the Alliance

The PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being is an independent and incorporated non-profit organization mandated to create conditions for positive change that advance resiliency and improve the mental well-being of all Islanders. The Alliance launched in 2021 as a response to community-informed recommendations with a specific intention to focus and accelerate activities at the prevention end of the spectrum.

Day-to-day, the Alliance serves as a backbone support, providing leadership, coordination, and communication.

## Our Goal

All people living on PEI have an equal opportunity to achieve and maintain the best possible mental well-being throughout their lifetime.

## Our Mandate

The Government of PEI has mandated the Alliance to provide leadership, coordination, and communications related to mental well-being on PEI by:

- Developing, catalysing, and disseminating with its partners, a dynamic and pragmatic 'whole of PEI' collaboration around a common vision of mental well-being;
- Building relationships, consulting, and co-operating with and among governments, not-for-profit, academic, business, professional and voluntary organizations in matters related to mental well-being;
- Contributing to the effective understanding and knowledge mobilization around a common knowledge base to inform mental well-being actions;
- Facilitating and contributing to the development and application of professional development and capacity building on mental well-being;
- Promoting and assisting in the development of realistic and effective policies and programs aimed at improving mental well-being; and
- Championing a comprehensive, ongoing communications approach to inform partners and all Islanders of collective efforts focused on mental well-being.

# Our Work

The Alliance achieves its mandate through three interconnected pillars of work:

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## Convening the Community

In its backbone support role, the Alliance works to facilitate connections and be a catalyst for coordinating action.

## Knowledge Mobilization

The Alliance fosters widespread understanding around mental well-being and the science of resilience to build a common knowledge base across the province.

## Focusing Action for Positive Change Grant Program

The Alliance administers this annual funding program to support the delivery of projects and initiatives that can improve mental well-being outcomes for people living on PEI.



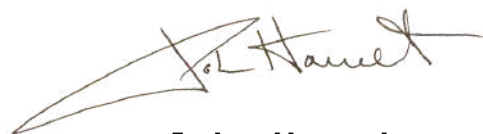
# Message from the Board Chair

It is a pleasure to present the PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being's 2022-2023 Annual Report.

I want to thank the Alliance's Board and staff for their efforts this past year. The work to reach communities, bring people together, and deliver on the Focusing Action for Positive Change Grant Program demonstrates a strong commitment to improving mental well-being outcomes for people living on PEI.

As an organization, the Alliance continues to be guided by the community. This year, we added two additional Directors to our Board: Claudette Gallant and Annette Ryan, both of whom came to us ready to collaborate and stepped into the role with profound personal interest.

I look forward to 2023-2024 and seeing the Alliance move forward with the organizational strength it has developed.



**John Horrealt**  
Board Chair

# Message from the Executive Director

The 2022-2023 year has been energizing and fulfilling.

Our first few months saw the expansion of our team, which added focused communications, programming, and outreach expertise. This extra capacity helped us build on our engagement and outreach efforts from the previous year. Alongside recipients of our Grant Program, we travelled to each county to meet with people living and working on PEI. This outreach led to a series of events and workshops starting in late summer that fostered important connections within the mental well-being landscape.

As an organization involved in funding, we wanted to ensure that our Grant Program infrastructure allowed for fair application processes and met the needs of those engaging with it. With each grant cycle, we adapted and fine-tuned elements of the Grant Program as a response to feedback received. These enhancements aligned with our desire to lead in a new direction of partnership with grantees and the community.

Our focus on partnerships was not limited to the Grant Program though. Building relationships with a variety of interested individuals, organizations, and groups was a priority for our team. In getting to know others and creating connections, we were able to build trust, share resources, and find ways to amplify one another. I talk about our partners with pride and anticipate widening that network further in the coming months.

Like last year, our team worked hard to support the Alliance as it grew and adapted. Without fail, they encouraged innovative action and made it happen. Their desire to form strong relationships with community members was an asset to our work. I look at the year ahead with great enthusiasm and motivation as we continue working together to ensure that people living on PEI can achieve and maintain the best mental well-being throughout their lifetimes.



**Karen Cumberland**  
Executive Director

# Our Work:

## Convening the Community

**"The Alliance is encouraging collaboration..."**  
**- Creating Connections Workshop Participant**

Throughout the year, the Alliance was able to gather hundreds of people together. From focused meetings to group workshops, ideas were shared, and actions were shaped.

Our first formal workshop was held in August 2022 at the Credit Union Place in Summerside. Facilitated by Michel Perron from MP Strategies Group, the Creating Connections Workshop guided participants through activities to build and explore the vast spectrum of partnerships. Michel brought expertise to the table from his past experiences in partnership development with community groups, non-profit organizations, and the United Nations. In a feedback survey, participants noted that the day provided a valuable opportunity to step away from the office and engage with their colleagues. Some also expressed appreciation for intentional time to consider what partnerships have looked like and how they might look different in the future.



Soon after the workshop, our team members began mapping out a storytelling celebration that would take place in November 2022. The celebration would recognize several achievements, including:

- The dedicated work of grantees from the 2021-2022 Round of the Grant Program.
- Seven new grantees funded for projects or initiatives.
- The Alliance's first targeted investment under the Grant Program.
- The Alliance's first year of operations.



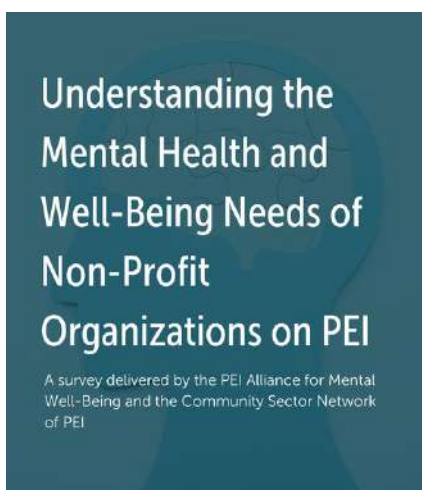
Initiative to Impact: Stories that Lead Us Forward was held at the Carriage House in Charlottetown on November 25. Close to 70 individuals gathered to hear about efforts being made across PEI to improve mental well-being outcomes. Vanessa Bradley from PEERS Alliance and Shawn Hogan from the PEI Writers' Guild spoke about the skills acquired by youth in their ongoing Queer Youth Group Writing Club. Lindsay Connolly from Under the Spire Music Festival led a group singing exercise and talked through their efforts to make music programming inclusive and accessible. Sweta Daboo from the PEI Coalition for Women in Government spoke about their partnership with the Federation of PEI Municipalities to lead quarterly networking and development sessions for women serving in municipal government across the province.

The new year brought more opportunities to build and nurture partnerships. In January, a partnership with the Community Sector Network of PEI (CSN PEI) increased our awareness and understanding of the mental health and well-being realities of individuals working in non-profit organizations. In a digital survey, over 80 respondents shared their stories and perspectives on how events in recent years have impacted culture and morale at work.

Understanding the Mental Health and Well-Being Needs of Non-Profit Organizations on PEI report was released in March 2023. Key survey results included:

- High employee morale is trending downward. 49% of respondents ranked staff morale at 4 out of 5 prior to the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Only 27% ranked staff morale at 4 out of 5 post-Hurricane Fiona.
- 74% of respondents reported seeing signs of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion in their staff.
- The top three factors negatively impacting the mental well-being and morale of staff and volunteers were reported as: fatigue from juggling work/home responsibilities (73%), increasing demands from personal responsibilities (70%), and pivoting priorities based on current activities and needs in our community (52%).
- The top three factors positively impacting the mental well-being and morale of staff and volunteers were reported as: workplace culture (64%), workplace colleagues (64%), and flexible work hours (64%).

As a follow up to the report, the Alliance and CSN PEI hosted a workshop in May 2023. The workshop offered non-profit representatives the opportunity to gather, discuss the report's observations, and consider collaborative ways to address current issues impacting their mental well-being.



March 2023



# Our Work: Knowledge Mobilization

“Knowledge mobilization occurs when research knowledge is applied to help facilitate real-world impact on policy and society.” - Toronto Metropolitan University

Bringing research knowledge into the “real world” is never an easy task. It takes significant translation, creativity, engagement, and time. Yet, the outcomes can be remarkable.

A foundational goal of the Alliance has been to build awareness around the science of resilience. One of the first efforts was the Resiliency Roadshow in June 2022. Members of the Alliance Board and staff visited Wellington, Charlottetown, and Cardigan to host free workshops focused on the science of resilience. Each event had a presentation about the Alliance, speeches from grantees, and activities that brought the principles of the science to life.

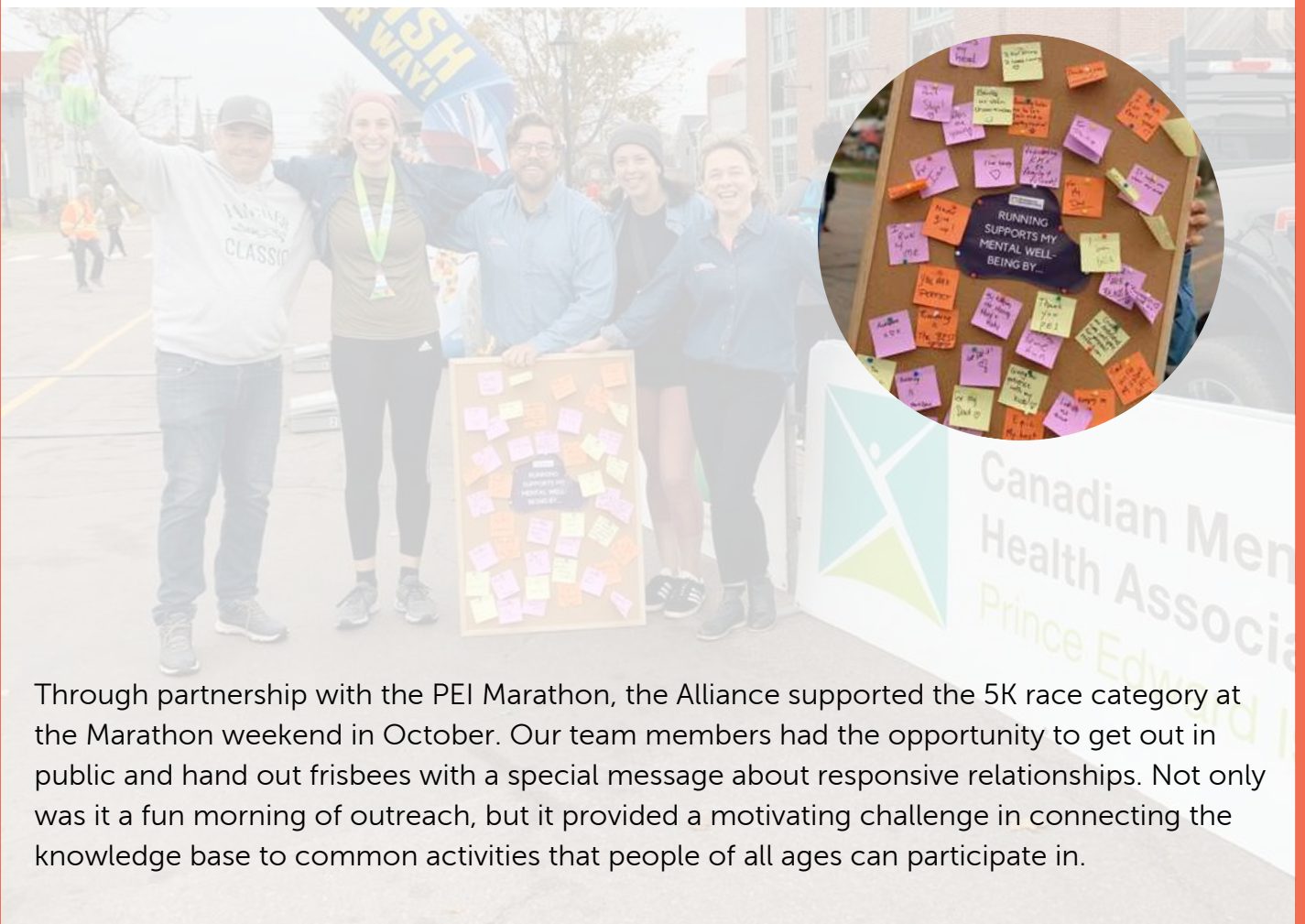


Shortly after the Roadshow, we invited grantees from the 2021-2022 Round of the Grant Program to participate in a Community of Practice Masterclass. Led by Carlene Donnelly, Executive Director of CUPS Calgary, and Amanda Rae Storteboom, former Director of Integration and Special Projects at CUPS Calgary, the Masterclass worked with participants to explore communicating and evaluating their work in the context of the science of resilience.

"It's incredibly invaluable because it sparks ideas. You can learn from each other and collectively you feel that you're working toward a common goal... which is bettering the mental well-being of all Islanders."

- Masterclass Participant

In September, we welcomed four students from UPEI's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program for a four-month practicum placement. The students worked with the Alliance team to explore knowledge mobilization opportunities that could lead to embedding elements of Brain Story Certification across the province and within the UPEI Nursing curriculum.



Through partnership with the PEI Marathon, the Alliance supported the 5K race category at the Marathon weekend in October. Our team members had the opportunity to get out in public and hand out frisbees with a special message about responsive relationships. Not only was it a fun morning of outreach, but it provided a motivating challenge in connecting the knowledge base to common activities that people of all ages can participate in.

November was a busy month for the Alliance. Nancy Mannix, Patron of the Palix Foundation, visited the province to present on the work of the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative and two of its signature resources that we use: the Resiliency Scale metaphor and the Brain Story Certification course. Over 112 people registered for the Masterclass, which was graciously hosted at UPEI's Alumni Hall.



In the early weeks of 2023, a development in knowledge mobilization efforts occurred as the Alliance team began to explore the idea of a group that could come together to advance research related to mental well-being on PEI. As a first step, a preliminary environmental scan of current mental health research was completed internally and presented at a multi-disciplinary research meeting in January 2023. From that meeting, the PEI Mental Well-Being Research Advisory Table was created and efforts to populate the Table were made over the rest of the fiscal year. During this time, members began planning for a Research Forum in late 2023 that would build a common research agenda and action plan.

# Our Work: Focusing Action for Positive Change Grant Program

The Focusing Action for Positive Change Grant Program is an annual funding mechanism that supports PEI non-profit and charitable organizations to deliver projects and initiatives that can improve mental well-being outcomes for people living on PEI.

In the 2022-2023 year, we opened the Grant Program for two cycles (one opened in June, and another opened in December). The Innovations and Creating Connections streams were open in the summer cycle while the winter cycle accepted applications for the Enhanced Support stream.

Building on the support initially offered in the first round of the Grant Program, Alliance team members worked to create a variety of opportunities that would suit the needs of many applicants.

- Virtual coaching workshops with experts from the field of brain development, such as Dr. Nicole Sherren.
- Collaborative events like the Creating Connections workshop.
- Virtual and in-person one-on-one coaching with the Grant Program team.



# Summer Cycle Grantees

- Island Nature Trust
- PEI Coalition for Women in Government
- Lung Association of NS and PEI
- Generation XX
- Native Council of PEI
- PEI Association for Community Living
- River Clyde Pageant
- Health Research Network (Targeted Investment)

# Winter Cycle Grantees

- CHANCES
- Paramedic Association of PEI
- Milton Community Hall
- BGC Charlottetown and Montague
- Reach Foundation
- Creative PEI
- PRIDE PEI Inc.
- Recreation PEI
- PEI Humane Society (Targeted Investment)



“  
 My motivation to quit vaping came from the health effects it had on me. I've definitely struggled with mental health and realized that it makes me very anxious when I'm constantly using nicotine  
 ”

PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being  
 Advancing resilience

-19 year old student from Prince Edward Island

**WILD CHILD**

**2023 Winter Nature Immersion visits**

Free facilitated outdoor play-based learning for groups on PEI!

**Request Form is LIVE**

PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being | SIERRA CLUB CANADA FOUNDATION | PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FUND

Queer youth & allies ages 12 - 18

Come write with us!

**2SLGBTQ+**

**Queer Youth Writing Club**

**March 13 & 27**

6 - 8 pm at the PEERS Alliance Office  
 250 B Queen St.

PEOWG | PEERS ALLIANCE | PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being

**Fostering Resilience In Women Municipal Leaders**

Charlottetown Library Learning Centre

January 28th, 2023  
 9:00am to 4:00pm

PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being | PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND | COALITION FOR WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT | FEDERATION OF MUNICIPALITIES

Has your mental health impacted your artistic practice?

How can we help improve your mental well-being?

**Let us know.**

[creativepei.ca/wellbeing](http://creativepei.ca/wellbeing)







**THE CREATIVE WELL-BEING INITIATIVE**

# A Look Ahead to 2023-2024

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2023-2024 is shaping up to be a busy year for the Alliance. Operations within our pillars of work will continue to evolve and we will build on initiatives from past years.

Other priorities include:

-  Delivering a third year of the Focusing Action for Positive Change Grant Program.
-  Increasing digital and in-person outreach across PEI, with a focus on rural areas.
-  Creating more opportunities for those working within the mental well-being landscape to convene.
-  Exploring opportunities for increasing the mental well-being of those working in the non-profit sector.
-  Facilitating tailored learning sessions for Brain Story Certification and other knowledge-based activities for frontline workers.
-  Working with the Mental Well-Being Research Advisory Table to host a Provincial Mental Well-Being Research Forum and bring together the community, researchers, government, and other entities to discuss and begin the development of a common research agenda on PEI.

# Connect with Us

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Interested in the Alliance's work? Connect with us!

Email: [info@afmwb.com](mailto:info@afmwb.com)

Facebook: [PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being](#)

LinkedIn: [PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being](#)

X (formerly Twitter): [@wellbeingpei](#)

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