

A note from Polly Sutherland, Team Lead , Harm Reduction Coordinator for ANKORS East Kootenay and Moving Mountains Community Action Team Cranbrook Coordinator

Another busy year behind us with so many highlights all centered around connection, compassion and wellness.

Working closely with common ground encampment, other community partners and ANKORS programs that employ many of the peers that ankors support under our peer engagement portfolio.

The opening of the after-hours program and this winter's emergency winter response including Emergency overnight shelter along with daytime warming space and emergency cold outreach was an added community need that ANKORS once again has responded to. Response work is how I describe life these days, responding to toxic drugs that leave our most vulnerable citizens at risk of death, responding to extreme heat and cold events, responding to community partner support that we are asked to help with, responding to a 10 year anniversary since the toxic drug emergency was declared, even though we already were responding years before, responding to community backlash, hate and intolerance that not only impacts our service users, but our collective staff who show up every day, who address community stigma, who educate, who in the quiet moments are deflated.

But somehow, we push through, we find those that support us in community, we grow stronger, we make our communities better, we are better, we rise above with great strength and elegance. This is simply what Harm Reduction is! Thank you to everyone for striving for excellence every day to make life a little easier, a little gentler, a little kinder for the vulnerable people we serve every day. I'm honored to be working with you all.