

## **Civility Matters Regional Tour**

**Featuring Dr. Chris Turner, co-founder of Civility Saves Lives in the UK**

**November 13 to 19, 2024**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **How it Began....**

Dr. Yann Brierley, Pathologist and Chief of Staff at the Vernon Jubilee Hospital (VJH) was first introduced to the impact that incivility has in the healthcare setting after viewing a TEDtalk video, *When Rudeness in Teams Turns Deadly*, presented by Dr. Chris Turner, co-founder of Civility Saves Lives in the UK. In it, he speaks to the profound downstream impact that rudeness or uncivil behaviour has, often at the unintended cost of patient care. Dr. Turner is also affiliated with [civilitysaveslives.com](http://civilitysaveslives.com), a website that shares compelling data on the effects of incivility and informs the basis for the civility initiative first launched at VJH in 2021.

The need to address incivility became apparent to Dr. Brierley when he learned of the frequency and level of disrespect experienced by front-line laboratory staff at the hands of fellow healthcare staff. In subsequent discussions with other support staff departments at the hospital, it became clear that laboratory staff were not the sole recipients of mistreatment and disrespectful behavior and that messaging about the importance of civility in the workplace was required hospital-wide. This was the genesis of the Civility Matters Project and through discussion had over the years with healthcare workers at other sites, it is clear that the VJH hospital site is not unique in this regard.

The most recent 2023 Doctors of BC survey reported that roughly 40% of medical staff throughout Interior Health suffered a psychological safety event in their workplace in the last 12 months. Of the 121 survey respondents for the KGH medical staff wellness committee survey, 40% also reported being involved in or witnessing bullying, harassment, discrimination or uncivil behaviour at least once this year.

Through in-roads made with the Civility Matters Project, VJH is benefiting from improved team dynamics and performance that comes with attention paid to the importance of civility in the workplace. Motivated to improve their work environment, staff at VJH have requested the project and the initiative has spread from department to department. Such work has enthusiastic local support from both the senior medical staff and hospital operations partners and has served as important common ground for the strengthening of dyad relationships at the site. The Civility Matters initiative represents a shift in work culture at VJH and one that other physician societies/medical staff associations at other hospitals in Interior Health are keen to replicate – please see appendix 4 for project details and findings. The Regional Tour Event with Dr. Chris Turner will serve to pique burgeoning interest in workplace wellness at other IH facilities and will spotlight IH as a leader in

workplace culture work in the province. As a further resource, a Civility Matters project website ([www.4civility.ca](http://www.4civility.ca)) will be available to make implementation at the local level as low barrier as possible to engender a multisite culture shift towards civility.

## **Why Civility Matters in work environments**

Incivility in healthcare settings can lead to severe consequences, including increased staff errors, absenteeism, and disability claims, all of which exacerbate workforce shortages and negatively impact patient care.

Research from the Civility Saves Lives website highlights that exposure to **incivility** can:

- Decrease cognitive capacity by 60%
- Reduce creativity by 30%
- Impair mental processing for up to eight hours
- Distract individuals with worry about the event

Witnesses to **incivility** also experience:

- A 20% reduction in cognitive capacity
- A 50% reduction in pro-social behaviour, such as helpfulness and resource sharing

Conversely, a **civil** workplace fosters:

- A 30% increase in team productivity and performance
- A 60% increase in engagement and psychological safety
- A 90% increase in job satisfaction and enjoyment

A civility mindset aids in developing a workforce where people want to come to work, feel valued and respected at work, and are able to provide the best possible care to patients and families in the communities served. This results in improved employee attraction and retention, reduced sick time, long-term and short-term disability, WorkSafeBC claims, and preventable medical errors.

## **Spreading Civility**

The desire to address burnout, bullying, uncivil behaviour, and harassment is resounding and gaining momentum, especially in the face of the compelling data that is coming forward on the importance of civility in the workplace. The planned Regional Tour Event, featuring Dr. Chris Turner, feels timely and enjoys significant multisite medical and operational staff support and represents a tremendous opportunity for increasing engagement throughout Interior Health.

By acknowledging shared concerns and uniting towards solutions, our goal is to spread civility as the new mindset where all healthcare staff can experience significance, belonging and respect on their work team, as a compelling way to improving psychological safety, satisfaction at work and ensuring optimal patient care. This goal aligns with Interior Health's strategic plan for cultivating an engaged workforce and delivering high-quality care.

## Regional Tour Event and Objectives

Dr. Turner will facilitate two site-specific sessions for interested physicians and hospital employees at Vernon Jubilee Hospital (VJH), Kelowna General Hospital (KGH), Penticton Regional Hospital (PRH), and Royal Inland Hospital (RIH). The aim is to welcome medical staff and leadership to these talks, both as a team and on an individual level. Virtual attendance will be made available at one location (RIH) – please see appendix 2 for draft agenda for further details.

A separate Regional Conference for physicians and hospital administration will be held on November 16 at the Four Points Sheraton in Kelowna, with virtual participation available. This conference will feature three sessions on various civility topics led by Dr. Turner, with ample opportunities for questions and discussion. All three sessions will be recorded to allow for later viewing by IH staff. We plan to have these sessions CME accredited for physicians, with future train-the-trainer opportunities to empower local leaders to take ownership of their respective civility initiatives with support from not only the Civility Matters Project but also from members to organizing committee for this regional event – please see appendix 1 for planning committee members.

Session Topics:

- 1) Why civility matters in a complex world
- 2) What's your theme tune – understanding misunderstandings
- 3) Calling it out with compassion – towards a culture of safety, excellence and learning

Please see appendix 4 for **session objectives**

The event will culminate in a mixer, enabling physicians to network and share ideas socially. This will be followed by dinner with Chris to find further solutions to the challenges we face within IH.

Additionally, access to materials and resources found on the 4Civility website will be made available at these events.

Please see below for the detailed **budget** for these sessions

## The promise of a team approach to civility in the workplace

Current data and new metrics will be implemented to assess the impact of the Regional Tour. Available information from the 2023 Doctors of BC Physician Engagement survey, IH metrics around reported psychological safety events to date and data from physician led quality improvement work on physician wellness will inform and provide the baseline information. A new survey specifically designed for the event, deployed before and after the event, will be available in order to glean the value derived by participants from the event. Pre and post regional tour event survey response metrics will be analyzed, summarized and shared with Interior Health Directors in the spirit of

continued partnership and collaboration in this longitudinal work. The planning committee will engage in a post-event debrief analysis with particular emphasis on maintaining and strengthening pathways of communication to provide support for one other at our respective sites. The aim is to support one another in this work, to form strategies and develop tactics to help address systemic issues which are identified as contributing to incivility in the workplace. Based on user needs and feedback, available resources found at the 4Civility website will be modified or augmented. As event follow up, Dr. Turner is amenable to “open-mic” follow-up virtual sessions to help groups problem solve any persistent obstacles encountered in their civility journey.

**Final Comments:**

This executive summary outlines the critical importance of a civil workplace, the significance of Dr. Chris Turner's tour for healthcare staff, and the expected outcomes for Interior Health. We aim to enhance staff morale, improve patient care, and create a more engaged and supportive workplace culture by fostering a more civil environment

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Regional Civility Tour Planning Committee

Appendix 2 – Regional Civility Tour Draft Plan

Appendix 3 – Dr. Turner Session Objectives

Appendix 4 – The Vernon Jubilee Hospital (VJH) Experience

## Appendix 1

### Regional Civility Tour Planning Committee Members

<b>Vernon</b>	<b>Kelowna</b>	<b>Interior Health</b>
Dr. Yann Brierley	Dr. Deema Jassi	Jennifer Gilchrist
Sharon Hughes-Geekie	Dr. Sarah Sunderland	Devin Harris
Taylor Blake	Dr. Neil Young	Jarnail Dail
<b>Penticton</b>	Liechen Naude	Kara Grist
Dr. Danielle Weisgarber	Zeno Cescon	Ashley Gunn
Dr. Michelle Scheepers	Susan Cyr	Glenn McRae
Helen Crocker	<b>Doctors of BC</b>	Kevin Buhrmann
Kirsty Brenneman	Bill Haring	
<b>Kamloops</b>	Brent Weiss	
Dr. Kaveri Gupta		
Karen Vogel		

## Appendix 2

### Civility Tour Draft Agenda November 13 to 20, 2024

DATE/ OVERNIGHT	TIME	LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS	ACTIVITY
<b>November 13</b> Vernon	TBD	Zoom (1.5 hrs)	Civility Planning Team	Meet the Team
<b>November 14</b> Vernon	11:00 – 12:00	SLGH - TBA	Medical/Hospital Staff	Info Session, Q and A
	14:00 – 15:00	VJH – Education Room	Medical/Hospital Staff	Info Session, Q and A
	16:00 – 17:00	VJH – Education Room	Medical/Hospital Staff	Info Session, Q and A
<b>November 15</b> Kelowna	11:00 – 12:00	KGH – CAC	Medical/Hospital Staff	Info Session, Q and A
	13:00 – 14:00	KGH - CAC	Medical/Hospital Staff	Info Session, Q and A
	16:30 – 18:30	TBA	KGH Wellness Committee	Dinner and debrief
<b>November 16</b> Kelowna		Four Points at Sheraton - Kelowna	Regional Conference Open to physicians, nurse practitioners, midwives and hospital administration.	11 am to 6 pm 3 sessions, lunch and mixer 6 to 7:30 pm – Dinner – Chris and Planning Committee Debrief
<b>November 17</b> Penticton	Free Day	Overnight Penticton		
<b>November 18</b> Penticton	11:00 – 12:00	PRH – Health Unit	Medical/Hospital Staff	Info Session, Q and A
	13:00 – 14:00	PRH – Health Unit	Medical/Hospital Staff	Info Session, Q and A
<b>November 19</b> Kelowna	10:00 – 12:00	RIH – Lepin Theatre	Medical/Hospital Staff Zoom for remote communities, including outside of IH	Info Session, Q and A
	13:00 – 15:00	RIH – Lepin Theatre	Medical/Hospital Staff Zoom for remote communities, including outside of IH	Info Session, Q and A
<b>November 20</b>	Flight Home			

SLGH – Shuswap Lake General Hospital  
VJH – Vernon Jubilee Hospital  
RIH – Royal Inland Hospital

KGH – Kelowna General Hospital  
PRH – Penticton Regional Hospital

## Appendix 3

Session objectives below were provided by Dr. Turner and are placed here verbatim.

### **Session 1: Why Civility Matters in a Complex World**

Healthcare has evolved from being based solely around the individual pursuit of excellence to a practice that involves multiple healthcare professionals working together to achieve the best outcomes for patients. To do this, we have to create environments where individuals can perform at their best and then work together as teams.

Session goals

- 1) Understand the evolution of the importance of teamwork in today's healthcare world
- 2) Be able to describe the differences between simple puzzles, hard puzzles, complicated and complex situations.
- 3) Understand why equality and diversity matter at a group decision level, but that just having diversity does not mean we have inclusivity- and what we can do about that.
- 4) Understand the impact of incivility at a recipient, bystander and perpetrator level.
- 5) Understand the impact of incivility at a departmental/organisational level

### **Session 2: What's your theme tune?**

This session shows the evidence for how easily we misunderstand each other, how we fall prey to negativity bias and how, despite our beliefs, we are each misunderstood on a frequent basis. We shall look at the components of what contribute to our understanding of a situation and begin to think about how we can influence this, both as someone observing others and as the one being observed.

Session goals

- 1) Understand how easy it is to be misunderstood.
- 2) Have a framework to understand how various factors contribute to how we are comprehended by others.
- 3) Know some of the statistical evidence around the disparity between how much we think we understand and how much we do (on average) understand and how different communication modalities affect this.
- 4) Have mechanisms to bring to play if we want to be interpreted in the positive.



### **Session 3: Calling it out with compassion**

For many people, having difficult workplace conversations is one of the most important, unpleasant and avoided areas of leadership. In this session we shall look the essential nature of these interactions, why we need to have them and at the evidence base for how to have these effectively. We shall learn a structure designed to minimise distress both for the recipient and also the person initiating the conversation, leading to the best chances that they can hear the message and have the opportunity to change their behaviours.

#### Session goals

- 1) Understand the importance of the conversation around the perception of conduct.
- 2) Learn to differentiate between retributive and restorative conversations and why this is important.
- 3) Have a clear structure for who should be having the conversations.
- 4) Learn a stepwise approach to having the conversation.
- 5) Recognise the potential pitfalls of these conversations.
- 6) Discuss and rehearse how to put this into practice.

## Appendix 4

### The Civility Matters Project

In 2021 Dr. Yann Brierley set out to improve the workplace culture at Vernon Jubilee Hospital. Informed by hospital survey data, and through educational materials and training provided by a certified leadership and performance coach, the Civility Matters project has three aims:

1. To spotlight the impact that our thoughts, behaviour and actions have on the quality and consequence of our social interactions.
2. To highlight the team advantage that comes with a civility mindset and the improvement in patient care/safety that comes as a result.
3. To empower staff with an effective toolkit of skills to use when confronted with incivility.

After a four-month intervention at VJH, a survey among 23 physicians and 53 non-physician hospital staff found that:

- 50% of respondents reported a noticeable decline in general forms of rudeness, such as sighing, huffing, belittling comments, and dismissive gestures.
- 80% of survey respondents responded “yes” to the statement: “I am treated with dignity and respect on a daily basis – an increase from 65%.
- 82% of respondents responded “yes” to the statement: “The Civility Matters training provided had a positive impact at work”.

Informed by lessons learned along the way, the project includes a clear roadmap outlining the steps and elements necessary to engender a positive shift in workplace culture. This guiding document can be found at the [4civility](#) website.