BRIEFING NOTE:	Network Partner Admission, Partnerships and Sponsorship: Direction Sought	
Prepared For:	Board of Directors	
Prepared By:	Jen Baker, Executive Director	October 23, 2026

Purpose: This note requests direction on two questions before scoping revenue diversification for the interim strategic plan: whether there are sectors or organizations the Board does not want approached about Network Partner membership or sponsorship, and how new Network Partners will be approved from here.

Background: The strategic plan ends December 31, 2026, and the Board is asked to recommend a one-year interim plan during the ED transition and organization assessment. Partner contributions are the main revenue line; the standard fee of $5,000 has not changed since 2010; and on October 8, 2025, the Board agreed to hold fee increases until the value proposition work is complete, and no fee change is being proposed at this time. The Executive Director has reviewed the Articles of Incorporation, By-law No. 1, the Board Conflict of Interest policy, the fall 2024 Membership and Partnership Committee report and the Board minutes from February 2024 to July 2026; no legal advice has been obtained.

Provisions in the governing documents:

- **Who may be a Network Partner:** The Articles authorize one class of members (Schedule B) and place no restrictions on the Corporation's activities (item 5). By-law s. 3.1 opens membership to “public, private, not-for-profit health and/or social, health-related or leadership-related organizations which are interested in furthering the Corporation’s purposes.” For-profit organizations are eligible on the face of the text; “health-related” and “leadership-related” are not defined. Innovative Medicines Canada (2010) and HIROC (2019) are already partners. The 2024 committee read the by-law the same way and recommended exploring “private sector, insurance companies, charities, start-ups”.
- **How partners are admitted today:** Section 3.1 allows admission by the Members or “in such other manner as may be determined by the Board.” The Board has in practice approved partners itself, by motion (February 20, 2025) or by assent recorded as information (April 23, 2026), but no resolution or operating policy has ever set the process; there is no written screening or onboarding step.
- **Sponsorship:** Neither the Articles nor the by-laws discuss sponsorship, and nothing prohibits it. On April 9, 2025, the Board recorded that CHLNet has no sponsorship policy and should create one, non-commercial and framed on member benefit; this work has yet to be undertaken. The KPMG relationship has grown meeting by meeting since then, all in-kind, with a July 16, 2026, action to convert it to revenue.
- **What the Board can do by policy:** Under s. 2.6, the Board can adopt admission criteria, an admission procedure, a dues schedule and a sponsorship policy by Ordinary Resolution, with no change to the by-law. Should a second class of member be considered, it would require an Articles amendment by Special Resolution of the Members.

Questions for the Board:

1. "**No-go" spaces for membership:** Within s. 3.1, are there sectors the Board would treat as outside CHLNet's membership, or would not want approached, regardless of fit? Likely scoping cases include health insurers and benefits carriers, pharmaceutical and life sciences manufacturers, consulting and professional services firms, health technology vendors, and provincial or territorial bodies whose national counterpart is already a partner.
2. "**No-go" spaces for sponsorship:** Is the Board open to organizations supporting CHLNet's work (event or series sponsorship, project funding, in-kind) without membership or voting rights, under a policy that sets conditions: alignment with CHLNet's purposes, no sponsor influence over content, speakers, research or tools, public disclosure, a ceiling on any single sponsor's share of revenue, and director conflict handling?
3. **Admission route:** Does the Board want to keep approving new partners itself (Executive Director screens and recommends; Board approves at a meeting, or the Chair between meetings with ratification), and have that written down as an operating policy in January 2027, with the dues questions settled in the same document?

Key considerations: Several Network Partners work in the same leadership space, and industry support is the category most likely to draw partner reaction; a written policy approved before any approach is made, and the listening tour, mitigate reputational risk associated with potential changes. The Executive Director's concurrent OPA role and independent consulting are disclosed to the Chair, and any proposed partner or sponsor touching either would be declared in advance under the Conflict-of-Interest policy.

Recommendation: The Executive Director requests that the Board:

1. Name any sectors or organizations it considers off limits for membership or sponsorship approaches.
2. Indicate whether it is open to non-member support under a policy, and which conditions it wants written in; if so, direct the Executive Director to bring a draft Sponsorship and Partnership policy to the January 15, 2027, meeting.
3. Confirm the admission route and direct the Executive Director to bring an admission and dues procedure as an operating policy in January 2027.

Conclusion: Direction on these questions supports scoping revenue diversification within the boundaries the Board has set and puts partner admission on a recorded footing. Both recommended policies sit within the Board's authority under s. 2.6; neither changes who CHLNet's Members are or requires a change to the by-law.