CHLNet Board Meeting
July 16th, 2026 – 1:00 to 2:30 Eastern Time
Minutes

Board Members:
Scott Malcolm (Chair)
Valerie Grdisa
Dawn Thomas
Melissa Braithwaite
Tina Edmonds

Regrets:
Carolyn Pullen
Tiffany Boyd
Zaina Asfour (note-taker)

Invited Guests:
Deanne (Dee) Taylor (Senior Research Advisor, CHLNet)
Kelly Grimes (Chief Executive Officer, CHLNet)

1. Consent Agenda

1.1 Land Acknowledgement and Conflict of Interest
The meeting opened with the Land Acknowledgement. Board members were invited to declare any conflicts of interest relating to the agenda items. No conflicts were noted.

1.2 Welcome to New Board Members
The Board welcomed new members **Dawn Thomas, Melissa Braithwaite and Tina Edmonds**.

1.3 June Financial Statements
The June income and balance sheet statements were received for information.
The Board noted that CHLNet's cash position remains positive with approximately **$97,000 cash on hand**. It was also noted that several partners have outstanding payments despite having received two reminders.

1.4 Courses of Action
The Courses of Action document was received for information.

1.5 Committee List
The updated Committee List was received for information.

1.6 CHLNet Progress Report
The CHLNet Progress Report was received for information. The report provides an overview of CHLNet's work to date against the four Courses of Action and will serve as a useful reference for the incoming Executive Director and Board members.

1.7 Approval of April Board Minutes
The April Board minutes were presented for approval.
Motion: To approve the April Board minutes.
Moved by: Valerie Grdisa
Seconded by: Dawn Thomas
Decision: Approved. All in favour.

---

2. CHLNet Structure and Functioning

2.1 CEO Succession Planning: Board Subcommittee Report
Scott provided an update on the CEO succession planning process. The Board is now moving forward with a shortlist of candidates. The recruitment project plan prepared by *Mullen Leadership Recruitment* was included in the meeting package, with a final decision anticipated by the end of July. Scott reported positively on the work of the recruitment team, noting that the process had generated hundreds of applicants. Following the initial screening and interviews, the candidate pool had

been reduced from four candidates to two. Interviews with the final two candidates are scheduled for July 27. Valerie confirmed consensus regarding the proposed three-member Board subcommittee supporting the recruitment process.

Action: Continue the CEO recruitment process with the shortlisted candidates and proceed with final interviews.

2.2 Secretariat Contracts Update

The Board discussed updates to the Secretariat contracts, including the CEO, advisors and coordinator roles. Kelly confirmed that she had agreed to remain with CHLNet through the end of September, for up to six days per month, to support continuity and maintain essential operations. Her work will focus on keeping key functions moving forward, including the LEADS Refresh, MOAs, bill payments and other operational requirements. It was also confirmed that Zaina Asfour's coordinator contract will be extended to the end of November at 10 days per month.

Scott and Maria had also discussed the advisor complement. Given the work underway through the *Canadian Learning Collaborative for Health Leadership* and other evidence-building activities, the Board supported extending Deanne Taylor's Senior Research Advisor contract through the end of the year. Stephen has indicated that he is ready to step away from his role as Senior Policy Advisor as a new individual comes onboard.

2.3 Emeritus

The Board discussed CHLNet's *Emeritus* designation. It was noted that the emeritus concept was established more than ten years ago to recognize individuals who have made a substantial contribution to advancing CHLNet's purpose. Emeritus members provide advice to the CEO/Executive Director and are expected to be retired from a full-time executive position and to have represented a Network Partner.

CHLNet currently has 11 Emeritus members. The Board considered adding Stephen Samis as the 12th Emeritus member. Stephen has served as CHLNet's Senior Policy Advisor for almost three years and previously served as Deputy Minister of Yukon Health and Social Services and as a Vice President at HEC. The Board noted that the current process for selecting Emeritus members is not particularly rigorous. Members discussed whether clearer and more inclusive criteria should be incorporated into the policy and whether Emeritus appointments should formally be a Board decision.

A friendly amendment was proposed to include a note regarding inclusive criteria within the policy.

Motion: To approve the *Emeritus policy*, including the friendly amendment regarding inclusive criteria.
Moved by: Tina Edmonds
Seconded by: Valerie Grdisa
Decision: Approved.

Motion: To approve Stephen Samis as a CHLNet Emeritus member.
Moved by: Valerie Grdisa
Seconded by: Dawn Thomas
Decision: Approved.

Action: The Board will revisit the Emeritus criteria and process to determine whether additional rigour and a formal Board decision requirement should be incorporated.

3. Support Leaders Through Dialogue and Engagement

3.1 May 1 Executive Roundtable, Leadership Dialogue and Network Partner Roundtable Feedback

The Board reviewed the feedback from the *May 1 Executive Roundtable and Leadership Dialogue.* The Executive Roundtable feedback suggested that CHLNet could play a stronger role in supporting leadership development through:

- mentorship opportunities;
- practical tools; and
- targeted resources.

The Board noted that these areas could be considered by the incoming Executive Director in collaboration with the Board when developing the next *Courses of Action for 2027–28*, as the current Courses of Action extend through the end of 2026.

An update was provided on discussions with KPMG, which has expressed interest in continuing its role as sponsor of the *Leadership Dialogue* and in providing an executive briefing as an in-kind contribution. The Board discussed potential topics for the *November 6 Leadership Dialogue.* The May 1 session had focused on psychological safety and the fragility experienced by health leaders in the current environment, with contributions from Valerie Grdisa, Enas El Gouhary and Haroon Yousuf.

Action: Previous *Leadership Dialogue* topics will be circulated to Board members for consideration. Board members are asked to provide suggestions for a relevant and timely topic for the November session.

3.2 MacNaught & Taillon 2026 Award Results and Next Steps

The Board received an update on the *MacNaught & Taillon 2026 Award.* The award is currently presented every three years. The Board noted that there may be value in discussing whether the frequency should be increased. This matter will be considered with the Awards Committee in the fall. The Board noted that Owen Adams, CMA was the recipient of the 2026 award, as reflected in the press release included in the meeting package.

Action: Discuss potential changes to the award frequency with the Awards Committee in the fall.

3.3 KPMG / JP Centre Lunch & Learn

The Board received an update on the new *Lunch & Learn* series focused on AI and leadership. The first session, *AI Stewardship in Healthcare,* was held in April 2026. KPMG has expressed interest in supporting another session in the fall, with potential topics including *AI in governance or AI and patient safety.* The Board discussed the possibility of recording future sessions to enable broader access. KPMG's senior leadership did not support recording the session but instead provided an executive summary that was distributed to KPMG partners. The Board also discussed the possibility of developing the in-kind contribution into an additional revenue opportunity for CHLNet.

Action: Explore a fall KPMG *Lunch & Learn* and other potential partnership opportunities.

4. Build and Apply Health Leadership Research, Evidence and Knowledge

4.1 Canadian Learning Collaborative for Health Leadership MOA

The Board discussed the updated Memorandum of Agreement for the *Canadian Learning Collaborative for Health Leadership* between CHLNet and the JP Centre for Health Systems Learning and Innovation, and the Learning Health System Leadership Centre, Trillium Health Partners. Legal review had been undertaken by Deanne's lawyer at the JP Centre. The appendices currently represent initial thinking about how the collaboration could achieve its purpose of:

- building evidence-informed leadership capacity;
- advancing research;
- supporting diverse health leaders; and
- developing practical tools to transform health systems in Canada.

Scott highlighted CHLNet's strength in **21st-century leadership practices** and the potential for the initiative to evolve into a broader consortium involving universities and diverse funding sources.
The Board discussed the longer-term potential for the Hub to become revenue-generating.
Members were asked to review the documents based on their experience and identify any concerns or opportunities. Given the anticipated transition to a new Executive Director, the Board agreed that there is no need to rush the decision and that the incoming leader should have an opportunity to review the opportunity.

Action: Board members to review the Hub MOA and provide comments to Scott and Kelly.
Action: Add the item to the next Board meeting agenda for further consideration.

4.2 LEADS Refresh MOA

The Board reviewed the LEADS Refresh MOA and received an update on the four-party collaboration involving **CCHL, CHLNet, LEADS Global and Royal Roads University (RRU)**. The project is funded through a Mitacs grant and includes evidence generation through a literature review, focus groups, interviews and related activities. CHLNet's involvement provides access to the evidence being generated through the project. The LEADS framework itself remains embargoed and is being finalized by the Steering Group.

The Board discussed the distinction between access to the research outputs and ownership or access to the LEADS framework itself. The agreement provides CHLNet with a systems stewardship licence as outlined in Clause 6. Deanne noted that while LEADS remains an important framework, CHLNet should continue to leave room for other research frameworks and sources of evidence, including the work being undertaken through LHS. The Board also discussed intellectual property considerations and the importance of ensuring that the agreement supports CHLNet's longer-term strategic interests.

Board members were asked to undertake a further review and provide feedback on this collaboration. It was noted that the transition to a new Executive Director provides an opportunity for a fresh review of the agreement.

Action: Circulate a follow-up note to Board members requesting a further review of the LEADS Refresh documents.
Action: Board members to provide comments and identify any IP, strategic or other concerns.

4.3 CCHL Collaboration

The Board discussed the emerging opportunity for a deeper partnership between CCHL and CHLNet. The Chairs have been discussing organizing principles for a potential partnership and a possible division of responsibilities. A draft MOU and related organizing principles were included in the Board package.

The proposed approach would see CHLNet developing evidence-based tools informed by LEADS and related evidence. CCHL is also seeking to rebuild trust and strengthen collaboration. Potential collaboration with CSPL was discussed, including the possibility of a convergence activity during the current fiscal year in which CHLNet could participate. The Board also discussed potential opportunities related to CIHI data, including the aggregation of data from 360-degree assessments and other sources.

Board members were asked to review the documents from a strategic perspective and identify any potential red flags rather than undertaking a detailed legal review. The Board emphasized the importance of ensuring that the incoming Executive Director is involved in the development of the partnership.

Action: Follow up with the Chairs in September.
Action: Board members to review the three documents and provide strategic feedback.

4.4 Board Orientation

The Board discussed the importance of providing orientation for the new Board members.

Action: Zaina Asfour will circulate a Doodle poll to identify a suitable time for a Board orientation session and coordinate with Fanny on a **30-minute orientation session**.

---

5. In Camera: Secretariat Planning if Required

No in camera required.

---

6. Next Meeting Dates and Evaluation

The following dates were confirmed:

- **Board Meeting:** October 8, 2026
- **Network Partner Roundtable:** November 6, 2026

The meeting was adjourned at **1430 hours**.