

CHLNet Network Partner Virtual Roundtable DRAFT Minutes

May 1st 2026 1130 to 1430 Hours Eastern Time

Secretariat

Kelly Grimes, Chief Executive Officer
Stephen Samis, Senior Policy Advisor
Deanne (Dee) Taylor, Senior Research Advisor

Board Members

Maria Judd, Healthcare Excellence Canada,
Past Chair and Facilitator
Valerie Grdisa, Canadian Nurses Association
Carolyn Pullen, Canadian Cardiovascular
Society
Tiffany Boyd, Yukon Hospital Corporation

Network Partners

Andrea Johnson, Nova Scotia Health
Arni Ahronson, Canada's Drug Agency
Anurag Saxena, University of Saskatchewan
Brad Dorohoy, Alberta Health Services
Caroline Heick, Canadian Institute for Health
Information
Catherine Gaulton, HIROC
Dawn Thomas, Island Health
Diana Verrier, Island Health
Dev Menon, University of Alberta
Frank Tuzik, Accreditation Canada / HSO
Graham Dickson, LEADS Global
Greg Healey, Canadian Forces Health Services
Group
Ivy Bourgeault, Canadian Health Workforce
Network
Jeff Moat, Pallium Canada
Jennifer Peterson, Horizon Health Network
Jennifer Zelmer, Healthcare Excellence
Canada
Jérôme Ouellet, Healthcare Excellence Canada
Jessica Cox, Alberta Health Services
Kathy MacNeil, Island Health
Kate Mercer, Nova Scotia Health
Katherine Chubbs, Good Samaritan Society
Lisa Votta-Bleeker, Canadian Psychological
Association
Lily Bale-Feldman, Shared Health Manitoba /
University of Manitoba

Michael Corry, Mental Health Commission of
Canada

Michelle McLean, HealthCareCAN

Ming-Ka Chan, Shared Health Manitoba /
University of Manitoba

Myles Sergeant, Canadian Coalition for Green
Health Care

Nadia Salvaterra, Canadian Society of
Physician Leaders

Phil Cady, Royal Roads University

Robin Dziekan, Emerging Health Leaders

Rhonda St. Croix, Royal College of Physicians
and Surgeons Canada

Sarah Scott, College of Family Physicians of
Canada

Sandy Pagotto, HealthCareCAN

Sheila Burt, Horizon Health Network

Stephanie Choquette, Canadian Medical
Association

Steve Kovacic, Good Samaritan Society

Susan Owen, Canadian College of Health
Leaders

Suzanne McCann, Canada's Drug Agency

Victoria Schmid, SWITCH BC

Emeritus

Bill Tholl

Brian O'Rourke

Rachel Bard-Maillet

Wendy Nicklin

Observers and Speakers

Laura Desveaux, Trillium Health Partners

Enas El Gouhary, McMaster University

Valerie Lukac, KPMG

Haroon Yousuf, McMaster University

Grace Gemin, Notetaker Royal College of
Physicians and Surgeons Canada

o. Executive Roundtable

Chair and Facilitator: Maria Judd

Maria Judd welcomed participants, observers, and emerging leaders and thanked members for their ongoing engagement with CHLNet. The Executive Roundtable was conducted under Chatham House Rule and focused on two questions:

1. What are the major challenges for leadership in the health system right now?
2. How might CHLNet help address these challenges?

Participants were divided into three breakout groups facilitated by Maria Judd, Carolyn Pullen, and Deanne Taylor. Following the discussions, facilitators reported back on key themes.

Discussion Highlights

Leadership Development and Succession

Participants expressed optimism regarding emerging leaders entering the health system and the new ideas and perspectives they bring. However, concerns were raised regarding recruitment, retention, mentorship, and leadership development opportunities. Participants noted that many emerging leaders are not receiving adequate support, training, or mentorship and that organizations may not be creating conditions that encourage leadership development.

There was discussion regarding the increasing demands placed on senior leaders, which often limits their ability to mentor future leaders. Participants suggested that CHLNet could play a stronger role in supporting leadership development through mentorship opportunities, practical tools, and targeted resources.

Leadership Capacity and System Complexity

Participants discussed the increasing complexity of leadership in healthcare, including competing priorities, workforce shortages, recruitment and retention challenges, geopolitical and economic uncertainty, and balancing operational pressures with long-term strategic goals.

Additional challenges included navigating tensions between:

- Management and leadership;
- Current and future leadership needs;
- Strategy and ethics; and
- The need for change versus the ability to influence change.

Relational and Human-Centred Leadership

Participants emphasized the importance of human-centred and relational leadership practices. Leaders require support systems for themselves while also providing stability and support for others.

There was discussion regarding meaningful co-production with patients, care partners, community members, and individuals from structurally excluded groups to address complex system challenges.

Leadership Development Opportunities

Participants suggested several opportunities for CHLNet to support leadership development, including:

- Mentorship programs connecting established and emerging leaders;
- Leadership laboratories and simulations;
- Communities of practice;
- Case-based learning opportunities;
- Gamification approaches to leadership development; and
- Practical tools and resources that support leaders at all levels.

Evidence and Advocacy

Participants discussed the importance of demonstrating the impact of leadership on health system outcomes. CHLNet was encouraged to continue serving as an objective voice that promotes the value of leadership and leadership development across Canada's health system.

Action

Feedback from the Executive Roundtable will be summarized and shared with the Board to inform strategic planning, future priorities, and CHLNet's value proposition.

1. Introductions and Approval of Minutes

Maria Judd again welcomed participants just joining this portion of the meeting, provided a land acknowledgement and reviewed the meeting process and agenda.

Motion: Moved by Robert Woollard, seconded by Heather Colman and carried that the October 31st, 2025 Network Partner Roundtable Minutes be approved as circulated.

Given it is Kelly Grimes last meeting as CEO, Maria thanked her for 12 years of service and encouraged attendees to share their thoughts on what she has meant to the network in the chat. A thoughtful [KudoBoard](#) from network partners thanked Kelly for all her “time and dedication to CHLNet and the health leadership landscape in Canada and beyond! CHLNet would not be the same without your guidance. Best of luck in your next adventure!”

2. Value Stream 1: Support Leaders Through Dialogue & Engagement

Where is the Psychological Safety? Exploring the Fragility Health Leaders Face in this Tumultuous Environment

This leadership dialogue co-hosted with KPMG, focused on leadership well-being, psychological safety, workforce sustainability, and the increasing complexity of leadership roles in the health system. Panelists were:

- Valerie Grdisa, Canadian Nurses Association
- Dr. Enas El Gouhary, McMaster University
- Dr. Haroon Yousuf, McMaster University

Maria Judd facilitated the session. As an in-kind contribution and with many thanks, KPMG produced an executive briefing of the session. [Please click here to access.](#)

3. Value Stream: Champion Strategic Leadership Excellence

CEO and Board Succession Planning

Maria Judd and Kelly Grimes provided an update on succession planning activities. Mullen Leadership Recruitment has been selected by the Board to undertake the CEO/ED recruitment process. Board subcommittee been created for selection with Scott Malcolm chairing and Valerie Grdisa and Maria Judd as members. Hope to have a new person in place by end of summer.

Three members of our board are turning over this year. Big thank you to Katherine Chubbs, Jean Louis Denis and Yvonne Mburu for their service. Very pleased we had excellent candidates as new directors of the Board and these are Dawn Thomas of Island Health, Melissa Braithwaite of Good Samaritan Society and Tina Edmonds of Newfoundland Health Services have all accepted the positions. This will be ratified at our AGM shortly.

CIHR Best Brains Exchange Grant

Building 21st century leadership practices to transform health systems with Nova Scotia Health (NSH), Nova Scotia government, CHLNet and CIHR hosted invitation only one day event funded through a CIHR Best Brains Exchange Grant. Andrea Johnson from NSH couldn't be here today that worked with us on that. Forty-five participants and began the conversation of linking evidence to policy and practice. The report resulted from this Oct 20th session is now finalized and shared with all network partners in early December (as well as with this meeting package). Data gathered will be feed into the newly form Canadian Learning Collaborative for Health Leadership (The Hub) and its workplan with Dee Taylor & Anurag Saxena as cochairs. A presentation of early findings was provided at CHLNet's October Network Partner Roundtable. Key themes emerged such as leadership is expressed through observable behaviours not fixed styles, leadership in health systems exists in tension, collective leadership capacity must be built, and more. Very interesting the overlap of themes/data with Bench 3 results. There will also be a joint meeting of the Hub and Health Leadership Exchange and Acceleration Working Group in early June that will look at this work along

with Bench 3 results, LEADS Refresh and Indigenous Health Leadership toolkit on turning evidence into practice and policy.

MacNaught & Taillon Health Leadership Award

Four high quality candidates will be reviewed based on defined criteria at the May 6th Awards Committee meetings comprised of Healthcare Excellence Canada, CIHI, Canada Health Infoway and representatives of the family (Diane Parker Taillon and Bill Tholl). At the June 14th Ehealth conference June 14 the award will be presented to the nominee as well an announcement of who the nominee selects as an emerging or patient leader who receives a \$1,500 bursary.

4. Value Stream: Accelerate 21st Century Leadership Practices

2025 Benchmarking Study 3 Results

Final report and infographic in English and French in the package. Just to refresh memories, this is CHLNet's third benchmarking study, an initiative conducted in collaboration with the Canadian College of Health Leaders (CCHL), Canadian Medical Association (CMA), Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), Canadian Society of Physician Leaders (CSPL), Emerging Health Leaders (EHL), Healthcare Excellence Canada (HEC), HealthCareCAN (HCC), Good Samaritan Society (GSS), LEADS Global, Royal Roads University (RRU), Saint Mary's University, University of Ottawa, and University of Manitoba/Shared Health Manitoba. Without their generosity of both financial and in-kind contributions (from translation, project management, and communications to facilitation), we would not have been able to undertake this update of the pan-Canadian health leadership study. The Bench III Study Steering Group provided the vision and stewardship of this five-year follow-up survey. Thanks so much to these individuals (listed in the report, many of whom are here today for their practical guidance and invaluable insights). Another huge thanks to Stephanie and Cher at CMA, who kept us on track and focused with their desire to build a coalition of the willing for pan-Canadian health leadership. We are grateful to have been awarded a Mitacs Accelerate Grant with Dr. Kevin Kelloway as supervisor for PhD candidate, Isaiah Hipel.

Stephanie provided a short presentation using the final Infographic. Participants noted it would be powerful as an advocacy next step to translate this benchmark study into the impact it is having on the health system from a patient/ public perspective. Are these study results impacting productivity, wellness, quality, etc., that in turn impacts access, safety, racism etc.? At a time when "administrative leaders" are being vilified by politicians on both sides, how do these results make the case of leadership value?

Canadian Learning Collaborative for Health Leadership/CAHSPR Workshop

CHLNet is still in discussions with several organizations on the form and functioning of the hub so more to come soon. However, arising from BBE Grant, hosting a Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research workshop on May 25 in the afternoon at the Delta Hotel in Ottawa. If you want to attend, please email Kelly directly. Dee Taylor, Kelly Grimes, Laura Desveaux and Meg McMahon are presenting on "What Does It Take to Lead a Learning Health System? Competencies, Canadian Highlights, and Collective Priorities." This session will help attendees make sense of where Learning Health System leadership in Canada is headed and what capabilities leaders will need next.

Climate Conscious Leadership Practices Progress on Efforts

Diane Meschino, representing the Canadian Coalition of Green Health Care (a CHLNet network partner), presented on climate-conscious leadership in healthcare, framing it as a core leadership responsibility rather than a separate sustainability initiative. She emphasized that effective climate action must be embedded across governance, clinical practice, long-term care, and organizational decision-making, and is closely linked to workforce well-being, psychological safety, and system resilience, aligning with broader leadership and resilience themes such as those outlined in *Leaders supporting leaders: Leaders' role in building resilient and psychologically healthy workplaces during the pandemic and beyond* [Leaders Supporting Leaders Article](#).

She highlighted practical, implementation-ready resources developed by the Coalition—such as hospital and long-term care guidebooks and the Climate Emergency Jumpstart Kit (English/French)—which are available through CHLNet's network partner resources and background documentation [CHLNet Roundtable Background Documents](#). A key focus of her message was the importance of building climate literacy and leadership capability across the health workforce, fostering cross-sector collaboration, and integrating climate considerations into everyday decision-making, the importance of relational leadership, psychological safety, and cultural change in enabling system transformation. Other resources shared included: [Safe and Brave Spaces – Elise Ahenkorah](#), [Calling In – Loretta J. Ross](#), and [SCALE Learning Health System Paper](#).

Indigenous Health Leadership EXTRA Fellowship Toolkit for Recruitment and Retention

Kelly, Dawn Thomas, and Steve Kovacic presented on their team's final report and toolkit. The official title of the project is “*Listening and Learning from Indigenous Health Leaders: Creating Culturally Safe Spaces to Strengthen Retention and Recruitment*.” This effort began in summer 2024 when Katherine Chubbs (Good Samaritan Society) and Kathy MacNeil (Island Health) came together to help establish this group, bringing forward a collaborative “dream team” including Dawn, Reagan Bartel (travelling and unable to attend), and Steve.

Extensive resources were shared and can be found at the end of these minutes. Kelly has also spoken with Denise McQuaid and Jerome Ouellette from HEC regarding next steps, including potential pilot testing in the North and Quebec. Organizations interested in contributing to additional components of the broader talent management continuum beyond recruitment and retention are invited to connect with Kelly.

LEADS Framework Refresh

Graham Dickson provided an update on the LEADS Framework Refresh project. Key updates included:

- Phase 1 (Divergence) focused on gathering perspectives from leaders across the health system
- Phase 2 (Convergence) is synthesizing literature, interviews, focus groups, benchmarking findings, and additional evidence sources
- Early findings suggest the pace of change facing leaders is outpacing the published literature

- Systems leadership, coalition building, accountability, and measurable results emerged as key themes
- A technical review process is underway
- A consensus panel is scheduled for late June 2026
- Recommendations will be presented to the LEADS Steering Group before implementation planning begins

Participants were reminded that CHLNet continues to participate on the LEADS Steering Group.

Additional related resources referenced during the roundtable and/or shared in the meeting chat included:

- Meeting package and background documents: <https://chlnet.ca/dialogue-and-engagement/background-documents-network-partners-roundtable-may-1-2026>

Leadership Dialogue, Reports & Benchmarking Resources

- [Leadership Dialogue: Leadership Action for Psychological Safety and Workforce Well-being](#)
- [CIHR Best Brains Exchange \(BBE\) Grant Final Report](#)
- [Benchmark 3 Report](#)
- [Benchmark 3 Infographics – English](#)
- [Benchmark 3 Infographics – French](#)

Leadership, Psychological Safety & Workforce Well-being

- Leaders Supporting Leaders: Leaders' Role in Building Resilience and Psychologically Healthy Workplaces During the Pandemic and Beyond <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9127620/>
- [Canada's Health Workforce Well-Being Plan](#)
- [Thematic Literature Analysis: 2025 Update](#)
- [Annotated Bibliography: 2025 Update](#)
- Elise Ahenkorah – “Safe and Brave Spaces Don't Work (and What You Can Do Instead)” <https://medium.com/@elise.k.ahen/safe-and-brave-spaces-dont-work-and-what-you-can-do-instead-f265aa339aff>
- Loretta Ross – Calling In <https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Calling-In/Loretta-J-Ross/9781982133983>

Learning Health Systems & Leadership

- Supporting Cultural and Learning Enablers for a Learning Health System (SCALE) <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/lrh2.70082>
- CAHSR 2026 Conference

What Does It Take to Lead a Learning Health System? Competencies, Canadian Highlights, and Collective Priorities. <https://cahspr.ca/>

- [Learning Health System Leadership Community of Practice Registration](#)

Climate-Conscious Leadership Resources (Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care)

- [Guidebook for Hospital Boards, Executives and Clinical Staff](#)
- [Guidebook for Long-Term Care Boards, Management, and Clinical Staff](#)
- [Climate Emergency Jumpstart Kit – English](#)
- [Climate Emergency Jumpstart Kit – French](#)

Indigenous Leadership, Cultural Safety & Reconciliation

- Sacred Workplaces | Decolonizing HR <https://www.sacredworkplaces.ca/>
- EXTRA: Executive Training Program Healthcare Excellence Canada - Applications for Cohort 21 are open until June 10, 2026. <https://www.healthcareexcellence.ca/en/what-we-do/all-programs/extra/>
- CIHI – List of Cultural Safety and Indigenous-Specific Racism Measurement Baskets and Associated Indicators <https://www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/cultural-safety-anti-indigenous-racism-baskets-indicators-en.pdf>
- Canadian Nurses Association – Anti-Indigenous Racism Knowledge Sharing Event 2025 <https://www.cna-aiic.ca/>
- Physician Leadership Institute – Inclusive Leadership Course <https://www.cma.ca/resources/learning/physician-leadership-institute>
- Indigenous Cultural Safety Palliative Care Course <https://palliumcanada767.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/palliumteam/IQDwUUeQFQsrSLhPs31hL48nAZdvLvp7DsoTf7z-KoWEHYg?e=gvsQX6>

6. Next Meeting Date and Evaluation

The next Network Partner Roundtable will be held virtually on **November 6, 2026**. Participants were thanked for their engagement, discussion, and ongoing support of CHLNet.