



Short Proposal: Canadian Learning Collaborative for Health Leadership (The Hub)

July 2025

Transforming Health Leadership in Canada – Together

The Canadian Learning Collaborative for Health Leadership, known as the “Hub,” is the first initiative of its kind in Canada. It brings together an interdisciplinary, pan-Canadian network of scholars, health system leaders, and other partners committed to advancing evidence-informed leadership for system transformation.

Why Now? The Opportunity

Health leadership research in Canada is fragmented. Over the last ten years, the Canadian Health Leadership Network (CHLNet), in collaboration with LEADS Global has advanced applied and academic work in this field but continuing health care challenges, global uncertainty and social upheaval highlight the need to go further. We need capable and effective 21st century leadership capabilities to deal with these challenges, however the gap between the leadership we have and the leadership we need continues to be wide. Now is the time to:

- Build evidence on what works in health leadership to transform health systems;
- Link health leadership evidence to policy and practice;
- Champion strategic leadership excellence to improve health system performance; and
- Support a new generation of diverse and equity-driven health leaders.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) has been a long-time network partner of CHLNet and the University of Saskatchewan (USask), College of Medicine (CoM) joined the Network three years ago. This proposal presents a unique opportunity for the CoM at USask to become the host of a proposed ‘hub and spoke’ approach to this much needed work. The host hub would connect with other universities (spokes) and non-academic partners, to ensure a more connected and systematic effort to grow leadership capacity at the CoM and SHA, at a pan-Canadian level and internationally.

USask’s CoM is well positioned to host the hub. First, the CoM recognizes that high quality leadership is a critical to knit together otherwise disconnected professionals required to work together to deliver comprehensive health services to Canadians. Second, USask’s desired direction to be “The University the World Needs” fits perfectly with the hub and spoke model envisioned by this proposal.



The Hub aligns closely with CHLNet’s own pan-Canadian strategic efforts to better incorporate evidence and systems thinking into the practice of 21st century health leadership to improve health system performance and transformation. Another key partner, LEADS Global, is uniquely positioned to facilitate this work internationally.

Proposed Four Themes of Action

1. *Leadership Practices for the 21st Century to Transform Health Systems* – Build contemporary leadership tools to facilitate lifelong learning and provide engagement opportunities in networks to address the use of technology/AI, systems leadership, complexity thinking, and data-driven decision-making.
2. *Antiracism & Social Justice to Achieve Effective, Diverse and Inclusive Leadership* – Centre equity, inclusion, and Indigenous-led approaches to leadership transformation.
3. *Learning Systems that Support Workforce Wellness* – Promote leadership styles and practices that foster learning health systems, but also psychologically safe, human-centered work environments.
4. *Climate-Conscious Leadership Practices for a Sustainable Health System* – Build understanding and mobilize health leaders to integrate sustainability and planetary health into their practices.

Potential Products & Services

- *Collaborative Scholarship & Research Platform*: Early grant alerts, collaborative proposal writing, and shared research infrastructure.
- *Venue and Platform to Share Successful Innovation Exchange and Diffusion*: Showcase successful leadership practices and innovation in action in Saskatchewan, across the country and internationally.
- *Supportive Knowledge Commons*: Curated resources, podcasts, and potentially a leadership journal or special issue.
- *Mutual Support Network*: Peer mentorship, connection-building, and cross-sector learning among scholars and other health system leaders.
- *Health Leaders Incubator*: Curriculum that prepares current and future health leaders to address contemporary health system, social and technological challenges and ensures leadership learning development becomes an ongoing journey.
- *Evidence Clearinghouse*: Centralized, actionable summaries of the latest leadership studies to inform existing and new leadership development programs.
- *Needs-Based Leadership Planning and Development*: Understanding and enhancing the level of leadership capability in the health system.



Who's Involved?

Confirmed partners are University of British Columbia and Rural Coordinating Centre of British Columbia, Royal Roads University, University of Saskatchewan, University of Ottawa, University of Manitoba, McMaster University, as well as LEADS Global and CHLNet. Ongoing discussions are occurring with Toronto Metropolitan University, University of Alberta and University of Toronto. Currently the hub is housed at CHLNet and being developed through in-kind resources.

The Hub Project Team will be Co-Chaired by Dr. Anurag Saxena (USask CoM, LEADS Global) and Dr. Deanne Taylor (CHLNet Senior Research Advisor and Executive Director, JP Patterson Center for Health Systems Learning and Innovation). The Project Coordinator will support the remaining hub collaborators: Kelly Grimes (CHLNet CEO), Stephen Samis (CHLNet Senior Policy Advisor) and Dr. Graham Dickson (Head, LEADS Global). Collectively, this team will develop a business and implementation plan for the Hub. Four co-leads from the various universities have agreed to oversee the themes of action by: **L**Leading the conversation, **E**ngaging the network and hub, **A**cting as a boundary spanner, **D**iscovering grant opportunities, and **S**haring evidence and practices. These co-leads could also form the inaugural steering group with the Dean of USask CoM as Chair.

The Ask of the University of Saskatchewan

CoM to serve as the Hub home and to provide funding for the Project Coordinator for a minimum of two years beginning in the Fall of 2025. CoM will also begin developing internal capacity and support that will also serve the needs of Saskatchewan's health system, by leveraging existing projects and energy in support of meeting those needs.

The Commitment of the Partners

CHLNet will continue to refine and clarify the roles of the other scholarly partners and support the development of the business and implementation plan for the Hub and Spoke model.

LEADS Global will offer time from its principals and international connections to ensure the enterprise is well connected to leadership scholars and practitioners world-wide.

Let's Shape the Future of Health Leadership in Canada

This is a generational opportunity to develop inclusive, and future-ready health leaders using 21st century leadership practices. Benefits for the hub host include branding as hub host for this first of its kind learning collaborative; Cochairing the Project Team; Chairing the steering group; priority access to grant opportunities and evidence generation; and development of leading-edge learnings to integrate into curriculum development and Canada's health systems.