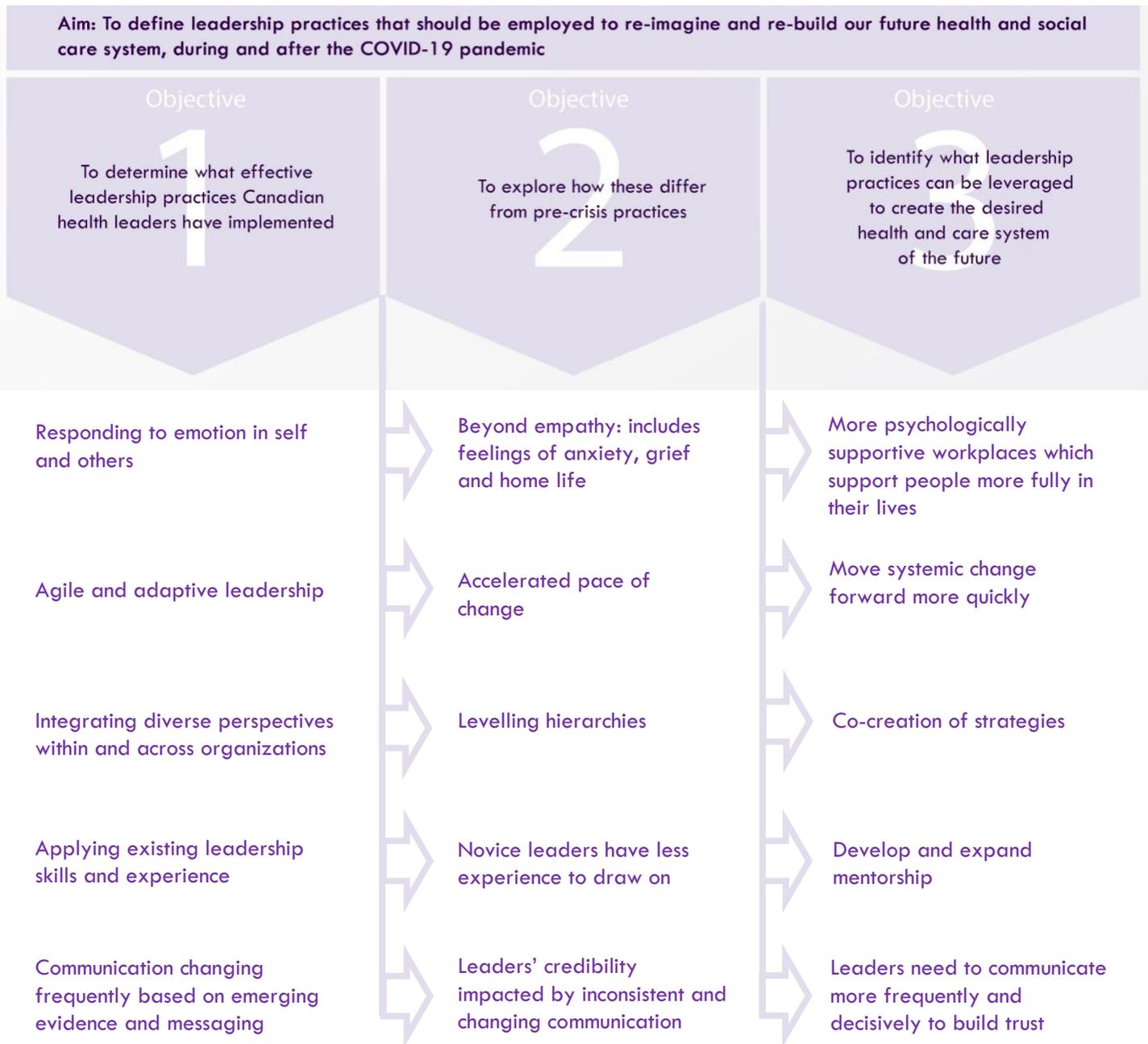
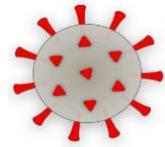


# LEADING THROUGH COVID

CHLNet is a value network representing over 40 partner organizations who share a commitment to building health leadership capacity in Canada. Interviews with 18 health leaders\* were conducted during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. This is a summary of the grounded theory analysis of how they described their leadership during this unprecedented health crisis.



\*Sample: Male=11, Females=7; Leadership level: emerging=2, mid-level=2, senior=4, executive=10; Organization type: Health authority=5, National organization=5, Academic=3, Not-for-profit=2, Government=2, Long-term care=1; Location: BC=4, AB=5, ON=2, NS=2, National/BC=1; National/ON=4



## Core Dimension: Dislodging Entrenched Structures

### Context

Sudden  
Unknown  
Rapidly changing  
Increased pressure  
on health system

Leaders responded to the sudden, unknown and rapidly changing context of the pandemic, with resulting impacts on the health system, by making decisions quickly, often with incomplete information, and involving many people from within and outside the organization. Faster decision-making and innovations, greater collaboration and more supportive workplaces are changes that leaders would like to maintain in the future.

### Leadership

Increased visibility,  
communication, and collaboration  
Focus on emotional well-being  
Rapid decision-making

### Future

Faster decisions  
Improved innovation  
Greater collaboration across  
organizations, systems, provinces  
Supportive workplaces  
Diverse input into  
decisions

### Psychological Well-Being

Increased awareness and attention to maintaining psychological well-being in self and others, including home life. Increased authentic connection with staff.



### Adaptive and Agile Leadership

Leading in a rapidly changing environment without knowing the answers. Credibility and trust required increased visibility and frequent communication.

### Integrating Diverse Perspectives

Levelling hierarchies through bringing together a variety of perspectives in the decision-making process.



### Making Room for Innovation

Large scale mental model shift towards actively seeking input into new possibilities, increasing capacity for accelerated adoption of innovation.

### Awareness of Systems at Play

Heightened expectation of leaders, socio-political influences, and reduced control over decision making required adaptation to greater complexity.

