

LEADerShip at a Glance

CHLNet’s “Top Four” Suggested LEADS Readings

The four references contained within this month’s *Top Four* have been chosen because they speak directly to the four Strategic Priorities of CHLNet.

The infographic consists of four white text boxes arranged in a 2x2 grid, each with a circular icon above it. The icons are: a group of four people, a hand holding a heart, a magnifying glass over a city skyline, and a globe with a leaf. The text boxes contain the following information:

- Top Left:** Icon of four people. Title: **Foster Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging to Achieve Effective Leadership**. Text: Co-championing and co-creating incremental change and strategies that foster open dialogue, trust and safe spaces are key to more meaningful systemic change. Building Indigenous health leadership and practices (such as two-eyed seeing) are essential in an all-encompassing path forward.
- Top Right:** Icon of a hand holding a heart. Title: **Promote Wellness and Psychologically Supportive Workplaces**. Text: Relational leaders and psychologically supportive workplaces shape the culture and values of the workplace vital to employee retention, satisfaction and restoring a sense of joy, humanity, and compassion in the workforce. Leaders must role model behaviours such as work-life balance, authentic two-way communication and listening, but also use evidence informed interpersonal leadership styles, such as affiliative and coaching.
- Bottom Left:** Icon of a magnifying glass over a city skyline. Title: **Accelerating Leadership Practices for the 21st Century to Transform Health Systems**. Text: Leaders and leadership must be part of any transformation strategy. Leader toolboxes need constant updating to accelerate 21st century leadership practices such as the use of technology/AI, systems leadership, evidence informed/data driven decision making, complexity, creativity, belonging and inclusivity, and effective ways to partner that cross boundaries and sectors. A lifelong learning approach and engagement in networks to share knowledge and ideas must be embraced.
- Bottom Right:** Icon of a globe with a leaf. Title: **Addressing Climate Change for a Sustainable Health System**. Text: Leaders must initiate vital conversations to drive improvements, reduce waste, and prioritize sustainability and local sourcing in health system decision-making and supply chains. The idea of resource sharing among institutions and countries should be tied to principles of social justice, and the ethical dimensions of health system decisions on a global scale.

Strategic Priority: Foster Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging to Achieve Effective Leadership

This document was chosen because it reflects marvelous work, in keeping with this priority. It provides an equity-centred leadership framework that combines antiracist practice, community power-sharing, and accountability for equity outcomes in health systems. It offers practical tools such as equity impact questions, partnership rubrics, and leadership reflection prompts that leaders can use to embed DEI and health equity into strategy, governance, and day-to-day decision-making.

[Dixon DL. Focusing the Equity Lens. Healthcare Executive. 2024;39\(5\):34–5.](#)

Summary:

The author summarizes The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine summary report in her article, identifying many considerations for leadership moving forward.

The considerations are:

- Strengthen leadership and strategic change; i.e., in particular, leader awareness and insight.
- Pay attention to organizational culture. The equity lens requires assessing the current culture and identifying the barriers to creating the desired culture in which equity and inclusion are not only valued but also live in the day-to-day work and interactions of people.
- Cultivate an equity organizational mindset and cultures of growth. Equity and inclusion are more likely to thrive in a ‘culture of growth’.
- Remove destructive friction; i.e., the forces that make it harder, slower, more complicated, or downright impossible to get things done in an organization.
- Learn from pushback. Use data about disparities to educate and facilitate learning.

Link to LEADS

- **Lead Self:** Emphasizes self-awareness and belief systems.
- **Engage Others:** Argues for creation of healthy cultures in which equity is front and centre.
- **Achieve Results:** Advocates for use of equity metrics to measure outcomes.

Strategic Priority: Promote Wellness and Psychologically Supportive Workplaces

This article is directly relevant to this priority, as it describes competencies for leadership that should be built into healthcare leadership programs in universities in the USA. Caution as to their applicability in Canada is recommended.

[Goetz Goldberg D, Cantiello J, Kamat R. Leadership competencies to support the health, safety, and well-being of the healthcare workforce. Journal of Health Administration Education. 2026 Jan 29;41\(4\):521-49.](#)

Summary:

This article describes how to build content into healthcare management educational programs for students to gain skills for their own well-being as well as to positively address burnout and other mental health concerns experienced by healthcare workers.

Several frameworks are presented to advance health workforce well-being with a focus on leadership strategies at the individual and organizational level.

At the individual level, strategies for building resiliency and managing stress are reviewed, which include self-awareness, reflection, growth mindset, social connections, and building healthy habits. At

the organizational level, discussion centers on building physically and psychologically safe work environments, supportive organizational culture, participative management and shared governance, and enhanced use of quality management techniques, implementation science concepts, and best practices in measurement and evaluation.

[Link to LEADS:](#)

- **Lead self:** Frames leader *personal well-being and emotional intelligence* as prerequisites for workforce well-being.
- **Engage Others:** Describes well-being-centred leadership behaviors (e.g., trust, voice, inclusion).
- **Achieve Results:** Reframes “results” to include workforce outcomes (well-being, safety) alongside traditional performance metrics.

[Strategic Priority: Accelerating Leadership Practices for the 21st Century to Transform Health Systems](#)

This article was chosen because it highlights the role of adaptive leadership in health care as a useful framework for navigating increasing complexity and unpredictability, given the prevalence of both elements in today’s socio-political-technological environment.

[Robinson N, Claringbold G, Anglim J, Fischer S, Walker A, Forsyth L. Adaptive leadership in health care: a rapid review. Australian Health Review. 2025 Nov 25;49\(6\):AH25068.](#)

[Summary](#)

In this paper, fifteen peer-reviewed studies were analyzed for insights into the value of adaptive leadership.

Study authors generally interpreted their results as supporting positive effects of adaptive leadership. It had a role in: (a) supporting change initiatives and innovation in care planning; (b) improving safety citizenship behaviours, increasing employee engagement and facilitating the identification of process improvements; and (c) enhancing trust, helping patients co-create solutions and learn new skills.

[Link to LEADS](#)

- **Lead Self:** Adaptive leadership’s emphasis on learning, reflection, and managing disequilibrium strongly aligns with Lead Self, especially in maintaining effectiveness under complexity.
- **Develop Coalitions:** Adaptive leadership strongly aligns with Develop Coalitions, particularly in bridging professional boundaries and involving patients as partners.
- **Systems Transformation:** This is the strongest alignment: adaptive leadership is fundamentally about enabling systems transformation through learning, experimentation, and cultural change.

Strategic Priority: Addressing Climate Change for a Sustainable Health System

This article was chosen because it combines the notion of ‘learning health systems’—i.e., a construct popular in creating health system improvement—to the priority of climate change and its impact on health care systems. It profiles a tertiary care centre in Nova Scotia, Canada.

[Barber BV, Sinclair D, Cassidy C. Advancing environmentally sustainable learning health systems: Perspectives from a Canadian health center. Learning Health Systems. 2025 Jul;9\(3\):e10470.](#)

Summary:

There is increasing demand for health systems to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and invest in climate-resilient health care. Learning health systems, defined as systems that seek to continuously generate and apply evidence, innovation, quality, and value in health care, can guide health systems with planning organizational structures and processes to advance environmentally sustainable healthcare.

The purpose of this paper is to provide in-depth insight from key health system leaders and healthcare professionals to identify challenges and recommendations for planning environmentally sustainable learning health systems.

Health system challenges include limited patient and community engagement, the lack of a systematic approach to measuring and monitoring emissions data, and limited knowledge of sustainability co-benefits and strategies for mobilizing sustainable organizational change. Recommendations include engaging patients and communities in co-creation of sustainable healthcare, monitoring of emissions data, identifying high-impact areas for action, and well-coordinated leadership supporting sustainable policies, procedures, and decision-making in practice.

Link to LEADS:

- **Lead Self:** Aligns with developing self and reflective practice.
- **Achieve Results:** Makes environmental impact measurable, actionable, and continuously improved.
- **Systems Transformation:** Mirrors priorities such as strategic change leadership, creating conditions for innovation, and aligning structures across the system.