

## BC SUPPORT Unit Advisory Council

### Minutes

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October 6, 2021, at 10:30am – 12:00pm

**Attendees:** Lynn Stevenson (chair), Krista Allan, Ellen Chesney, Gregory Haljan, Alison Hoens, Bev Holmes, Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, Martha MacLeod, Alison Mclean, Megan O'Reilly, Anni Rychtera, Swapnil Shah, Anne-Marie Visockas, Amanda Ward

**Ex-officio:** Stirling Bryan, Michelle Duffy, Terri Fleming, Danielle Lavallee, Victoria Schuckel, Waqar Mughal

**Tentative:**

**Regrets:** Bernie Pauly, Martin Wright

**Secretariat:** Sara Lima Branco

### **1. Call the Meeting to Order**

L. Stevenson welcomed all members to this meeting of the BC SUPPORT Unit Advisory Council and brought the meeting to order at 10:32am.

### **2. Territorial Acknowledgement**

L. Stevenson acknowledged that this meeting is being hosted from within the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the Esquimalt, Songhees, Tsawout, WJOLEP, Pauquachin, MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat), and Tsecum First Nations, and of the Metis people. Meeting attendees were welcomed to share their respective territory.

L. Stevenson led the group in recognition of the first National Truth and Reconciliation day, which took place on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **3. Recognizing Pat Atherton**

S. Bryan led the group in recognition of P. Atherton and her extensive work with the BC AHSN, after her passing earlier this year. Planning is taking place regarding acknowledging all of P. Atherton's work on the annual conference, including a scholarship or award of some kind in recognition of trainees.

### **4. Introductions:**

#### **a. Welcome new members**

New council member A. Ward introduced herself to the group.

### **5. Action items review**

There were 3 action items from the **previous** meeting:

- The Summative Evaluation steering committee/group will create a briefing note or short overview of the plan thus far, to be shared with this group for feedback and guidance.
  - **UPDATE:** This is taking place. **This item is closed.**
- A document/ mechanism of tracking the cross appointments/activities of Advisory Council members, to see what areas/themes are being supporting, and where additional coverage is needed will be created.
  - **UPDATE:** This will be discussed in more detail during the Terms of Reference agenda item, but correspondence and discussions took place this summer, regarding each member's designations and affiliations, which address this action item. **This item is closed.**

### **6. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes were presented to the group. The minutes were approved.

### **7. BC AHSN/MSFHR Consolidation Update**

S. Bryan provided an update on the consolidation process with Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research. The required documents have been signed by the board chairs. As with updates provided at previous meetings, this information is embargoed until the formal announcement is made on October 13. All BC AHSN Units, and their requisite Advisory Councils, will be maintained.

A discussion took place, regarding the new, fully integrated organization and its existing components (possible new ones), the new board and its makeup, regional concerns and representation,

## **8. SPOR SUPPORT Unit Phase II Key Updates**

### **a. Implementation plan:**

This high-level plan was submitted to CIHR, and has received CIHR's approval. Feedback was positive, including our new partnership with British Columbia Network Environment for Indigenous Health Research (BC NEIHR).

### **b. British Columbia Network Environment for Indigenous Health Research (BC NEIHR) Partnership:**

A memorandum of understanding (MoU), outlining the relationship between the BC SUPPORT Unit and BC NEIHR, will be shared on October 13<sup>th</sup> for signature. The MoU will also be shared with this group.

### **c. Putting Patients First:**

D. Lavallee provided the group with an update on the planning status of Putting Patients First, including that the [call for abstracts](#) is now live.

### **d. Summative Evaluation**

An update regarding the Summative Evaluation will be available in the coming days, but D. Lavallee was still able to provide some new information to the group. D. Lavallee advised that there has been extremely robust interest in the focus groups (nearly 250 stakeholders have been engaged).

Ference & Co held a focus group with those individuals from the Advisory Council. Members present appreciated the time for the discussion, which was fulsome. A. Visockas provided this group with a summary of the focus group discussion that took place with Ference & Co. Other Advisory Council members that were also in attendance at the focus group provided their thoughts.

## **9. Terms of Reference in SPOR SUPPORT Unit Phase II**

In advance of this meeting, an annotated version of the Terms of Reference (ToR) was circulated, highlighting aspects of focus and change (this includes a new organization name, funding partnership changes, membership, governance, the sustainability work group). These areas were reviewed with the group, who provided feedback and guidance on these areas.

### **a. Membership**

Earlier this summer, D. Lavallee circulated a document, asking individuals to clarify their various perspectives and affiliations. This will allow the BC SUPPORT Unit to welcome individuals to the Advisory Council that meet the specific designees CIHR mandates for Phase II. At this time, individuals with the ‘Trainee’ designation are needed.

A discussion took place, regarding

- what exactly a ‘trainee’ is,
- what exactly is included in the term ‘clinician’ (and does it include individuals who are engaged more administratively?),
- how do learning health systems fit in?
- how does the new consolidated organization fit in?
- how to effectively report as pertains to individuals who we are wearing more than one hat (and ensuring you aren’t ‘double’ or ‘triple’ reporting membership),
- how to be more purposeful about the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion aspect of membership,
- what does ‘representation’ look like, and is this the most appropriate term, especially when considering what we want to achieve.

Other feedback included

- specifically acknowledging family and caregivers in the ‘Patients and public’ definition,
- whether ‘communities’ should be considered (especially as relates to reconciliation, and since some groups and individuals don’t consider themselves ‘patients’ or are unhoused, et cetera),

### **b. Governance for Phase II**

In Phase II, the BC SUPPORT Unit is accountable to BC NEIHR’s Governing Council (Indigenous health research work) and the Advisory Council. In the new consolidated organization, there will also be accountability to the new board as well.

D. Lavallee posed a question to the group, as to what accountability should the BC SUPPORT Unit have to the Advisory Council for the work being done? Should any changes be made to reporting, et cetera?

A discussion took place:

- Reporting back on progress is appreciated.
- An inquiry was posed, as to what this group has done that has been most useful?
- Is there an expectation that this council will ‘network’, and communicate to their various constituencies and communities?
- Are recommendations and advice limited only to the BC SUPPORT Unit, or the consolidation organization at large?
- What are the fiduciary responsibilities of the Advisory Council?

D. Lavallee advised that as relates to the fiduciary responsibility, the auditing and accountability to CIHR as pertains to spend has been approved by the board, and funds have been allocated under the mindset of spending funds judiciously, and with proper recording.

Going forward, more high-level information on spend, and receiving feedback from the group in return, could take place.

More rigour (in terms of the Council better summarizing and providing concise advice to the Unit, the Unit better communicating back to the Council information being provided to groups such as the board, and more detailed information on how the feedback is used) could be implemented for this group.

L. Stevenson also indicated that the group was overwhelmingly positive regarding A. Visockas coming on board as the new chair of the Advisory Council in the new year.

### **c. Sustainability workgroup**

Phase II requires the establishment of a sustainability working group. For the BC SUPPORT Unit, the group will overlap and connect with this Advisory Council. Questions to consider include:

- How can we be clear about what we are sustaining?
- Who are the right individuals to help us think to include as many perspectives as possible?

This sustainability workgroup will start convening in early 2022.

**ACTION ITEM:** The Advisory Council will work on a structured response to D. Lavallee's request for feedback and recommendations for sustainability and/or the sustainability workgroup.

S. Bryan conveyed many thanks to L. Stevenson for her work as chair, and to D. Lavallee for her leadership, as well.

## **10. Summary and Next steps**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1:00pm – 2:30pm.

## **11. Group adjourned at 11:59am.**