Collaborative Learning College (CLC) Research Subcommittee Terms of Reference

Mission

We are committed to strengthening recovery- and equity-focused mental health research to ensure growth of the Recovery College (RC) movement through **co-production, curiosity, creativity, and science.**

Purpose

- Conduct research and knowledge translation activities related to recovery and equity-focused mental health and addictions research by engaging with local, regional, national, and international RC communities, mental health literature, and members' lived and learned expertise regarding mental health.
- Establish and advance the science of co-production through the integration of learned and lived expertise in RC research.
- Advise mental health community organizations on matters related to RC research and cross-cutting issues of interest to the subcommittee.

Objectives

- Implement our co-produced CLC research agenda in ways that reflect the diverse needs and priorities of the communities RCs engage with.
- Review CAMH research applications and outputs related to the CLC and RCs as requested.
- Consult on the alignment of CLC research and proposed research activities with the CLC research agenda.
- Mobilize mental health research that emphasizes recovery and equity through inclusive, participatory approaches to knowledge translation, ensuring that our findings reach diverse audiences in accessible and engaging ways.
- Build transformative communities rooted in the principles of co-production that seek to challenge stigma, disrupt misconceptions, and chart paths toward more just and equitable futures.

Values/Comfort Agreement

- Accessibility and flexibility
- People over products
- Mutual respect, shared safety, and shared power
- Compassionate connection, authenticity and community
- Coproduction and multi-directional learning

Principles

- We co-create flexible and responsive spaces that honour diverse ways of knowing and actively remove barriers to participation, enabling engagement in multiple and accessible forms.
- We take a relationship-centred approach that prioritizes wellbeing, care, and mutual respect, recognizing that meaningful and impactful outcomes emerge from healthy and supportive relationships.
- We remain accountable for how power is exercised in our work, regularly reflecting on whose voices are amplified, whose are absent, and how decisions are made.
- We practice mindful, trauma-informed engagement, encouraging compassionate sharing while respecting members' boundaries and control over what and how they participate.
- We navigate conflicts and/or disagreements with humility and respect.
- We value and learn from all kinds of lived and learned knowledge, paying attention to power differences so we can work together more fairly, openly, and respectfully.

Practices

- Shared authorship
- Check-ins and check-outs
- Debriefs
- Reading circles
- Voting
- Ad hoc meetings
- Synchronous and asynchronous work on shared documents
- Reviewing comfort agreement
- Updating comfort agreement and terms of reference
- Option to co-produce and/or add agenda items
- Openly provide feedback

Membership

The Research Subcommittee consists of individuals with various expertise who can provide guidance on strategic directions for CLC research. Membership of the Research Subcommittee consists of:

- One CLC Research Coordinator (co-chair)
- One Senior Scientist, Education/CLC Research Chair (co-chair)
- Two CLC Program Engagement Co-facilitators
- Five people with experience accessing the CLC
- One Scientist
- Two research staff
- One Research Engagement Coordinator (adhoc)
- One CLC Coordinator (ad-hoc)

The Research Subcommittee will be co-chaired by the CLC Research Chair and the CLC Research Coordinator (PWLE). The selection of the co-chairs is consistent with the purpose of facilitating meaningful partnerships between those with learned and lived/living expertise.

Terms
Scientists' terms are based on the project duration. When the project ends, they are asked if they would like to renew. If not, they will be invited to move to an ad hoc role, and recruitment begins for a new scientist

Structure

The Research Subcommittee will have two-hour bi-weekly meetings. There is a standing agenda which outlines three main sections to each meeting:

- Welcome, Check-in, and Comfort Agreement
- Updates
- Working session
- Debrief, comfort agreement, and next steps

The group will offer a land acknowledgement quarterly, with members taking turns to share.

All members are invited to share their expertise and any documents or other resources they have which they think will be useful to all members. Every member's voice is valuable and welcome.

The co-chairs are responsible for:

- Facilitating group discussion to ensure that communication is appropriate and respectful.
- Coordinating the agenda and/or objectives for the subsequent meeting.
- Sending out regular messages to all subcommittee members about the next meeting/activity.

Mutual Expectations

- Our work will be guided by the mutually agreed-upon guidelines, as set out in the comfort agreement and values as identified above.
- Actively participate and attend meetings. Should a member miss more than three consecutive meetings in a row, the Chair will reach out to them to ask about capacity and interest in participating.
    - The Chair will support the member in achieving their desired level of engagement.
- Send and respond to meeting requests in a timely manner to ensure quorum (50% + 1) is met and to allow for re-scheduling of meetings, if required.

- Send, respond and provide feedback to materials, requests, questions, etc. in a timely manner.
- Members will have the space to share and ask questions to their personal level of self-defined comfort (which can vary among individuals and could change depending on the topic or day) as we build trust over time.
- Members are invited to use any of the following to their comfort level: screens, mics, and chat.
- Members are expected to be respectful of others' thoughts, feelings, and opinions.
- Members are expected to use the hand-raising function during group discussion to ensure everyone has the space to contribute.

Decision-Making Processes

- Wherever possible, the Subcommittee will strive for consensus in decision-making.
- Decisions should be made collaboratively through deliberation/discussion at meetings with time for consideration of potential modifications and/or alternative courses of action.
- If unanimity cannot be achieved within two meetings (or fewer if the matter is time-sensitive), the co-chairs may call for a vote, whereby a majority (50% +1) may approve a course of action or to determine if additional time is needed.
- If a member feels the decision-making process was unjust or inequitable, they can request an appeal from the co-chairs to have the decision reconsidered by the larger committee.

Accountability

This committee reports up to the CLC Steering Committee through the co-chairs.

Terms of Reference Review

Consistent with the aims and values of the CLC, and aligned with the CLC’s commitments to co-creation, these terms of reference will be regarded as a living document that will be revised and updated based on input from the Research Subcommittee in order to remain responsive to the needs and priorities of the CLC community. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and discussed on an annual basis, at minimum.

Appendix A. Comfort Agreement

- Make decisions together
- Create shared goals
- Share accountability
- Create space for everyone to contribute
- Respect and honour that everyone comes from different perspectives, identities, that have shaped them as an individual
- Communicate energy levels if needed to ensure everyone feels available and respected
- Offer alternative ways to contribute other than speaking (e.g. chat, document comments, etc.)
- Participate in ways that are comfortable for you
- Communicate your needs
- If someone says you've upset them, believe them
- Accept genuine and thoughtful feedback
- Give constructive feedback
- Be forgiving as we all make mistakes
- Call people in rather than calling people out
- Be kind
- Laugh at ourselves, not others
- Bring our personhood first
- Be supportive
- Validate one another's thoughts, feelings, and experiences when discussing, even when not in agreement.
- Headlines, not details: When sharing, please don't go into great detail as it could trigger other folks (focus on how something impacted you/made you feel instead of what happened if it can trigger others)
- Listen well
- Create a safe space
- Don’t interrupt
- Make space for others, and be mindful of when you're taking up a lot of space
- What's said here, stays here; what's learned here, leaves here
- Personal accountability
- Mutual respect
- Stick to any principles we decide on (e.g. around using the raise hand function)
- Support people’s stories and experiences
- No side conversations
- Use “I” statements
- Respect each other
- Be curious