

KDE Hub Event Brief

Meeting of the Leadership Team

Toronto, Ontario - March 25 & 26, 2019

Purpose

This meeting was the first in-person gathering for the Knowledge Development and Exchange (KDE) Hub Leadership Team. Leadership team members share responsibility for KDE Hub outcomes, come from across Canada, are experts in a range of areas pertinent to child and youth mental health promotion, and come from academic and practice sectors. The main purposes of the meeting were to get to know each other, become familiar with the many contexts relevant to the positioning and work of the KDE Hub, establish ways of working together, and share perspectives, experiences and background work that would shape early directions of the Hub.

Participants

Participants included members of the Hub leadership team, the Hub secretariat, evaluation consultants working with the Hub, members of the PHAC MHP-IF team, and mental health promotion thought leaders. Twenty-eight participated with most being on-site; leadership team and secretariat members were present for the entire meeting with others joining for significant portions. There were four participants who joined virtually for select sessions.

Meeting structure

- Two-day meeting with half day emphases on:
 1. The core of the KDE Hub (vision, plan and team),
 2. Positioning of the Hub within PHAC and external environments,
 3. Knowledge sharing and Hub shaping, and
 4. Refining a Theory of Change and preparing to tell a contribution story.
- Individual sessions included presentations, interactive exercises, small group discussions, mapping activities and roundtable reflections.

What did we learn?

Early exploratory work, consideration of PHAC priorities for the initiative and input from thought leaders in the field of child and youth mental health promotion highlighted that:

- An opportunity exists for the MHP-IF, including the Hub, to help shape the nascent field of upstream positive mental health.
- Language needs to be inclusive and shared so everyone sees a role (including those outside the health sector); the initiative should reveal that investing in children and youth has positive long-term implications for communities and Canadians.
- A shared learning agenda and how it is expressed in terms of questions, constructs, indicators and measures will be important. Coherence can start with thinking about different uses of information, including accountability, improving practice/directions, and new knowledge.
- Common indicators will need to account for the complex systems in which projects operate; developed from a First Nations perspective, hope, belonging, meaning and purpose are constructs that may help to provide common meaningful indicators across projects.

Through various exercises and discussions, the leadership team began to build a set of core commitments:

- Focus on population mental health promotion for diverse groups of children and youth
- Act in ways that respect properties of complex systems
- Support existing expertise and leadership in the field
- Honour multiple ways of knowing and doing
- Ensure KDE informs decision-making and contributes to new knowledge
- Use the most suitable and rigorous KDE methods to address the most relevant needs
- Use participatory design practices in all we do
- Embrace an improvement orientation to our work; within the Hub and services we provide

How will learnings from this event be used?

- Learnings will provide strong foundations for developing the KDE Hub itself including recruitment, refined roles of team members, branding and evaluation.
- They will be used as a basis for building the web-based platform and other supports for projects funded through the Mental Health Promotion Innovation Fund.
- An early set of core commitments will provide touch-stones as the KDE Hub is developed and begins to serve the MHP-IF projects and others in Canada with shared interests in child and youth mental health promotion.

