**Briefing Note**

**Subject: ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­****REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT**

**Date: August 3 2021**

# **Decision(s) / Direction(s) Requested:**

**Decision  Discussion  Information**

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**Purpose**

To seek JCSH Management Committee (MC) approval for the JCSH to provide a letter of support to Dr. Katerina Maximova and Dr. Paul Veugelers, who are submitting a proposal for $3M for six years, to the recently announced CIHR Healthy Cities Implementation Science (HCIS) Team Grants funding opportunity.

**Recommendation**

* It is recommended that the Co-Chairs of the JCSH MC sign the attached letter of support.
  + The proposed research proposal (Team Grant funding) to the CIHR is entitled *Promoting health and tackling health inequities by implementing Comprehensive School Health in disadvantaged and racialized communities in Canadian Cities.*

**Other Options**

* The Co-Chairs of the JCSH MC decline offering a letter of support and the JCSH Secretariat will then notify professors Maximova and Veugelers in an email that the JCSH is unable to provide a letter of support at this time.

**Background**

* The Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH) was established in 2005 by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and the Conference of Ministers of Health to facilitate a comprehensive and coordinated approach to health promotion in the school setting.
* The 2020-2025 Mandate has 4 priorities: Positive Mental Health, Substance Use Prevention/Harm Reduction, School Food, COVID-19 support
* In 2007, JCSH Management Committee made the decision that it would agree to provide letters of support for research contributing to a collective benefit to the children and youth/school communities in Canada.

**Issue**

Katerina Maximova (Associate Professor, Epidemiology, School of Public Health, University of Alberta-SPHUofA), and Paul Veugelers (Professor, Population Health Intervention Research Unit. SPHUofA), have requested a letter of support (attached) for Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) grant funding Healthy Cities Implementation Science opportunity. Drs. Maximova and Veugelers, of the School of Public Health, University of Alberta, will be working in partnership with APPLE Schools (A Project Promoting healthy Living for Everyone in Schools).

* If this grant proposal is successful, Drs. Maximova and Veugelers will also receive matched funding ($3M for six years) from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

The proposed funding application to CIHR is entitled *Promoting health and tackling health inequities by implementing Comprehensive School Health in disadvantaged and racialized communities in Canadian Cities.* Drs. Maximova and Veugelers will be working in partnership with APPLE Schools (A Project Promoting healthy Living for Everyone in Schools).

**Rationale**

* On July 13, 2021, the Government of Canada, CIHR launched a grant funding opportunity titled Team Grant: Healthy Cities Implementation Science (HCIS) Team Grants.
* The Healthy Cities Implementation Science (HCIS) Team Grants funding opportunity is offering grants focused on increasing our understanding of how to design, implement, and promote the systematic and equitable uptake of evidence-based interventions (such as comprehensive school health interventions, that have been piloted or tested and found to be promising, in multiple urban environments) to improve population health and well-being.
* The results of this research will be shared publically and assist with the development of future best practice and evidence-based actions for the implementation of comprehensive school health in Canada.
* This research team has extensive experience in school-based research in Northern, rural and remote communities, both qualitative and quantitative, and a long history of effectively communicating their research findings with knowledge users, including First Nations and Metis stakeholders.

**Considerations**

* Provincial and Territory government departments such as Health, Education, Children’s Services, non-profit organizations that support children and family programing, and others are interested in the results of this research.
* The Healthy Cities Implementation Science (HCIS) Team Grants funding opportunity is offering grants focused on increasing our understanding of how to design, implement and promote the systematic and equitable uptake of evidence-based interventions (i.e. interventions that have been piloted or tested in a setting and found to be promising) in multiple urban environments to improve population health and well-being.
* One of the biggest challenges in applied healthy cities research is to implement evidence-informed interventions into different contexts and to understand whether those interventions are effective, for whom, and why.
* This funding opportunity will support multi-site implementation science ꟷ population health research studies in specific thematic research areas to understand which interventions/solutions can improve the health and wellbeing of people living in cities, the differential health impacts of these interventions within populations and why they occur.
* If Professors Maximova and Veugelers are successful in receiving this CIHR funding it is anticipated that the results will be well received by all stakeholders.
* The research would support JCSH current priorities of positive mental health, substance use prevention/harm reduction, school food, and COVID-19 support.

**Additional Information**

* APPLE Schools, established in 2007, is a comprehensive school health initiative that is currently operating in 75 Northern, rural, remote and urban schools across Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Northwest Territories, including schools in First Nations and Metis communities.

**Financial Implications**

* This letter of support has no financial implications for the JCSH.

**ATTACHMENTS**

* Draft letter of support from JCSH Management Committee co-chairs for CIHR Healthy Cities Implementation Science (HCIS) Team Grants application
* Grant Proposal 2021 – Executive Summary