

Belonging, Dignity and Justice Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH CLUSTER

Purpose of the Committee

The Belonging, Dignity and Justice Advisory Committee supports the Women's Health Research Cluster (WHRC) in accomplishing the following goals:

- Create an inclusive community where members feel respected, valued, and heard.
- Increase the capacity of WHRC members to incorporate belonging, dignity, and justice (BDJ) within their research, pedagogy, community engagement, and advocacy.
- Develop initiatives focused on people who have been marginalized by science and healthcare.
- Establish the Clusters commitment to decolonization, with a focus on decolonizing science and healthcare for all women, two-spirit, and non-binary people, First Nations/Indigenous, Black Latinx and other marginalized groups.
- Increase personal and professional diversity within cluster members. Doing so will enable the WHRC to 1) facilitate new collaborations between members with diverse perspectives and expertise, 2) amplify the reach of diverse research and research conducted by diverse people, and 3) encourage diverse people to enter the women's health field.

The objective of this Committee is to review WHRC activities and processes, and form recommendations to help the WHRC fulfill these goals.

Membership Composition

The Committee will have between 10-15 members that represent diverse groups. The Committee must have representation from each of the following groups at all times: IBPOC, 2SLGBTQA+, female, male, early career researcher, student, community member, senior faculty.

Accountability and Reporting Structure

The Committee is a permanent fixture within the WHRC's governance structure. It sits under the senior leadership bodies (Senior Co-Leads & Trainee Co-Leads) and above WHRC staff. Committee recommendations will be brought to the senior leadership bodies for approval and implementation. Recommendations will be evaluated based on the availability of resources required for implementation. If insufficient resources are available, the Committee may alter their recommendations and resubmit for review as many times as desired. One Senior Co-Lead of the WHRC will attend all Committee meetings to maintain accountability and commitment of the senior leadership bodies.

Committee Processes

This Committee will meet quarterly in the first year to provide guidance and direction on WHRC activities and processes related to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). In 2022 the Committee will decide whether to continue meeting on a quarterly or bi-annual basis. Membership runs from January-December each year and members must commit to being on the Committee for a minimum of 1 year. Each year, new members will be recruited to ensure diverse perspectives are engaged. Members may serve on the Committee for up to 3 years.

The Committee can form recommendations about the organizational structure, strategic planning, staff and leadership composition, hiring practices, communication practices, and all programming—existing or otherwise—including award, education, knowledge translation, research facilitation and advocacy initiatives. The Committee can request WHRC staff to conduct analyses of WHRC activities and/or processes that would support the Committee's ability to form informed recommendations. WHRC staff may on occasion send emails to the Committee outside of regular meetings to request feedback on time sensitive items.

Defining Belonging, Dignity and Justice

Belonging

Belonging is a feeling that arises when one experiences psychologically safety, and senses that they are welcomed, valued, and accepted.

Dignity

Dignity is a phenomenon that is experienced personally as well as relationally and is rooted in the fact that all people possess inherent value and worth. To experience dignity relationally, others must understand, accept, and respect the inherent value and worth of oneself.

Justice

Justice is a repairing and restoring of individuals and communities historically, and currently, excluded from the scientific endeavor and from access to healthcare, housing, equal treatment, and opportunity.

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated as needed on an annual basis.