

June 22, 2015

Conference Delegates,

On behalf of the Charter Working Group and the Conference Planning Committee, we present a first draft of the new Charter. The draft has been shaped by consultations and survey input from around the world as well as key informant interviews and literature reviews of best practices, other Charters and Declarations. A summary of results from this pre-conference activity is available here:  
<http://www.internationalhealthycampuses2015.com/charter-renewal/>

We look forward to your input, critique of the draft and ideas in further shaping and launching the Charter at the conference. The following are ways you can contribute:

- 1) **Drop by** the DESIGN LAB (EME 1123) on Tuesday June 23<sup>rd</sup> (10:15 – 3:00 and 5:00-6:00) and Wednesday June 24<sup>th</sup> (10:15-3:30) for engaging activities to share your thoughts for the Charter (including the title!). Every participant will have a chance to win a digital prize package valued at over \$150.
- 2) **Share** your feedback and participate in dialogue in the Charter Co-Design and Charter Activation sessions on Thursday, June 25.
- 3) **Post It:** Use the Post-it notes in your welcome kit to write down the ideas you want to share (e.g. from sessions, reflections, conversations). Submit to the DESIGN LAB (EME 1123).
- 4) **Follow** @2015IHPUC on Twitter and join the conversation using #designthecharter

The draft Charter includes space to note your thoughts and ideas that you may want to draw on for Design Lab activities or in the Charter sessions on Thursday. Each day of the conference, a synthesis and writing team will be actively incorporating input and feedback from the Design Lab and Charter Co-Design session. A second draft will be ready for critique the morning of June 25 and a final draft will be ready by the end of the Conference for the Signing Ceremony and Celebration.

We sincerely thank those of you who have already contributed to the Charter process. We look forward to your help in continuing to shape the new Charter throughout the Conference as well as to share in launching it.

Best Regards,



Tara Black and Sharon Doherty  
Co-Chairs, Charter Working Group



## **The Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges<sup>1</sup>**

An outcome of the 2015 International Conference on Health Promoting Universities and Colleges

### **A SHARED VISION FOR HEALTH PROMOTING UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES**

Health promoting universities and colleges embed health into everyday operations, business practices, and academic mandates, to enhance the success of our institutions; create campus cultures of well-being and equity; improve the health of the people who live, learn, work and play on our campuses; and strengthen the ecological, social and economic sustainability of our communities and wider society. Universities and colleges have a unique opportunity and responsibility to educate, develop new knowledge and model practices of benefit to society.

### **PURPOSE OF THE CHARTER**

The purpose of the Charter is to:

1. Mobilize international action for the integration of 'health in all policies and practices', thus promoting Health Promoting Universities and Colleges
2. Reflect the latest concepts, processes, and principles relevant to Healthy Universities and Colleges, building upon advances since the 2005 Edmonton Charter
3. Generate dialogue and research that accelerates local, regional and international network-building on and off campuses

The Charter has two Calls to Action for Universities and Higher Education Institutions:

1. Embed health into campus operations, business, academics, and campus culture
2. Lead health promotion action locally and globally

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that terminology for health promotion in higher education differs depending on regional context. In South America and Europe it's Health Promoting Universities; in the UK it's Healthy Universities; and in North America, it's Healthy Campuses or Healthy Campus Communities.



## **HEALTH PROMOTING UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES**

Health promotion action builds upon the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion and the Bangkok Charter. These emphasize the interconnectedness between individuals and their environments, recognizing that “health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life: where they learn, work, play and love” (WHO, 1986). Health is viewed holistically as a “state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO). It takes a positive and proactive approach, moving “beyond a focus on individual behaviour towards a wide range of social and environmental interventions” (WHO) that create and enhance health in settings, organizations, and systems. It also takes an explicit stance in favour of sustainability, social justice, equity and health for all while recognizing that the well-being of people, places and the planet are interdependent. Universities and Colleges have the potential to promote systemic, campus-wide health and flourishing in their institutional, social, organizational, cultural, built and natural environments, and in doing so model and test such approaches for the wider community and society. As such, collective action that engages individuals and partners outside of traditional health fields is fundamental.

## **THE UNIQUE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

Universities and other higher education institutions play a central role in all aspects of the development of individuals, communities, societies and cultures, at every level - global, regional, national and local. As such, higher education has a special leadership role to play in the promotion of health across sectors, departments, disciplines and professions. In the emerging knowledge society, higher education is called upon to not only generate knowledge, but to transmit and apply new knowledge advancing policies, practices and programs that enhance health in citizens and communities both now and in the future.

Higher Education Institutions are called upon to incorporate health promotion ideology and values into their mission, vision and strategic plans. Although Health Promoting Universities' programs and initiatives maintain their unique cultural and institutional essence, using the Okanagan Charter's Action Framework encourages shared learning and action, accelerating the Health Promoting Universities Movement on a regional and global level.

## **THE OPPORTUNITY FOR UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES**

A University or College is, by its very nature, an essential part of any systemic health promotion strategy. It has multi-varied roles as an institution of knowledge creation, a leader organization with cross-cutting operational, business, and



academic components, a community where people live, work, learn and play, and a unique culture, enshrined by values of advancement and improvement for society.

An opportunity exists to:

- Advance the core mandate of higher education by creating, evaluating and empowering healthy universities and colleges, viewing human and environmental health and well-being as determinants of learning, productivity and engagement.
- Accelerate leadership and influence among Universities and Colleges by embedding health in knowledge production, student development, institutional policies and campus cultures, thus benefiting current and future students, staff and faculty and setting an example for health promoting settings more broadly
- Remain relevant and adaptive by aligning with existing global agendas for Health in All Policies, sustainability, social justice, equity, human flourishing and mental health.

## **AN ACTION FRAMEWORK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

The following framework provides two calls to action and outlines key principles for action that together guide the development of Healthy Universities and Colleges.

### **TWO CALLS TO ACTION**

Using existing evidence and recommended practice, Institutions of Higher Education are called upon to create Healthy Universities and Colleges in the following ways.

#### **Call to Action 1: Embed Health into Campus Administration, Culture, Academics, and Operations**

- **Embed health in all campus policies**  
Review, create, and coordinate campus policies and practices with attention to health and well-being, so that all planning and decision-making takes account of and supports the wellbeing and flourishing of people, campuses, communities and our planet.
- **Create supportive environments**  
Enhance the campus environment as a living laboratory, identifying opportunities that support health well-being, as well as sustainability and resilience in the built, natural, social, economic, cultural, academic, organizational and learning environments.



- **Generate thriving communities and a culture of well-being**  
Be proactive and intentional in creating empowered and connected campus communities that foster an ethic of care and collaboration while incorporating a well-being lens into teaching, learning, research, programs, procedures, services, physical spaces, policies and decisions.
- **Support personal development**  
Develop and create opportunities to build student, staff and faculty resilience, personal capacity and life enhancing skills – and so support them to thrive and achieve their full potential.
- **Create or re-orient campus services**  
Coordinate and design campus services to support and enhance health and well-being, optimize human and ecosystem potential, and promote a supportive institutional culture.

#### **Call to Action 2: Lead Health Promotion Action Locally and Globally**

- **Integrate health, well-being and sustainability in multiple disciplines**  
Incorporate and embed an understanding and commitment to health, well-being and sustainability in and across the diverse sectors and disciplines on campus, ensuring that health becomes a foundation for all those involved in teaching, learning, research and work on campus.
- **Advance teaching, training, and research in health promotion**  
Ensure adequate training, learning, teaching and testing of health promotion; and develop research partnerships and a research agenda to advance health promotion in higher education and beyond.
- **Lead local and global action for health promotion**  
Partner with local and regional communities in order to develop knowledge and action for health promotion, locally, regionally and globally.

#### **Key Principles for Action**

The following are guiding principles for *how* to mobilize systemic and whole campus action.

- **Use a settings-based and whole system approach**  
Use holistic settings and systems as the foci for inquiry and intervention, effectively drawing attention to the opportunities to create conditions for health in higher education.



- **Act on an existing social responsibility**  
Act on the “Right to health” - or “health for all” - enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to ensure health promotion action embodies principles of social justice, equity, and diversity while recognizing the interconnectedness between health, sustainability and global ecological change.
- **Ensure a comprehensive, campus-wide participatory approach**  
Develop and apply multiple interconnected strategies that focus on students, staff, faculty, and administrators, using participatory approaches to engage broad, meaningful involvement in setting priorities and building multilevel commitment to action.
- **Develop interdisciplinary collaboration and cross-sectoral partnership**  
Develop cross-disciplinary collaborations and partnerships both within the campus community and with local, regional and global partners to support the development of whole campus action for health and the creation of knowledge and action for health promotion in communities more broadly.
- **Promote research, and evidence-informed action, and innovation**  
Use research, evidence and best practice in program development and develop research partnerships to generate new knowledge from campus innovations.
- **Build on strengths and revise approaches over time**  
Use an asset-based approach to recognize strengths, celebrate successes and focus on opportunities for the continual enhancement of health and well-being on campus.
- **Adapt to local context and priorities**  
Adapt strategies and initiatives to institutional, local and regional priorities, reflecting particular and current contexts in higher education.