



Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network

Guidance for Canadian Campuses on Adopting the **Okanagan Charter**

Overview

Canadian institutions of Higher Education are invited to formally adopt the *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges*.

This is intended to be a process whereby campus leaders can demonstrate their commitment to activating the Charter's Calls to Action and Principles. It is also intended to unite Canadian institutions and demonstrate Canada's leadership and commitment to activating the Charter and creating health promoting postsecondary campuses. It is recognized that activation and commitments will differ according to unique campus contexts.

The Adoption process is being facilitated by the newly established Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network.

About the Okanagan Charter

A key outcome of the 2015 *International Conference on Health Promoting Universities and Colleges* was the development of the *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges*. The Charter was developed in collaboration with researchers, practitioners, administrators, students and policy makers from 45 countries representing both educational institutions and health organizations.

The Charter provides a framework with two Calls to Action, key action areas and overall principles that together guide the development of Health Promoting Universities and Colleges.

At the conference, 380 higher education leaders and delegates, including network and organization representatives, signed a Pledge to bring the Okanagan Charter "back to their settings to inspire and catalyze further action towards the creation of health promoting universities and colleges." Representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) joined in the pledge.

The Charter has inspired universities across Canada and internationally to take action in embedding well-being into their everyday operations, business practices and academic mandates. A review undertaken by UBC showed that 16 of 18 universities interviewed—largely Canadian institutions—expressed interest in using the Charter to guide action. Many also signaled the importance of bringing the Charter forward to senior leadership for further buy-in.

Charter link: www.healthpromotingcampuses.ca/okanagancharter

Benefits of adopting the Okanagan Charter

- Promoting health and well-being are essential to achieving our full potential in teaching and learning, research, and engagement.
- Evidence demonstrates that people who are well are more productive, are more able to engage in deeper learning, are more likely to be retained, and have a stronger sense of community.
- Health and well-being are linked to enhanced learning, satisfaction, retention and engagement among students, staff and faculty.

Formal adoption of the Okanagan Charter

Principally, adoption of the Charter entails signing the commitment to support its:

Vision

Health and well-being promoting post-secondary campuses transform the health and sustainability of our current and future societies, strengthen communities and contribute to the well-being of people, places and the planet.

Calls to Action

1. Embed human and environmental well-being into campus administration, culture, academics, and operations.
2. Lead human and environmental well-being promotion action locally and globally.

Principles

- Use settings and whole system approaches
- Ensure comprehensive and campus-wide approaches
- Use participatory approaches and engage the voice of students and others
- Develop trans-disciplinary collaborations and cross-sector partnerships
- Promote research, innovation and evidence-informed action
- Build on strengths
- Value local and indigenous communities' contexts and priorities
- Act on existing universal responsibility

Required steps for adopting the Okanagan Charter

1. Institution Executive, Chancellor, University President, Rector, Provost or similar position of leadership signs the 'Statement of Adoption.'
2. Campus-specific commitments for the activation of the Okanagan Charter are summarized on institution letterhead.
3. Both of the above are submitted to the Canadian Health Promoting Campus Network Chair: Matt Dolf (matt.dolf@ubc.ca)

Examples of Individual Commitments

Additionally, the signing institution will articulate commitments to demonstrate how they will translate the Charter into action for their own campus and context. Below are some examples of commitment statements:

1. Commit to support the inclusion of well-being in the institution's strategic planning process.
2. Commit to promote well-being in priority areas identified by campus community such as:
 - Mental health & resilience
 - Learning & working environments
 - Built & natural environments
 - Food & nutrition
 - Social inclusion
 - Physical activity & recreation
3. Commit to invest new funds into well-being through allocations to:
 - Strategic supports for faculties and administrative units to facilitate campus wide action
 - Enhance and align existing well-being promotion resources
 - Engage with our community to inform and encourage new actions and learning
4. Commit to evaluate and report on health promotion outcomes including:
 - Annual reporting
 - Present progress and learnings at future International Conference on Health Promoting Campuses (planned for 2018)
5. Commit to convene conversations and share best practices across Canadian and international campuses.

Contact

For more information, please contact the Canadian Health Promoting Campuses Network Chair:

Matt Dolf

Director, Strategic Support | UBC Wellbeing
The University of British Columbia | Vancouver Campus
2321 – 2260 West Mall | Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z4
Phone 604.827.0709 | Cell 778.322.9556 | matt.dolf@ubc.ca

Visit the website: www.healthpromotingcampuses.ca