Summary of Literature Review on Collaborative Leadership

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This resource was coproduced by partners of the Collaborative Leadership in Practice (CLiP) project. A copy of the complete literature review is available at www.clip-lcp.org.

As part of the Collaborative Leadership in Practice (CLiP) project, a joint effort of Health Nexus and the Ontario Public Health Association, a literature review was conducted. First, the document explained the methodology utilized to identify, collect and analyze documents from academic sources and from the grey literature. Secondly, a brief overview of Collaborative Leadership was provided, particularly looking at collaborative leadership competency models at the individual and organizational level. Thirdly, the document presented examples of collaborative leadership found in relation to the fields of education, inter-professional collaboration, and in the not for profit sector. This was followed by a discussion of anti-oppression and intersectionality models in collaborative leadership. Literature in relation to collaborative efforts as well as on intersectionality and anti-oppression were discussed. However, the review found a lack of documentation and research on organizational collaborative processes and leadership in the non for profit sector. The main findings from the literature review related to the need for the development and utilization of intersectional research methods in organizations and the workplace, particularly in relation to strategies to build and strengthen collaborative efforts.

The main conclusions were as follows:

- There is a large body of publications in academic and grey literature in regards to the terms "collaboration" and "collaborative leadership";

- The topic is discussed extensively in literature pertaining to business management;

- Literature in relation to collaboration and collaborative leadership was found in the fields of education, inter-professional collaboration in health, as well as in the not for profit sector;

- In the review, models related to traits and competencies of the collaborative leader were presented, along with a model on strengthening core collaborative capacities;

- Limited resources were found in relation to anti-oppression and collaborative leadership; documents and toolkits in the field referred to using anti-oppression in the work of organizations, not specifically on how to integrate the framework into collaborations, and collaborative leadership.

- The literature critiqued the popularity of the terms "diversity" and proliferation of "cultural competence" initiatives and consulting, pointing out that they do not address oppression and power imbalances in specific policies and organizational procedures, therefore not promoting systemic change;

- Findings pointed out the need to use an intersectional approach to overcome the limitations of an anti-oppression framework, particularly in relation to expanding the

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understanding of power dynamics involving simultaneous oppressed and privileged subject positions.

- Additionally, the findings indicated that utilizing an intersectional approach could assist in understanding systemic processes that turn individual differences into inequities, therefore providing valuable knowledge to strengthen collaborative leadership and to identify strategies for systemic change.

- The literature highlighted a significant gap in the absence of research into the processes of collaborative leadership in the not for profit sector in general, and on the outcomes derived from the use of an intersectional anti-oppression frameworks in collaborations/collaborative leadership.

- The review encouraged organizations to develop working definitions of what an intersectional, anti-oppression, collaborative leadership is and steps needed to make it work in organizations by engaging first in active research in this area. This is needed to establish a definition that is based both on theory and practice of lived experiences of oppressed and marginalized groups and their leadership such as Indigenous, African/Black, LGBTTQ/Queer, Feminist, Working class, Immigrant, Refugee, Non-status communities.

- Challenging and deconstructing systemic structures of power and dominance that continuously, historically and contemporarily, create disempowerment, often resulting in health, financial and well-being disparities and violence is a requirement for intersectional, anti-oppression collaborative leadership. A process of rigorous critical engagement in an anti-oppression audit of self/personal, community (ties), and organizational processes must be completed and evaluated to ensure implementation of intersectional leadership in a responsible and accountable way.

- Examining leadership "from the margins" and re-examining historical connections within often coopted practices, such as health equity and social determinants of health, from a critical lens will support empowerment centred intersectional leadership collaborations.