

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

At the Northern Ontario School of Medicine

VALUE PROPOSITION OF THE CENTRE

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) was presented with the Charles Boelen International Social Accountability Award by the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC) in 2018. Named after Dr. Charles Boelen, a world leader in social accountability in medical education, the award aims to celebrate people or organizations whose professional accomplishments are reflective of the principles of social accountability, including a focused response to the priority health concerns of citizens and society in education, research and service delivery missions. Social Accountability is woven throughout NOSM's mandate—it is one of our key values and one of four strategic directions of The NOSM 2021-2025 strategic plan, the NOSM Challenge.

A one-of-its-kind centre, the Centre for Social Accountability's contributions to research and advocacy, will result in better informed decisions about challenges facing the system of health-care delivery in Northern Ontario, leading to better population health outcomes. Fundamental to this will be the Centre's research and advocacy into preventative measures outside the health-care system, such as water safety, food security, housing, income and access to critical services, which will magnify the impact of NOSM's education and advocacy efforts within the system. By measuring NOSM's impact through its provision of health-care workforce and implementation of health human resource planning, the Centre will be recognized for its leadership in Indigenous, Francophone and rural health at a national and international level.

Beyond the immediate and proximate benefits to education, practice, and health outcomes in the region, the research capacity of the Centre and its network of affiliated partners will be a vital resource for system-wide planning and policymaking, leading to farther reaching improvements and innovations in the future.

Ultimately, its work will find a wider audience among practitioners, planners, and policymakers in similarly challenged jurisdictions around the world, helping to elevate the issues of health-care equity, access, and social accountability.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CENTRE

The Centre functions as a multidisciplinary centre of NOSM dedicated to the improvement of health and wellness in Northern Ontario. Through policy leadership and advocacy, research and innovation, and education that better align medical training with community needs, it will be the frontrunner to improving equity, access, and population health outcomes that are sustainable.

Situated on the Anishinabek Nation, specifically Atikameksheng and Wahnapiitae First Nations, and operating under NOSM's governance and administration, the Centre's impact derives from its regional focus, yet is unbounded in its scope. The national and international relevance of the Centre's work will become recognized as its results are dispersed among practitioners, policy makers, and advocates in similarly challenged jurisdictions.

The establishment of the Centre for Social Accountability will result in improved health of Northern Ontarians while extending beyond NOSM's commitment to being socially accountable in our education and research programs and advocating for health equity. The Centre's integrated approach in the areas of policy leadership and advocacy; research and innovation; education; and community impact will produce a deeper and broader understanding on a range of issues affecting population health outcomes inside and outside the medical system. In this way the Centre's social accountability research defines and strengthens the School, making NOSM and its partners more effective in the achievement of this critical mission.

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

COMMUNITY IMPACT



Track the Intake + Output of All NOSM Graduates



Identify + Advocate for Local + Regional Interventions

POLICY, LEADERSHIP + ADVOCACY



Establish Canadian + International Standards



Collect + Disseminate Evidence of Impacts

Provide Leadership



Continuous Improvement



Become Recognized + Consulted as Credible Voice

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

RESEARCH + INNOVATION

Share Methods, Expertise + Resources



Create Capacity for Substantive Research

Leverage Data Collection + Research Relationships



Become Primary Aggregator + Disseminator of Data

Disseminate Research Results + Advocacy Positions

EDUCATION

Demonstrate Commitment to Values + Intentions in Internal Policies



Demonstrate Measurable Impact of NOSM Through Curriculum + Training

KEY OBJECTIVES

The Centre's will build its value proposition on four pillars underpinning NOSM's five-year plan:

1. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- a. Track the intake and output of NOSM graduates in all programs (UME, PGME, HSP, CEPD, etc.) and their impact through performance in the programs, location and type of practice and impact on population health.
- b. Identify and advocate for specific interventions in local and regional health care delivery that will have positive impacts in the future.
- c. Be more responsive to the resource needs of communities through improved health workforce planning.

2. POLICY LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

- a. Establish Canadian and international standards for the assessment of social accountability in health education, health research, and health service.
- b. Collect and disseminate evidence of the impact of Canadian medical schools and academic health science networks in being socially accountable.
- c. Enable continuous improvement by applying this knowledge in a systematic way and leading transformative change in social accountability in health.
- d. Provide leadership at national and international conferences and meetings on social accountability.
- e. Become recognized and consulted as the most credible voice in planning and policymaking for health and wellness across Northern Ontario.

3. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

- a. Create capacity for substantive research into social determinants of health affecting community health and wellness, with a focus on prevention as well as cure.
- b. Become recognized as the primary aggregator and disseminator of data and documents for other researchers in the field through the design, source funding, and execution of relevant and impactful research projects.
- c. Disseminate research results and advocacy positions through publication, presentation, and participation in pertinent consultations with communities, institutions and public agencies.
- d. Share methods, expertise, and other resources with those who are teaching or studying in social accountability or rural and northern medicine.
- e. Leverage data collection and research relationships to build relevance of accumulated Centre work in jurisdictions with similar challenges.

4. EDUCATION

- a. Demonstrate the measurable impact of NOSM's social accountability through its curriculum and the alignment of NOSM's curriculum and training programs with the needs and priorities of the communities it serves.
- b. Demonstrate commitment to the values and intentions of social accountability in the internal policies and practices of the Centre (and NOSM).

GOVERNANCE

The Centre for Social Accountability will be an “interdisciplinary unit” of NOSM. This new unit is a multidisciplinary, multi-institutional group with faculty, staff and students engaging in a commonly focused area of leadership, research and advocacy. It is a centrally established unit (outside the usual divisional or school structure) designed to foster research and teaching, and policy formulation in new or highly specialized areas. As such, the Centre will operate under the authority of NOSM’s Dean, President and CEO.

NOSM will create a Committee for Social Accountability, reporting on all initiatives of the Centre and the progress of Social Accountability measures at NOSM. It will be composed in part or whole of the founding advisory committee.

During the formative stage of the Centre, this committee will work at the direction of the Dean to set the strategic direction, ensure that investments and resources correspond to needs and priorities, and that its initiatives are impactful and scientifically sound. This Committee will also serve as a resource to the inaugural Executive Director who will be there for administrative and logistical support of the Centre’s mission.

MEMBERSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Invited members of the Centre will have a primary affiliation with NOSM, are currently faculty members or scholars with MERLIN, ICES-North and CRaHNR, or a related academic unit at Laurentian or Lakehead University. They will contribute to the Centre’s goals and objectives through active participation in research programs and/or other academic activities. They will be nominated for invitation by the Advisory Committee and will include, at a minimum, representatives from Indigenous, Francophone and rural communities as well as members of the AHSCs, namely HSN and TBRHSC.

The scientists and researchers of the Centre will be dedicated to developing new researchers in this vital and growing field of study,

and the Centre's Partnerships Program will be designed to support these efforts. Centre partners may be local, regional, national or international. Different than members, partnerships can be industry partners, sponsors or a community of funded researchers from other academic disciplines, with other health professional backgrounds and related institutions who wish to engage in programs of high-quality research, advocacy or innovation in social accountability.

General membership will be open to others having other forms of affiliation with NOSM, including representation from current and future partners with whom there are collaboration agreements or memoranda of understanding. These may include international partners such as; the Training for Health Equity Network (THENet), Towards Unity for Health (TUFH), the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA), as well as other universities.

FUNDING MODEL

NOSM’s commitment to social accountability is interwoven in the fabric of its academic enterprise. The Centre will take this commitment to a new level and increase the benefits to communities and patients across the Northern and rural Ontario. With targeted and strategic investments, it will yield optimal improvements to the healthcare system. Initial seed funding will enable the Centre to strengthen its roots and help build capacity and impact over time. Given the apparent need for the Centre, it will eventually grow and gain capacity at a level that fully supports its mission, however it can start at a minimal level and build capacity over time, or it can seek upfront funding commitments sufficient for a more ambitious launch and growth trajectory.

In the initial “start-up” funding scenario, the Centre would be established with \$250,000/annum for three years and would spend the first year with an inaugural Executive Director, part-time secretariat, postdoctoral fellowships and setting up systems to outline its research, education and advocacy priorities for the next five years.

