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ESTABLISHING A CISSS/CIUSSS TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Summary:

This document provides a summary of a lengthy research and consultation project used in the Initiative sur le partage des connaissances et le développement des compétences en santé publique's (IPCDC's) various community development activities. For readers who understand French, we have furnished some links to the IPCDC's website for additional resources that further illustrate and expand on the main elements in this document. Use the appropriate links throughout the text to download exercises or watch video content that illustrates the findings.

INTRODUCTION

In Québec, an integrated health and social services centre (a Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux CISSS) or an integrated university health and social services centre (a Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux – CIUSSS), along with its area network (réseau territorial de services – RTS) partners, is responsible for improving and maintaining the health of the population it serves. It must offer the best possible services to the clients who consult with it and, at the same time, anticipate problems relating to health and well-being. For that reason, it is called on to play a role in addressing several health determinants, including housing conditions, education, social support, access to employment, etc.

Community development support is an essential response measure in doing so. In addition to helping a CISSS/CIUSSS carry out its mission, community development support encourages CISSS/CIUSSS stakeholders to adopt practices that reflect population-level responsibility.

By taking a clear stance in this regard, the CISSS/CIUSSS guides its programs and mobilizes its resources to support community action, thereby improving living conditions and reducing social inequalities in health. In this way, the CISSS/CIUSSS commits to working with all the citizens, stakeholders and partners in its territory. CISSS/CIUSSS contributions to community development are largely influenced by organizational capabilities, as well as the ways in which programs are managed and relationships built with the population or partners. In this sense, CISSS/CIUSSS managers play a key role, both internally and externally.

By supporting community initiatives and offering programs adapted to local dynamics, health and social services institutions strengthen community action (World Health Organization [WHO], 1986) to create favourable environments and develop healthy communities. This type of approach to intervention has a positive impact on local dynamics, as it facilitates cooperation between residents and community organizations, and encourages action that improves the conditions under which individuals grow, live, work and age.

ACTING ON DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

By committing to working with its partners to address factors that allow for adequate response to the population's health needs and the resolution of problems that arise in a community, the CISSS/CIUSSS is taking steps to improve

living conditions. These factors, often called determinants of health, largely explain a population's health status and, for the most part, are responsible for social inequalities in health[1]. Every day, they affect the ability of individuals and populations to meet their needs, grow and even adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles[2].

1. Healthy Communities

As a key stakeholder in the community, the CISSS/CIUSSS is responsible for participating and even taking a lead role in the development of a healthy community. It undertakes initiatives to promote community development and supports those initiatives designed and implemented by the community and its partners.

> *Within the health and social services network, community development is defined as a "process involving voluntary cooperation, mutual assistance and building social ties between local residents and institutions to improve physical, social and economic living conditions" [translation][3].*

A healthy community is constantly improving its physical and social environment. It gives its citizens the opportunity to help each other carry out the basic activities of daily living and achieve their full potential (Hancock and Duhl, 1986). It is also prosperous, healthy, sustainable, fair, safe, united and inclusive[4]. Its development is based on the contributions of both individuals and stakeholders from various sectors who work together, hone their skills, mobilize resources and make positive changes to individual and collective health and well-being.

Empowerment is inextricably linked to the development of healthy communities. This term is largely used to describe actions that foster the power of individuals, organizations and communities to act and identify solutions to problems they encounter, or in their willingness to meet their needs themselves[5].

> *Empowerment fosters the development of stakeholders' ability to exert greater power, and to access and even control resources. Strengthening the power to act through community development means developing intervention and management measures that encourage participation. Joint action by various community stakeholders who recognize the value of collectivizing their efforts to achieve shared goals can also be relied upon.*

Many initiatives considered endogenous, that is, developed by community partners, show considerable creativity and demonstrate communities' ability to address food insecurity, homelessness, housing, local services, recreation, literacy, etc. These initiatives help to establish social economy enterprises, promote local spending, encourage participatory democracy, foster civic and public education, revitalize living environments, etc. Community development practices have been well established for decades. They even played a role in the creation of the centres locales de services communautaires, or CLSCs [local community service centres] in the 1970s.

> *In Québec, there are many designations for community development, though their make-up is often the same: local social development, territorial development, urban revitalization, sustainable development, etc. Although the expression "community development" is becoming more widely known, there is still no universal designation because of the number of stakeholders involved and the various shapes it takes (community, public and private measures).*

That said, local initiatives alone cannot combat the processes that create social inequalities in health, devitalized communities and social exclusion. They cannot replace the role of government in the adoption of public policy to reduce health disparities. Local initiatives can nevertheless receive government support, particularly public health programs looking to mobilize communities.

The combined strength of the government and territorial communities is recognized as a key factor in the improvement of living conditions, the revitalization of territories and the creation of social ties. Moreover, many of the Québec government's public policies, legislation and programs rely on community mobilization and the participation of local stakeholders. That is the case with the *Government Sustainable Development Strategy*, the *National Strategy to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion*, and the *National Policy on Rurality*.

2. The importance of territorial communities

Community refers to a set of individuals and groups that, despite their specific characteristics, are connected by common issues based on specific interests (workers, renters, parents of patients with mental illnesses, etc.), shared identity (young people, seniors, disabled individuals, etc.) or territory.

Territorial communities are particularly important, given that[6]:

- They encompass all of a territory's legal and political systems, as well as the majority of the citizens' customs and traditions. They rely on the support of various local organizations or institutions, formally connected or not, such as schools, work environments, community spaces, recreation centres, parks, churches, etc.
- Belonging to the same territory fosters collective action and public engagement, and helps local organizations and institutions build foundations. For example, the quality of an institution's relationship with the community will help it to mobilize the community's resources more easily, as will the various social, political or cultural dynamics that characterize it (a community's social capital). It can use its proximity to foster synergy and collaboration with other stakeholders.
- The local dynamic indicates how the community addresses issues relating to the health and well-being of its population, to varying degrees.

2.1 Postal codes may be more important than genetic codes[7]

A community's characteristics can have either a positive or a negative impact on many determinants of health, which can affect social inequalities. In addition to creating more difficult living conditions, this place effect[8] can limit individuals' ability to take action, restrict access to resources and limit growth opportunities. Faced with such challenges, a community's social capital makes a difference. Stakeholders' motivations for working together, the ways in which they do so, their perceptions of shared issues, the quality of their relationships and the conditions that affect cooperation are important determinants in the development of healthy communities[9].

2.2 Territories that vary in size

As each community is characterized by its own realities, the community development support strategy delimits its territory while ensuring that the citizens and stakeholders who live there share the same feelings of belonging. It can be a neighbourhood, a block, a district, a village or an entire city.

Territorial delimitation is an important issue in the implementation of community development support interventions. It is not always simple-delimitation can vary based not only on the stakeholders' function or perception, but also on the structures and programs that are already in place. The geographic boundaries for these are established according to a different set of administrative rules (e.g., school sector).

A community development territory can be different from the administrative territory in the CISSS/CIUSSS or local services network (réseau locaux de services – RLS) service area.

3. Community development, population-level responsibility and other legal foundations

Under Québec legislation, the CISSS/CIUSSS is responsible for addressing many determinants of health through health promotion and the development of intersectoral collaboration measures. The ***Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services*** advocates for promotion/prevention measures that make individuals, families and communities more accountable for health issues. Furthermore, the recent reorganization of the health and social services network confirms that **population-level responsibility** is one of the main building blocks. It aims to improve the health and well-being of an entire population and relies on the collaboration of local and regional stakeholders (e.g., public institutions, community-based organizations, private organizations and partners from non-health-related sectors) by **encouraging** them to use their skills and the means at their disposal to support a territory's population. The ***Public Health Act*** aims to create a living environment that fosters the health and well-being of those living in it. It stresses the necessity of dialogue mechanisms and the promotion of social and public policies that can improve the population's health and well-being.

Where these acts converge, there is a need for a CISSS/CIUSSS to position itself to support the capacity building of the community stakeholders in its territory. This institutional stance should specify the vision, tactical methods (e.g., organizational resources) and operational methods (e.g., activities or services) to ensure clear, coordinated interventions that support communities to improve living conditions and reduce social inequalities in health.

The CISSS/CIUSSS can assert this formal stance in a variety of ways. At a minimum, the organization clearly operationalizes its strategic vision through a community development policy and a time-bound implementation plan (e.g., over a three-year period) that facilitates its establishment and helps to launch it successfully. The result: the organization assumes responsibility while providing a more concrete definition of its commitments and major actions. Furthermore, the CISSS/CIUSSS can more easily adjust its methods and intervention practices in the community it serves while respecting its mission. It integrates community development support into planning documents (involving

population-level responsibility, public health, community-based organization, etc.). The CISSS/CIUSSS's clear stance on community development also facilitates connections with other stakeholders' planning exercises (including municipal policies, development plans, regional county municipality (RCM) land use plans, the school success plan, etc.).

Readers who understand French and wish to gain a better understanding of basic community development concepts may refer to a glossary that defines the main concepts and download these exercises. Readers may also consult several municipalities' accounts of their support for community development by clicking this link. These resources are in French only.

CISSS/CIUSSS SUPPORT

The institution has also elaborated a service offering that will encourage involvement from organization branches as well as individuals from diverse professional backgrounds: doctors, nurses, social workers, health promotion officers, community organizers, etc.

In its role as a community development actor, partner or supporter, the CISSS/CIUSSS enables community actors to address problematic situations and propose solutions. Whether through its interventions at round tables, in service initiatives or by the local provision of public health measures, CISSS/CIUSSS support increases community actors' abilities to improve living conditions, address local issues and mobilize around joint action to bring change to problematic situations.

This support is part of the CISSS/CIUSSS' regular activities. The branches will use intervention models that support community capacity building (the community approach to clinical services, public health measures that mobilize communities, etc.). Each will be involved in carrying out activities that support community development. There will have to be mechanisms in place to foster interdependence among the institution's various programs (i.e., transversality, which we will address later on), but also with other community organizations from various sectors (in other words, intersectorality).

In particular, CISSS/CIUSSS support for community development is based on:

- Initiatives brought forward by community actors, which involve several community actors (possibly including citizens), who define the end results, the means and the terms and conditions of governance. They take place in a territorially significant location and are adapted to a community's dynamics. These initiatives rely on, for example, municipalities that mobilize other community and regional actors. Along with them, schools, community-based organizations, local employment centres, business people and others work on improving people's daily living conditions (e.g., transportation, housing, academic success). They work with citizens and decide together on what action to take.
- Public health programs and approaches that mobilize communities around health issues. They implement solutions developed in keeping with provincial and regional priorities. These measures are varied and concern, among other things: Integrated perinatal and early childhood services (services intégrés en périnatalité et pour la petite enfance – SIPPE), the Government Action Plan (GAP) to Promote Healthy Lifestyles and Prevent Weight-Related Problems, Healthy Aging, and the Healthy Schools approach. Their goals include creating healthy environments and taking care of vulnerable populations. Part of CISSS/CIUSSS programming, these public health measures are implemented in the community through mobilization of various local actors (elected officials, community groups, etc.

Just as healthcare is not solely the prerogative of doctors, community development support services are not solely the responsibility of community-based organizations, although these organizations do play a vital role. The support that they offer (identifying priorities, developing action plans, evaluation, managing disputes, etc.) better enables stakeholders and partnership groups to resolve community issues. They allow the CISSS/CIUSSS to play an influential role in the communities it serves. Their integration into communities allows for action on determinants of health and leads to improved conditions in which people can live healthy lives[10].

To help position your organization to support community development, you can download these exercises, or watch this video. These resources are in French only.

MOBILIZE MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE TO ADVANCE THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT STRATEGY

To put in place organizational arrangements that will facilitate this positioning, the institution must mobilize and adapt its management expertise to the particularities of community development. For an organization to be able to support community development, a manager must be able to mobilize the CISSS/CIUSSS' organizational capabilities. This allows for internal and external interventions that help strengthen community action (WHO, 1986)[11] and community development, with a view to acting on determinants of health and health-related social inequalities. According to the management cycle used in Québec's public service (see the diagram on the following page), developing and using this skill occurs in four phases.

The management of these phases is based on the mobilization of resources (knowledge, skills, abilities, etc.) that are common to several situations and can be mobilized in various contexts. Regardless of the situation, the strategic positioning in community development requires the manager to:

Being an agent for change.	The manager exercises leadership to mobilize other actors and members of his or her team to get involved.
Being a leader who *empowers* others.	Because of his or her ability to rally various actors around community issues and joint project leaders, the manager associated with community action plays a key role in skills development.
Working with ambiguity and complexity.	Having to deal with ambiguous and complex situations, the manager will encourage individuals to express their points of view in order to identify the priority goals and intervention possibilities.
Managing innovative projects in a collaborative context.	Managing a community development support intervention relies on project management methods. Community development interventions evolve over time, in space and depending on the stakeholders (local, regional, national, etc.). Therefore, managing them requires being open to new things.
Guiding CISSS/CIUSSS action using principles that support healthy community development.	The CISSS/CIUSSS manager will have to deal with unconventional work situations. Operational management will be guided at each step by action principles that are commonly used in health promotion and widely associated with the support strategy: • collaboration, partnership and intersectorality; • reduction of health-related social inequalities; • *empowerment* of individuals, organizations and the community; • participation of stakeholders; • promotion and standardization of public policies that foster health.

In short, the institution's position on community development support poses a particular challenge for the manager in his or her role as strategist and visionary. The manager will need to reflect on how the CISSS/CIUSSS promotes community involvement within the population, and among its partners and employees.

For guidance on your role as a manager, you can watch this video on the manager's role in community development, or download these exercises. These resources are in French only.

1. WORKING TOGETHER

Community development is a responsibility that an institution like the CISSS/CIUSSS obviously cannot shoulder by itself. Through its interventions and support, the CISSS/CIUSSS will focus on its ability to resolve, in cooperation with other stakeholders, issues that arise within a community.

This community involvement will be fostered through: support for community initiatives and programs adapted to local dynamics; sharing power and control between community actors and CISSS/CIUSSS stakeholders; strong and long-lasting ties with other actors; and intervention processes in which those affected by a social issue are able to make a significant contribution to the mutual learning process for stakeholders and vulnerable persons. Involvement will also be encouraged through a participatory approach adopted by the CISSS/CIUSSS in its decision making, and in formulating and implementing its actions. A supportive stance requires that the manager demonstrate an open mind when faced with organizational and intervention methods that encourage working with partners and citizens as well as shared governance.

1.1 Citizen participation

Putting structures of collaboration in place more easily mobilizes organizations or institutions with a certain degree of structure. One of the challenges for these collaborations is how to help citizens themselves to govern through their active participation in community life, both within their own communities and in society as a whole. Including citizens in development approaches requires organized spaces. In this sense, government authorities must make greater efforts to remove obstacles to greater citizen participation in the decision-making process[13]. To this end, the CISSS/CIUSSS can rely on a variety of civic practices that are widely documented and proven. Remember that getting people involved in their communities, helping each other and working together are associated with (among other things) improved quality of life, prevention of health problems, more efficient and effective democracy, better social cohesion and better decision making[14].

1.2 Shared governance

The strength of collaboration depends on the group's ability to mobilize community actors around complex collective processes characterized by change. It also has to do with sharing power and available resources.

In this sense, CISSS/CIUSSS's participation in mechanisms of collaboration will help (for example) all stakeholders to take ownership for analyzing the issues, actions, their evaluations, etc. Remember that collaboration aims to bring together actors from diverse backgrounds, each with specific interests, but motivated by a common cause. It is characterized, "in essence, by a willingness to accept interdependence, by realizing that a targeted action does not take its full effect unless it is part of a group of complementary and converging actions" [translation][15].

Shared governance refers to non-hierarchical processes for power sharing and democratic decision making, through which the actors involved in the intervention have shared control over the various components of an intervention (approaches, stakeholder relations, activities, operating modes, etc.).

However, creating a context that is conducive to sustained relations between actors in the same territory often faces a number of challenges. For example, government programs of a provincial scope that are administered regionally

sometimes mesh poorly with community-based initiatives. In addition, CISSS/CIUSSS catchment areas do not necessarily map onto territorial communities in a way that makes sense for their citizens. Institutional and administrative thinking can, in some cases, complicate collaboration and partnership practices[16].

To deal with these challenges, it is important to focus on establishing and maintaining quality collaboration between the CISSS/CIUSSS and the community stakeholders in its territory.

1.3 Community capacity building through public health programs

Public health activities that focus on community mobilization (Healthy Schools, Healthy Aging, Services integrés en Périnatalité et Petite enfance [SIPPE], etc.) can go hand-in-hand with community development in that they unfold as social capital and community capacity increase (*asset-based community development*, Hancock, 2009). Their success and effectiveness require the participation of community actors, but also a democratic dialogue and a shared learning process that helps the individuals and organisations concerned to increase their power in a situation[17].

These activities can have undeniable convergences with community initiatives. They sometimes appeal to the same elements (e.g., intersectorality) and the same actors (municipalities, community groups, etc.). They are deployed at the local community level (towns, villages, neighbourhoods). Creating partnerships will consolidate interventions regarding social determinants and health-related social inequalities, in addition to optimizing cooperative action.

2. From hypercollaboration to an integrated development approach

Various public and private measures make community development and mobilization some of the key elements of success in achieving their targets (e.g., social integration, academic success, fighting poverty, etc.). To this are added numerous grassroots initiatives whose leadership "starts from the ground up" and "comes from within" the local or regional area. The situation is such that the territorial dynamic may be more complex than ever before in terms of governance[18].

A number of observations regarding collaborative practices show a trend toward dysfunctional collaborations and partnership fatigue[19]. This issue has numerous consequences. In particular, the actors involved, although mobilized, struggle to create a cohesive regional approach that can solve, in an integrated way, the problems faced by the population. The logic of sectoral public policy can push those involved in the governance of collaborative action to lose sight of how the various dimensions of problems are interrelated. To avoid this type of situation, groups can focus on the participation of the affected actors.

In addition, to maximize the impacts and repercussions of the various collaborations and to allow better connection between collaborations, proponents can focus on a strategic vision and a territorial development plan[20]. This is proving to be a necessity, as the "growing responsibilities faced by Québec cities, RCMs, and regions require, more than ever, the pooling of economic, social and cultural expertise to meet the needs and expectations in the region" [translation][21].

The following link includes exercises to help you in implementing your collaboration practices. These resources are in French only.

3. The challenges of accountability

You don't use a ruler to measure a sphere.

With ever-increasing pressure on public spending, results-based management and performance assessment are priorities for institutional leaders. The various programs have been put under the microscope, all services have been called into question, and every stakeholder is expected to document his or her work performance. In this kind of context, supporting community development initiatives poses many challenges for CISSS/CIUSSS managers and stakeholders. The initiatives go well beyond conventional accountability practices.

Certain characteristics unique to community interventions justify the consideration of special treatment:

- Community development activities are not limited to the institutional boundaries of the CISSS/CIUSSS. The goals of community development are not imposed by CISSS/CIUSSS, but result from consultations among stakeholders.
- There is no one formula for standardizing community development interventions, which makes it difficult to assess them. Community initiatives are not all the same and do not have access to the same resources—each has its own unique characteristics. The more intangible aspects are also determinants in the success of joint community development efforts (social capital, governance, etc.).
- The results often become tangible after a long period of time[22]. They fluctuate based on the community

dynamic and on the work of various actors who are sometimes pulling in opposite directions. In other words, "the collective impact is a marathon, not a sprint. There are no shortcuts in this long-term process that is social change[23]."

- The relative share of the various actors in meeting needs varies depending on their mandates, interests and resources, as well as by location. Their contributions are often tied to broader issues. Also, actors must appeal to many different policies and programs at once. They are indebted to many different stakeholders.

Faced with such circumstances, there is "the existence of a certain uneasiness among many planners and managers who cannot accurately predetermine the measurable and expected results of community development support interventions" [translation][24].

In short, a community development support intervention creates collective action in response to local factors that make it difficult to compare one CISSS/CIUSSS to another. Community development support strategies often cannot be measured with the traditional quantitative methods used in management[25]. This is due to the often-present combination of varying contexts, diverse interventions, stakeholders' agendas, the numerous challenges associated with collaborative action as well as multi-organizational issues. What's more, the approach that focusses on the impact of a single organization cannot easily be applied to measure the impact of several organizations working together to resolve a common issue[26]. Also:

- Mechanistic management that focuses on standard production poses numerous problems for a strategic intervention[27];
- The "current affairs" culture can hinder intersectoral collaboration[28];
- Many administrative practices and rules slow down local collaborative action[29], and these rules often work against democratic or community accountability[30].

Click on the following links to watch a short video on accountability or download exercises.
These resources are in French only.

A single indicator does not give an accurate picture of an intervention's complexity or of what actually occurs in terms of community development. Therefore, potential indicators can be grouped together in a cohesive system that considers:

Context	The CISSS/CIUSSS intervention takes into account the dynamics into which it is inserted, which in turn determines how it is to be implemented. The way in which the intervention takes into account the social, economic and political contexts that enable or restrict it is crucial. Without this dimension, there is no clear picture of the intervention's complexity, or of what really occurs[31].
Structure	The structure refers to the organization's positioning, the involvement of programs, resources, skills, information systems, etc.
Process	The processes cover everything that is done to provide services (a professional's activities to analyze a situation, give advice, implement an intervention plan, etc.).
Results	The results of an intervention are measured (over the short, medium and long term) and connections are made between CISSS/CIUSSS interventions and observed changes (changes to an actor's behaviour, relations between actors, access to resources, living conditions, etc.) This information shows that changes have resulted from the activities undertaken by the CISSS/CIUSSS and its partners.

3.1 Partnerships and collective performance

The strength of collaborations and initiatives comes from the actors' ability to work together. This synergy depends on the resources available to support the actors, but also on power sharing among them. CISSS/CIUSSS community development capabilities lie in mobilizing the resources required to achieve results, which are mostly external resources.

> *Both the quality of support provided by the CISSS/CIUSSS and interventions on social determinants require working together on collaborative interventions and capacity building.*

In terms of performance, it is worth remembering that optimizing community interventions must be a joint effort with partners in a context of shared governance. How quickly they are achieved, the quality of solutions and the scale of the results depend on the capabilities of community actors. The CISSS/CIUSSS networks with them to set goals and objectives. By working together, they mobilize diverse knowledge and resources to implement the initiative and to adapt it to the needs they have identified. The concept of public performance is insufficient for understanding the performance of a CISSS/CIUSSS when it works with community actors[33]. Indeed, a partnership's performance "is not automatically explicable in terms of specific outputs of a particular public organization; furthermore, [*it is influenced*] by the action of many other non-public actors, local or not" [translation][34]. This performance is in principle collective, since it "results from contributions from all of the actors, public and non-public" [translation][35].

The public nature of CISSS/CIUSSS services, as well as the importance of partnerships and of mobilizing community actors, reinforces the relevance of management based on the "new public value"[36]. This approach allows for shared governance of interventions (community initiatives, public health measures that focus on mobilization, etc.). It focuses on collaboration, deliberative methods and working together for public action (services, policies, etc.).

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35. This performance usually characterizes the actions and achievements of a particular entity, individual or organization and is part of an intentional strategy on the part of a single decision-making centre. Local collective performance can therefore be described as the set of individual achievements and collective skills in local society that condition the quality of life (objective and subjective) of its citizens (Divay, 2012, op. cit.).
36. Lévesque cites the studies by Benington and Moore (2011), for whom the management approach based on "public value" stems from the limitations and issues of new public management by its main proponents. It is the result of research conducted at the John F. Kennedy School of Government on the managers of public organizations and is consistent with the theories of economists who have shown that collective preferences are not given once and for all and that the logics for action are much more diverse (Lévesque, 2012, op. cit.).

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