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| **Developing a new Institute for Health Equity at McMaster University** |
| **Setting/problem:** McMaster University, located in Hamilton Ontario has a history of population health research and innovative health education as well as strong linkages with its local and global communities. It has extensive experience with cross faculty interdisciplinary institutes and has recently adopted the Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities and a new strategic vision of health and well-being of all. MIHE has established key partnerships with the City of Hamilton, working with planners, public health professionals, non-profit agencies, advocates and citizens in priority areas such as built environment, poverty, drug use and air quality. MIHE has supported community based research and student learning in determinants of health.**Intervention:** To provide collaborative focus on health equity research and education, McMaster University is developing a new Institute on Health Equity building on the strengths of the current Institute for Healthier Environments (MIHE).**Outcomes:** The proposed Institute for Health Equity would:1. push for better inter-disciplinary understandings of the social, economic, cultural, political and bio-physical forces that lead to such inequities – “the causes of the causes” – as Sir Michael Marmot has coined it in the Report of the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health;
2. adopt a leadership position in encouraging evidence-based action on health inequities and develop a body of expertise in evidence from interventions adopted to reduce health inequities and promote health equity
3. engage and support decision-makers at all levels in efforts to operationalize, through evidence-based action and ensuing rigorous evaluation, commitments to health equity
4. develop capacity at McMaster in researching Health Equity, building upon interests, expertise and data held by McMaster faculty and students across all faculties

**Implications:** Understanding and acting upon reducing health inequities is a core mandate of health promotion practitioners. Local governments are major players in these initiatives in knowledge development and exchange and training of health and broader sector learners. Universities must step up to work with municipalities to identify opportunities. McMaster University is well positioned to take on these challenges. MIHE has strong links within McMaster focused on indigenous studies, climate change, big data and other sustainable development interests.The two presenters are MIHE’s leads. One (JD) is the Chair of Health, Aging and Society based in Social Sciences. The second (FS), based in Health Sciences, was recently Director of McMaster’s new MPH.**Preferred presentation format: Oral or poster** |