

The Community Health and Social Medicine Incubator

Driving Student-Community Partnerships for Health

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Rationale

Healthcare students are increasingly being taught how complex structural factors – upstream social determinants of health (SDOH) – drive health disparities for historically marginalized populations. **However, curricular opportunities for students to act on these determinants in a meaningful way are limited.**

Our goals were to design a framework that empowers students to:

1. Partner with local marginalized communities to conduct a needs assessment and;
2. Co-create projects that address elicited community needs and take action against the SDOH impacting health to improve health outcomes.

Structure Employed

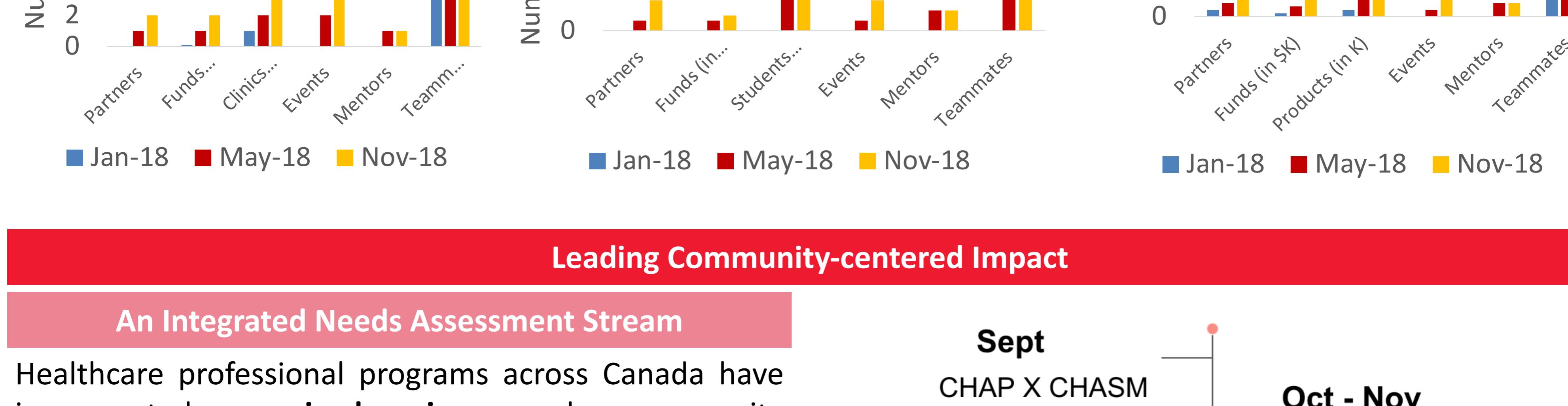
The Community Health and Social Medicine (CHASM) Incubator is an interdisciplinary social impact venture that improves the health outcomes of local, historically marginalized Montreal communities. CHASM encourages students to identify a concrete health need in an underprivileged population, and co-create a project in partnership with community organizations to address it. Student projects are given a framework to scale their ideas. This includes:

1. Mentorship by business and public health experts;
2. A social entrepreneurship and sustainability curriculum with bimonthly, interactive workshops;
3. Financial empowerment;
4. A committed network of student leaders that supports and publicizes the projects.

Curriculum and Impact on Student Initiative Growth

Workshop Name (Curricular Phase)	Learning Outcomes
Crowdfunding and Fundraising in Montreal (Discovery)	Learn the ingredients of a successful fundraising campaign and how to leverage different financial resources available in their community.
Setting Up and Maintaining Safe and Effective Project Environments (Discovery)	Appreciate group process theory and strategies to enhance communication both within their teams and with their external partners.
Creatively Engaging with Stakeholders (Design)	Understand how to map out community stakeholders, form new partnerships, and maintain ongoing stakeholder relationships.
Design Thinking in Social Entrepreneurship (Design)	Develop design thinking approaches to creatively approach solution-making with their target communities in mind.
Critical Consciousness in Community Work (Delivery)	Learn strategies for advocating for and with their communities and for grappling with moral distress encountered during community work.
Digital Marketing (Delivery)	Understand how to leverage different platforms (google AdWords, Facebook ads, etc.) to drive users and backers to their website.
Knowledge Translation (Evaluation)	Develop an approach for key messaging to diverse audiences by applying the theory of change and principles of knowledge translation.
Mixed Methods in Public Health (Evaluation)	Appreciate how to harness rigorous mixed methods approaches to measure their community impacts on their target population.

Growth Metrics of CHASM's Inaugural Impact Cohort



Leading Community-centered Impact

An Integrated Needs Assessment Stream

Healthcare professional programs across Canada have incorporated **service-learning** and community engagement into their curricula. Service-learning allows students to dismantle the perceived separation of work and civic contributions at the root of many health inequities.

CHASM Incubator provides a **framework for sustainable, impactful and innovative leadership-building service-learning curriculums**. Since 2019, the CHAP X CHASM program has partnered McGill medical students with our community organization network to complete Community Health Alliance Projects (CHAP), a central part of the service-learning curriculum of McGill University's undergraduate medical education program.

Community-Campus Exchange

Recognizing that the sustainability of initiatives depends on community-informed problem-solving, CHASM led a Community-Campus Exchange (CCE).

At the CCE, community stakeholders convened to identify Montreal-specific health priorities and foster interdisciplinary dialogue between health professionals, social entrepreneurs, and non-profit groups. CHASM's strategic planning are grounded in insights generated from this CCE.

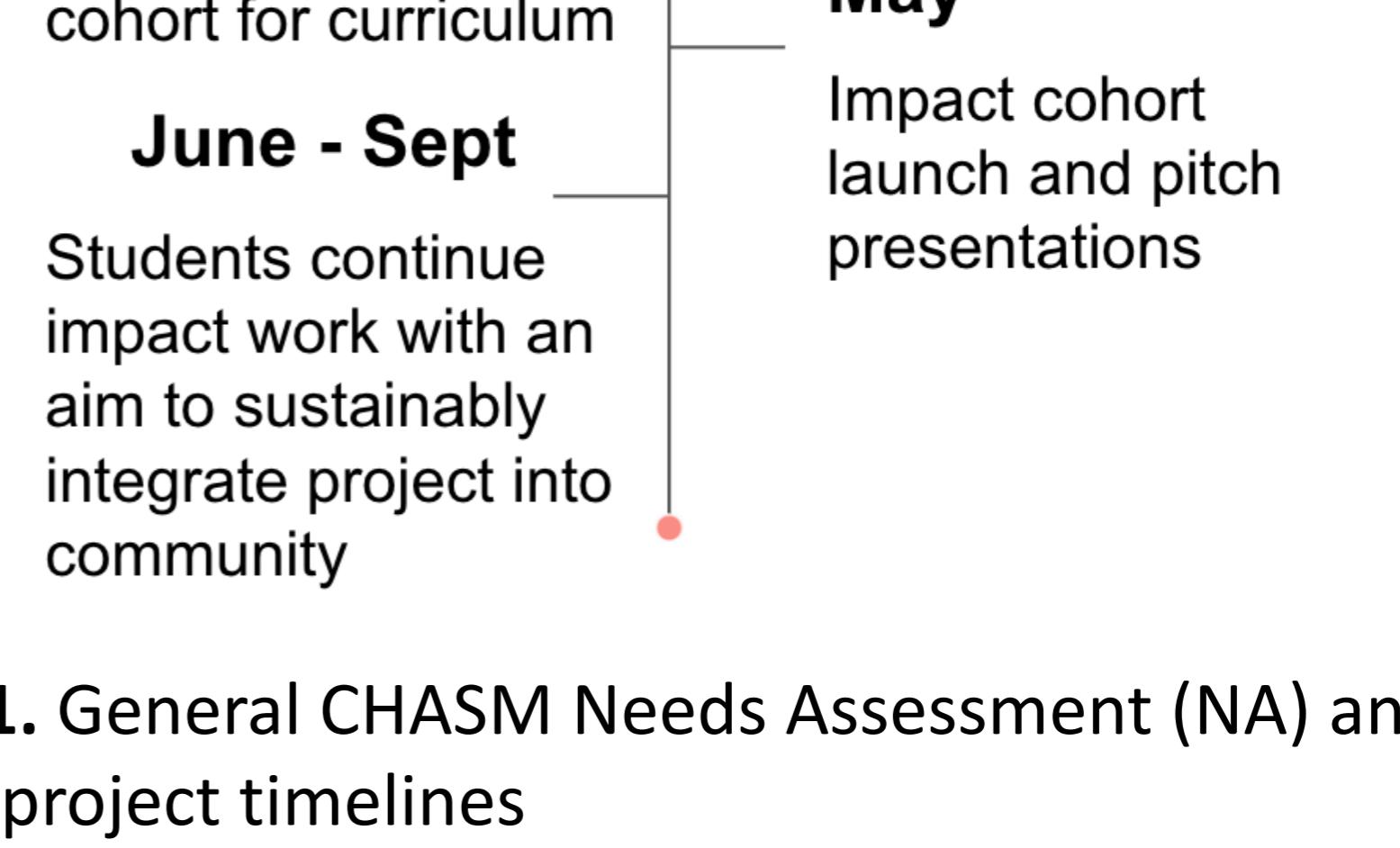


Figure 1. General CHASM Needs Assessment (NA) and Impact stream project timelines



Figures 2 & 3. CHASM's architecture and model

Conclusion

CHASM is an **unprecedented educational opportunity** that allows students to **partner with local communities** to sustainably address their **self-identified social determinants of health**, while simultaneously acquiring project development and advocacy skills. CHASM was a success in its first 3 years of operation. We hope to **expand** its scope in the coming years by increasing funding, recruiting more diverse projects and developing our workshops.