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March 28th, 2024

Re: College of Medicine's Strategic Star Award Letter of Nomination – Dr. Jennifer O'Brien

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic Letter of Recommendation in support of the nomination of Dr. Jennifer O'Brien for the College of Medicine's Strategic Star Award in the **Strengthen Research Capacity** category. As the longstanding Executive Director of Research in the Provincial Department of Anesthesiology I have had the privilege and pleasure of working closely with Dr. O'Brien for the last 15 years. Simply put, and in my opinion, there is no one in our department more deserving of this award.

To support this nomination I have included a copy of Dr. O'Brien's up-to-date CV.

In my view, all three award criteria are best supported by the outcomes of Dr. O'Brien's professional work within our Department. A snapshot of these outcomes in the last year include:

- Six peer-reviewed manuscripts,
- Three invited conference publications
- Three non-invited conference publications
- 12 peer-reviewed research grants
- 30+ research collaborators
- Ongoing collaborations with four local College of Medicine Departments and Anesthesiology Departments from other Universities.

Describe the nominee's specific actions in the last year that have contributed to one of the CoM strategic priorities

Objectively Dr. O'Brien's accomplishments highlighted above are superb, but the specific actions that have led to these successes can often be overlooked. Although the Provincial Department of Anesthesiology is proud of our research enterprise, we are primarily a clinical department with only two faculty members having significant research commitments. Dr. O'Brien's more than 30 co-authorships and co-investigator roles across multiple departments and intuitions speak strongly to the success of the department's research history. As with many clinical departments, clinicians will often determine a clinically specific research question but lack the time and research expertise to answer these important questions. It has been Dr. O'Brien's actions in supporting our clinicians that have allowed many of these questions to be answered and studied.

Further, our program's post-graduate medical trainees (residents) are required to complete a scholarly project - during a very busy residency. Dr. O'Brien has and continues to support and educate our resident's scholarly work in all areas including focusing the research question, assisting with protocol development, data interpretation, and knowledge translation. In addition, our Department regularly engages medical students in a summer research experience. This program requires medical students to be physically present in the Department for 10 weeks, with the expectation of completing a research project. Anyone involved in research knows a lot of groundwork is required to make this happen. It is often Dr. O'Brien who guides clinical supervisors through the research process to ensure timelines are realistic and achievable and that the overall experience is positive and successful for the students and all those involved. As an additional example of this exceptional support, Jennifer always attends our Department's regular after-hours research meetings and annual resident research competition. In no passive way, Dr. O'Brien will help the learners prepare their talks, fill in details of the project during the meeting, asks thought-provoking questions, and often provides written feedback to the presenters.

Dr. O'Brien's grant success is impressive with 12 successful grant applications in the last year alone. What is not evident in the documentation of these successes is that this represents a 100% success rate! The ongoing Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation project "Making Virtual Multidisciplinary Preoperative Assessment a Provincially Reality" of which Dr. O'Brien is a key team member, is the largest research grant our Department has ever received. This is in no doubt due to Dr. O'Brien's masterful grant-writing contributions. It should also be noted that Dr. O'Brien is never listed as a primary investigator on any of the grants, as she is not eligible to hold funds, but is always the primary grant writer, major supporter, and contributor.

Finally, there is a recurring theme to much of the work described above with many of the projects having a major qualitative research component, something that is uncommon in Anesthesia-related research projects. It is no coincidence that this is Dr. O'Brien's area of expertise. Her knowledge, work ethic, and "soft skills" have truly strengthened and focused our Department's program of research and capacity.

Describe how the actions of the nominee have been exceptional.

Dr. O'Brien's CV and her contributions over the last year in addition to the details outlined above, are more than enough to illustrate Dr. O'Brien's actions as exceptional, however, it must be highlighted that Dr. O'Brien is employed as a 0.6 FTE! The outputs she has successfully achieved are indicative of her exemplary time management skills and are more representative of an individual with a greater FTE. Furthermore, her successes require thoughtful and realistic planning; Dr. O'Brien consistently organizes research project timelines, plans meetings, and ensures the teams are meeting their schedule; and if not on track, determines the cause and rectifies or reassesses expected progress. Dr. O'Brien is easily the most productive asset of our Department's research enterprise. When considering exceptionality, it can imply the need to do a comparative assessment. As the Executive Director of Research, I frequently interact with those in similar roles within other departments, offering insight into the performance of our Department compared to others. These interactions allow me to conclude that Dr. O'Brien would be the most productive part of most Departments.

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Describe the impact of the nominee's actions on the strategic priority.

To my view this is the easiest of the three criteria, as the impact of Dr. O'Brien's actions can be objectively described in terms of outcomes. As such, it bears repeating Dr. O'Brien's research-related outcomes in the last year:

- Six peer-reviewed manuscripts,
- Three invited conference publications
- Three non-invited conference publications
- 12 peer-reviewed research grants
- 30+ collaborators in four departments in two universities

More simply stated, Dr. O'Brien is the embodiment of **Strengthening Research Capacity** as much of our Department's research success is directly attributed to the actions of Dr. O'Brien.

Thank you to the selection committee for their review of this nomination.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jonathan Gamble,
Executive Director of Research, Provincial Department of Anesthesiology
College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan

March 25, 2024

Staff Strategic Star Award Nomination

Strategic Priority: Quality Education

It is our shared honour and pleasure to nominate Ms. Krista Trinder for the Staff Strategic Star Award for the Spring of 2024. Ms. Trinder has worked as the Program Evaluation Specialist in the Undergraduate Medical Education Program since September 2008 and her work has been key for the growth and success of the MD program during this time.

Specific Actions in the past year that have contributed to the strategic priority of Quality Education:

1. In her role as Program Evaluation Specialist, Ms. Trinder has developed, revised and monitored the effectiveness of the **Program Evaluation Framework** for the undergraduate MD program. This detailed Framework supports program, course and teacher evaluation processes including data collection strategies/ methodologies and communication. This Framework developed by Ms. Trinder has been shared as an exemplary model with several Canadian medical schools through the National Program Evaluation Network.
2. Ms. Trinder has liaised with the University of British Columbia Program Evaluation team to access and include a UBC developed **Learning Environment** Evaluation tool (HELES instrument) within the University of Saskatchewan program evaluation measurements. This innovative tool supports exploration of student learning environment lived experience at our various campuses and educational sites. This data informs educational leadership and supports deeper exploration of learning environment from a general or as appropriate focal perspective.
3. Excellent and timely qualitative and quantitative analysis of student evaluation data and other program parameters has been a major strength of Ms. Trinder's work in her program evaluation role. These analytic summaries are crucial for a number of key programmatic monitoring activities including identification of:
 - Potential curriculum/curriculum delivery/learning environment variability between courses, between Saskatoon, Regina campuses and other teaching sites around Saskatchewan as well as within courses over time/curricular iterations.
 - Opportunities for **quality improvement enhancement** in curriculum/curriculum delivery/teaching quality/ learning environment
 - Positive practices in curriculum/curriculum delivery/teaching quality
 - Effectiveness of curricular innovations or pilots
4. Ms. Trinder also has recently expanded her contribution to a data-informed approach to UGME curriculum, academic support and administrative processes/activities through data-analysis supporting:
 - Undergraduate MD program Admissions, through data analysis of student performance over the four years in program and potentially predictive admissions related variables.

- Identification of assessment metrics early in program predictive for future academic performance
5. Collaboration with researchers in **medical education related scholarship** has long been an under-recognized part of the work Ms. Trinder undertakes. She frequently quietly and modestly lends her expertise in the crafting of survey instruments, focus group scripts, analysis and research ethics applications sometimes without formal acknowledgement for this important contribution. She also frequently supports the dissemination of survey instruments for both student and faculty research. Ms. Trinder has also supported facilitation of focus groups for both medical education scholarship and for program accreditation needs.
 6. In terms of supporting the UGME team as a whole, Ms. Trinder has been a model for supportive collaboration.
 - She has patiently and unfailingly supported transition of administrative team members to grow expertise in program evaluation needs/procedures.
 - She has generously given of her time to share communications and collaborate on matters relating to program evaluation processes and data/analysis with various groups within the wider UGME team.
 - She has prepared complex visual and narrative reporting documents for senior leadership in discussions with internal and external stakeholders.
 7. Despite her extensive portfolio and duties in Program Evaluation, Ms. Trinder this past year, also took on the challenge of stepping into the Accreditation Specialist role during the incumbent's maternity leave. This was a major responsibility with substantial work requirement as the UGME program prepares for an upcoming CACMS accreditation review. Ms. Trinder has supported a seamless transition during her colleague's leave period, maintaining a high-quality communication and virtual platform for accreditation related activities/documentations. It is commendable that Ms. Trinder has been able to excel at both positions, juggling multiple responsibilities for the last year.

Exceptionality of actions contributing to the strategic priority of Quality Education:

Ms. Trinder's work in the various areas of her portfolios as outlined above, include strengths which have been clearly exceptional in our environment.

- Her willingness to take on seamlessly a second busy and high-stakes portfolio is perhaps the most striking.
- Her development, implementation and ongoing curation of the exemplary Program Evaluation Framework.
- It should also be acknowledged that the quality of her evaluation work, the identification of key data, the data collection and analysis strategies are exceptionally strong and support tremendous opportunities for ongoing quality assurance/quality improvement in our medical

education program learning environment, curriculum, curriculum delivery, teacher quality, and in the admissions processes.

- Equally critical in the effectiveness of this work, is her diligence and remarkable gift for clarity of communication and development of visual informatics representing the program.
- Her collaborative leadership in her additional role as Chair of the Program Evaluation Sub-Committee of Curriculum Committee.

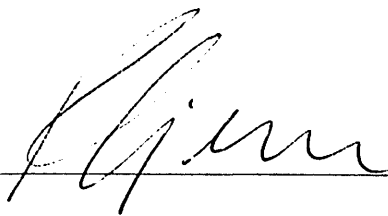
Impact of actions contributing to the strategic priority of Quality Education

Ms. Trinder's work has made possible:

- Ongoing quality improvement/quality assurance measures within our undergraduate medical education program - including relating to admissions processes, curriculum, curriculum delivery, teacher quality, learning environment and cross-campus comparability.
- Compliance with stringent external accreditation requirements for our MD program
- Positive reputational representation of University of Saskatchewan in the National Program Evaluation Framework community.
- Ensured the progression of critical Accreditation work for the upcoming visit in 2026.

Ms. Trinder would be a most deserving and worthy candidate for the College of Medicine Staff Strategic Star Award and it is our honour to recommend her to the committee through this nomination.

Sincerely,



Regina Taylor-Gjevre
Assistant Dean Curriculum



Athena McConnell
Accreditation Director UGME



March 28th, 2024

Re. Strategic Star Award- Letter of Nomination- Kristine Hunter

Dear College of Medicine Staff Award Committee members,

Please accept this letter in support of our nomination of Kristine Hunter for the Strategic Star Award. Kristine has been serving in an inaugural MPT Program Coordinator role since June 2023 and prior to that as the School of Rehabilitation Science's (SRS) Research Facilitator and Special Projects Coordinator. The MPT program expansion has prompted tremendous change over the past year in regards to creation of new roles, hiring of new staff, and development of new processes. Kristine has played a critical role in the following areas in the past year which are directly linked to both the College's strategic priorities pertaining to the SRS as well as the SRS's own strategic plan: 1) ensuring continuity of support of SRS faculty's research; 2) capacity building of SRS administration team, new staff, budget planning; 3) contribution to positive external partnerships and community engagement, including Indigenous engagement and reconciliation initiatives.

Ensuring continuity of support of SRS faculty's research:

In her role as Research Facilitator (April 2023-June 2023) as well as over the past several months with a transition to a new person in the Research Facilitator position, Kristine supported many aspects of SRS faculty's research programs. The below quotes from SRS faculty demonstrates the breadth and impact of this support:

“Kristine played an instrumental role in supporting the completion and submission of a large CIHR team grant application that required her to engage and support Indigenous community team members in obtaining and fulfilling administrative requirements for co-applicant processes in ways that were aligned with a respectful and ethical imperative necessary for Indigenous health research. Indigenous health research requires unique approaches to engagement with community members that are grounded in respect, reciprocity, and relationship building and Kristine exemplifies and enacts all of these qualities that build trust within our research team and between academic and community partnerships. This level of expert engagement and facilitation is essential to building and strengthening Indigenous health research initiatives which is not easy, straightforward, or natural for everyone, but it is for Kristine.”

“She was there at all steps of the research journey – identifying research opportunities, helping to polish grants, getting approvals, celebrating success, and doing all the details that come with spending the money supporting staying on time and on budget.”

“Kristine was instrumental in ensuring that research support to faculty was maintained at a high quality through the transition to a new person in the role. She continued to serve as an important ‘go to’ and wealth of information for the new Research Facilitator and for faculty at the time of transition and for several months after.”

**Capacity building of SRS administration team, new staff, budget planning**

Throughout the past year, Kristine has served an essential role in being a 'hub' for nearly all administrative processes in the SRS and MPT. As the designated 'people lead' for all CUPE staff in the SRS, Kristine has established an engaged and welcoming team approach through her leadership of biweekly admin team meetings, sharing administrative tasks and load with the team, and using a 'strength-based' approach to delegation of administrative tasks and duties. Nearly all of the CUPE admin team (4 total) are new and/ or in new roles over the past year. Kristine has ensured that all felt welcomed and supported with structured onboarding and ongoing mentorship and support. Additionally, Kristine has served to onboard several new ASPA staff reporting to the Director in the past year (5 total) regarding administrative processes which has helped to maintain a sense of support and continuity for our growing SRS team at a time of tremendous change and growth. Kristine's contribution to budget management and oversight has also been essential. This has included weekly meetings with the Director and Financial Manager to navigate budget management and planning as well as day-to-day budget management.

Contribution to positive external partnerships and community engagement, including Indigenous engagement and reconciliation initiatives:

Kristine serves as a member of and support for the SRS's nistotamawin committee (formally the Indigenous Engagement Committee) and serves as an important support to the SRS's newly established Indigenous Affairs Coordinator. She has been instrumental in helping to support several truth and reconciliation initiatives led by the nistotamawin committee and the Indigenous Affairs Coordinator. She is also very proactive in ensuring respectful communication and interactions with Indigenous community partners. Here are some quotes from our faculty to demonstrate:

"Kristine has a drive to ensure Indigenous community payments and protocols are followed respectfully and efficiently from administrative perspective. ...community work is most complex and she really is tremendous at it."

"Kristine has been supporting and building capacity and engaging the community in the area of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. ...Although we are fairly early in the EDI work and priority area, Kristine is attentive and responsive to these priorities in all that she does within the SRS."

Beyond WHAT Kristine does, HOW she approaches her work is what is most impressive to us. She is consistently professional, prompt, respectful with all communication, proactive with support to staff, faculty and students with a caring and positive attitude. We cannot imagine going through the changes and growth of our MPT program and school (with more to come) without the steadfast and positive support of Kristine Hunter.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you require any further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Brenna Bath, Professor & Director
Soo Kim, Professor & MPT Program Chair
Liz Rackow, Academic Lead Clinical Education & Community Affairs
School of Rehabilitation Science, College of Medicine