

## **MSES Application for Microfunding**

**1) Project Title: Commensality Group for MSES Wellness Committee and Development of “Commensality Champions”**

**2) Project Leads: Dr Janine Davies**

**Executive Sponsor (at RMD level or higher)- Dr Sharlene Gill**

**3) Project Description: (max 250 words)**

### **a. Justification and Methods**

Commensality, the act of eating together, is a way to develop collegiality and social connections, which are key factors in engagement, satisfaction, and well-being of healthcare professionals. Commensality Groups (also known as Camaraderie Groups), developed at the Mayo Clinic, are an evidence-based way to improved collegiality, increase professional fulfillment and decrease burnout. Over a meal, the group reviews topics of interest with relevance to physicians, exploring the virtues and challenges experienced as physicians, encouraging human connection and having a conversation about their professional experiences. Based on the Mayo data, there was decreased burnout, and with attendance at just 3 discussions there was a benefit in professional fulfillment (West et al, JAMA Int Med 2014). The key is creating community, and holding intentional space for sharing, yet not trying to rescue, fix or train our colleague(s).

The wellness committee is interested in participating, with a view to expand these across the province. We propose a virtual meeting for 1-1.5 hours over a meal, once a month for 6 months, with approximately 6-10 clinicians at each meeting. A list of 5 discussion questions will be proposed and one will be selected for discussion at that meeting; this provides structure to help discuss the dimensions of work that are not usually explored. At least the first 15 minutes should be dedicated to discussion of that topic, allowing each group member an opportunity to provide their perspective. The participants will become “Commensality Champions” and be able to encourage similar groups across BC Cancer.

### **b. Include who will be involved in this project: MDSA members, disciplines, centres, leadership**

The focus of this commensality group will be members of the MSES Wellness Committee (MDs + NPs). If there are not enough participants, we would invite other wellness committee champions from BC Cancer Centres. The Wellness Committee is comprised of MDs and NPs from most clinical groups including: medical oncology, radiation oncology, GPO, NP, all 6 BC Cancer centres, radiology, pathology, dentistry and psychiatry.

**4) Project Impact: (max 250 words) a. What beneficial outcome(s) do you anticipate? b. How will you know if success has been achieved?**

We anticipate this will be impactful in several areas.

1. For the participants themselves, reduced burnout and increased professional fulfillment. We will evaluate pre + post surveys.

- a. Pre survey: Why interested in commensality? What do you want to get out of the dinners? Mayo Well-Being Index.
  - b. Monthly during commensality groups, and 12 months post- Mayo Well-Being Index.
  - c. Post survey: Pre survey questions. Additionally- Was it worth it? Did participation in this group help your well being? Is there anything that could improve these sessions?
  - d. Debrief: how could this be rolled out at other centres? Sharing of ideas/resources to minimize burden on the organizers.
2. Attendance as a gauge of engagement.
  3. With the development of Commensality Champions,” this will provide a format for creation of commensality groups among other BC Cancer groups, including the tools and resources to create such groups. We will review the desire for and creation of other commensality groups after this.

### **5) How does this project align with MDSA/MSES Strategic Goals? (Max 250 words)**

The strategic priority to promote medical staff wellness fits well with the Commensality Group Project. Key to improving wellness is creating community and engagement among physicians and NPs. The Wellness Committee is focused on supporting initiatives for physician and NP wellness and ensuring that health care provider wellness is a priority in decisions and actions. This will also help facilitate expansion of commensality groups to other physician and NP groups on a greater scale with the development of “Commensality Champions.”

### **6) Project Timelines**

Month 0 (ideally start Feb 2025)

- Connection with Wellness Committee members by email.

- Approximately monthly meetings. Connection with Wellness Committee members.
- Selection of dates/times
- Circulation of potential topics
- Pre survey

Month 1-8

- Approximately monthly meetings.

Month 8 (last meeting)

- Post survey

Month 9

- Post Commensality Group discussion via Wellness Committee

Month 10

- Submit MSES/MDSA report

## **7) Project Budget = \$7500**

- admin (survey monkey for scheduling, distribution of meal vouchers)- prep- 5 hours + 2 hours / session (=12 hours) + pre survey collation (5 hrs) + post survey collation (5 hrs) = \$520
- meetings- meal vouchers: 10 MDs x \$40/meal x 6 meetings = \$2400
- Commensality Group debrief- Wellness committee members (those that participated and those that did not)- 15 MDs x \$176.18 = \$2642.70
- Creation of commensality materials (3 hrs), collation of topics (1 hr), review of data/surveys (5 hrs) + preparation of MSES report (2 hrs) = 11 hrs x \$176.18 = \$1937.98