



Dr. Julian Somers
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March 5, 2021

Dear Dr. Somers,

I want to thank you for the long-standing partnership we have established between your team at Simon Fraser University and the Ministries of Public Safety & Solicitor General (MPSSG), Health (MoH) and Social Development & Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) over the last 17 years. The Inter-Ministry Evaluation Database (IMED) has supported independent empirical evaluations of Justice, Social and Health sector initiatives designed to improve public safety, health, housing, and employment outcomes for justice-involved individuals and has optimized the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of available resources spanning multiple sectors.

When the IMED was first established in 2005, it was a nationally unique data platform—one that was able to provide key insights on government initiatives such as the Drug Treatment Court of Vancouver, the Prolific Offender Management Pilot program, and the Homelessness Intervention Project. These projects, among many others, have revealed interdependencies between sectors, and allowed our Ministries to advance best practices guided by evidence.

We appreciate the leadership CARMHA has shown in supporting Government policy development and providing evidence to support the work we do, and to promote the changes government needs to make. What we have been able to accomplish together over the last nearly 20 years has truly been remarkable and has laid the groundwork for other parts of government to initiate their own data linking initiatives. One such initiative is the Data Innovation Program, developed by the Ministry of Citizens Services.

The Data Innovation Program, supported by Population Data BC, is a data integration and analytics program that allows for population level analysis of government data. As you know, every B.C. ministry collects and manages its own data; however, the Data Innovation Program securely links and de-identifies data from multiple ministries, to support specific population-level research projects.

Since 2018, the MoH, MPSSG and MSDPR have been providing data to the Data Innovation Program—data that is, or will be, broader in scope than that which is currently provided to the IMED. Additionally, beyond justice, health and social services data, within the Data Innovation Program there resides education data, children and family data, income and work data, and road safety data (see the updated listings of data holdings and metadata for all sets here: <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/group/data->

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**Ministry of
Public Safety and
Solicitor General**

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[innovation-program](#)). Transitioning integrated data research to this platform will allow us to leverage these new data sources and allow all social ministries to carry out more innovative and comprehensive population level analysis.

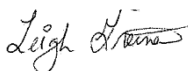
Streamlining our data sharing to one platform will also save valuable time and resources as this will negate the need for regular updates to a variety of data-sharing agreements and the need to facilitate the data matching process each time a new extract is created—a process that has historically been quite onerous and costly. It will also allow us to make data linkages and partner with other social Ministries whose data was not previously available, and to be able ask questions that have historically been beyond the scope of the IMED.

We believe that the Data Innovation Program will be a powerful resource for us to capitalize on to drive future innovations in cross-sectoral policy development and public transparency. We look forward to collaborating on projects of mutual interest within this new program, and more broadly, to continue discussions with CARMHA on how to generate evidence to best support the populations we serve. You would also be interested to know that the Data Innovation Program supports not only government-sponsored projects but has also recently opened the program to academics. Therefore, independent research can also be carried out within the new program should you so choose.

As you are aware, the information sharing agreements established between the Ministries (MoH, MPSSG and MSDPR) and Simon Fraser University to support the IMED are set to expire on March 31, 2021. Going forward, access to Ministries' data will be via the Data Innovation Program. Therefore, it is expected that use of the data within the IMED will discontinue at the end of March 2021. Further, all data must be destroyed and all media storage devices that housed Ministry data must be sanitized. This includes all backup copies, uploads and data on any media devices. Once complete, please send me a confirmation letter that these steps have occurred, and the data has been destroyed.

Again, many thanks for the excellent support we received from you and we look forward to continuing to collaborate as we transition to working within this new program.

Sincerely,



Leigh Greiner, Ph.D.
Director, Research & Strategic Planning
BC Corrections
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

CC: Gerritt Van der Leer, Ministry of Mental Health & Addictions
Robert Bruce, Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction
Ceri Sanderson, Ministry of Health