Evaluating patient partnerships formed within Quebec's SPOR Support Unit at the research project, network and governance levels

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BACKGROUND

The Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR)'s Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) supports a transformation of patients' roles **from research participants to active partners in research.**

Quebec SPOR SUPPORT Unit aims to build a sustainable support infrastructure for patient-oriented research through its Strategy on Partnership with Patients and the Public (SPPP)[1] (see Fig.1). Partnership capacity building is managed by the four Integrated University Health Networks (IUHN), co-led by a patient-researcher tandem, and trained by the SPPP[2] (see Fig.2)

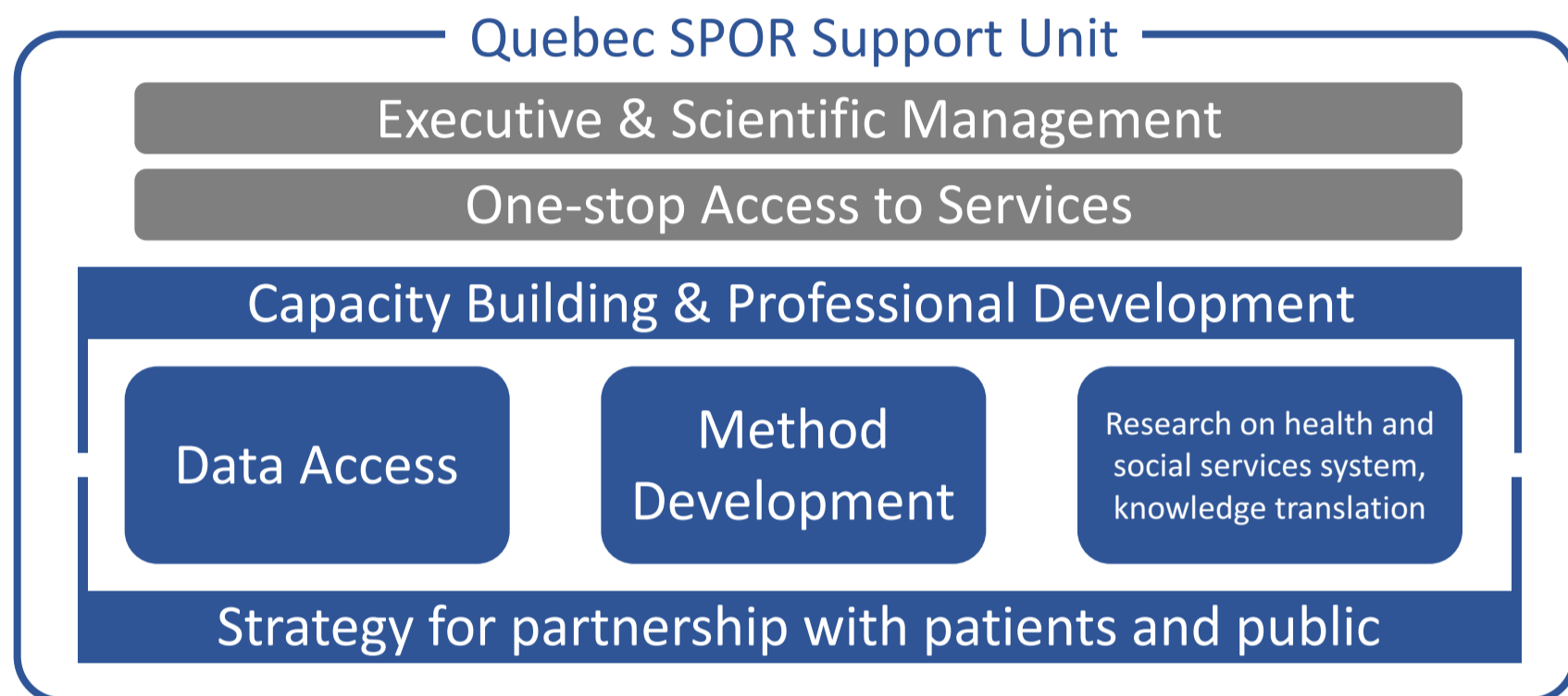This study will evaluate partnerships across the SPPP and disseminate its results with the aim of improving practices.


Figure 1: Quebec SPOR Support Unit

Quebec SPOR Support Unit
- Executive & Scientific Management
- One-stop Access to Services
- Capacity Building & Professional Development
  - Data Access
  - Method Development
  - Research on health and social services system, knowledge translation
- Strategy for partnership with patients and public

Figure 2: Co-leadership at every level of the SPPP

Provincial Governance — UNITÉ DE SOUTIEN SRAP | QUÉBEC — 12 patient partners are involved on different strategic committees

IUHN — Université de Montréal, McGill, UNIVERSITÉ DE SHERBROOKE, UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL — 4 patient partners involved as patient engagement co-leads in their IUHN

Research Projects — Support more than 70 research projects in patient partnership

OBJECTIVES

(1) Monitor and understand engagement practices through the "life course" of funded research projects;
(2) Assess the experience of patients and researchers collaborating as partners across the SPPP;
(3) Understand factors that influence perceived partnership success, including characteristics of research context and partnership support.

METHODS

Concurrent triangulation mixed-methods design[3]
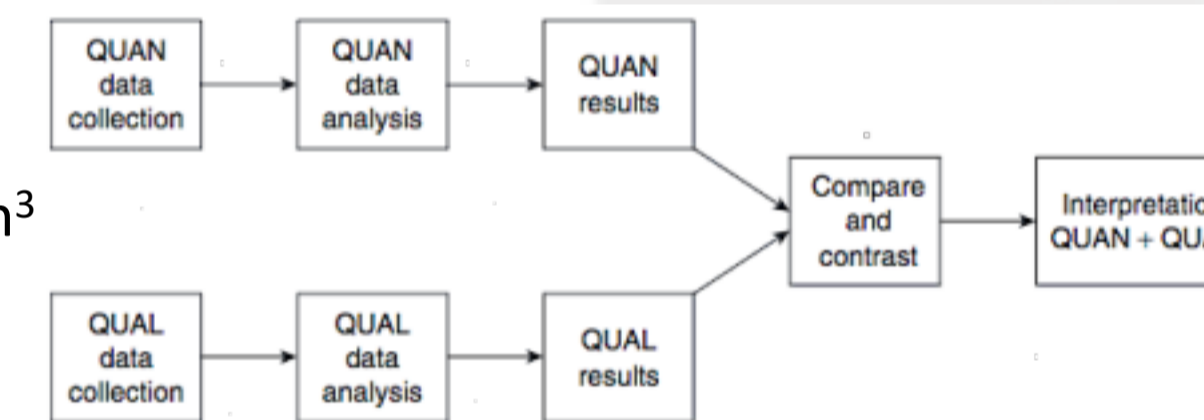
Data Collection & Analysis
Document review (Governance and IUHN level) and Logbooks (project level): quantitative (descriptive statistics) and qualitative description (thematic analysis);
Inception Questionnaire (all levels): Descriptive statistics;
Adapted WE-ENACT (PCORI) (project level): Descriptive and basic inferential statistics;
Semi-structured interviews (IUHN and Governance level): Thematic analysis. The integration of *QUAL* and *QUAN* data will be done at the interpretation phase, after analysis of each respective method. Qualitative and quantitative data will be compared and contrasted to better understand the factors that characterize a successful partnership (see Fig.3).
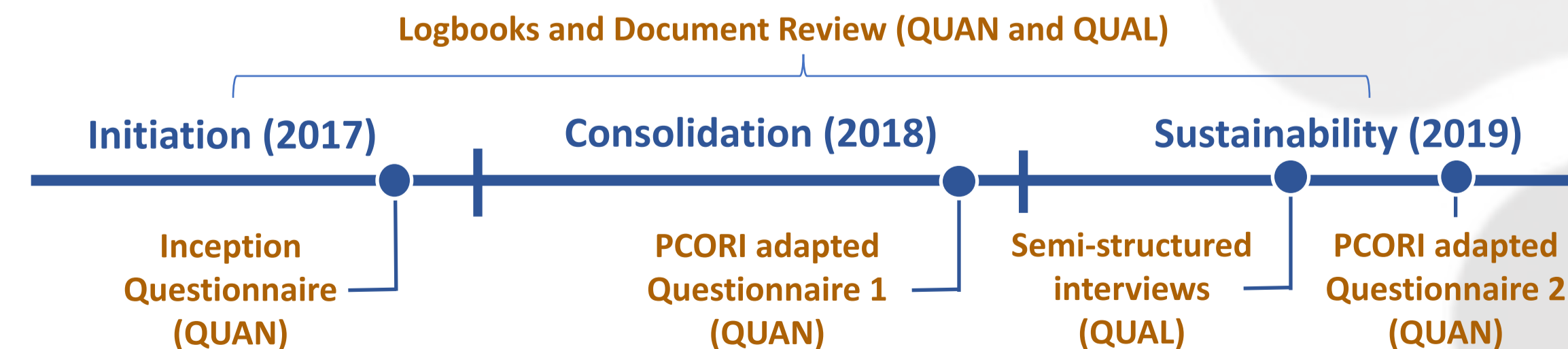

Logbooks and Document Review (QUAN and QUAL)

Initiation (2017) — Inception Questionnaire (QUAN)
Consolidation (2018) — PCORI adapted Questionnaire 1 (QUAN)
Sustainability (2019) — Semi-structured interviews (QUAL) — PCORI adapted Questionnaire 2 (QUAN)

Figure 3: Strategy on Partnership with Patients and the Public (SPPP) implementation timeline and evaluation data collection

RESULTS

Data will be reported back by a **face to face workshop** during which Provincial Governance and IUHN members, including patient partners, will have the opportunity to share comments and **discuss recommendations on how to best use evaluation results.**

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this evaluation will :
(1) Contribute to the improvement of partnership support tools and processes developed by the SPPP.
(2) Improve patient partnership practice across all levels of the Quebec SPOR SUPPORT Unit.
(3) Mobilize change within other Quebec research networks by sharing learned experiences and providing best practice recommendations.

REFERENCES
1. Unité de Soutien SRAP du Québec. *http://unitesoutiensrapqc.ca/composante/strategie-de-recherche/.* Visited May 10, 2018
2. Boivin, A, V. Dumez, V, *Stratégie d'engagement pour l'Unité de SOUTIEN SRAP du Québec.* March 2015.
3. Creswell, J.W., *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* 4th ed. 2013, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage publications.