DEPARTMENT OF BIOMEDICAL AND MOLECULAR SCIENCES

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Richard K. Reznick, MD
Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences
Director, School of Medicine
Queen's University
Kingston, ON

Re: FHS Advisory Committee Review – Translational Institute of Medicine (TIME)

Dear Dr. Reznick,

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) Advisory Review Committee has reviewed the formal proposal for Senate approaved faculty-based Institute status submitted by the Translational Institute of Medicine (TIME). As part of this review an announcement of the ICACBR initiative was made in the 'For the Record' section of the Gazette on 13 December 2018 inviting the Queen's community to submit comments to the Advisory Review Committee. However, no comments were received. Additionally, the Committee, whose membership is outlined below, met with Dr. Stephen Vanner, TIME interim Director, and Dr. Paula James, Translational Medicine Graduate Program Director. The members as a whole were highly impressed with the interdisciplinary and collaborative vision of TIME, and its highly developed programs and initiatives designed to support translational medicine at Queen's. In short, it is with great enthusiasm that the Committee provides its unanimous support to the TIME initiative and its application for Senate-approved faculty-based Institute Status.

Membership of the FHS Advisory Committee included:
Dr. Ian Gilron (Professor, Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine)
Dr. Rob Siemens (Professor, Urology)
Dr. Graeme Smith (Professor, Obstetrics & Gynaecology)
Dr. Steven Smith (Chair; Professor, Biomedical and Molecular Sciences)

As a virtual institute, TIME's vision is to strengthen interdisciplinary and collaborative translational health research that will accelerate discovery of novel and effective clinical therapies, and their adoption into clinical practice. To achieve this vision, this group has outlined a number of objectives to facilitate collaboration, optimize access to research platforms and expertise, and provide unique training opportunities, thereby enhancing the overall research portfolio. TIME has already demonstrated substantial progress in achieving these objectives. Examples include the successful launch of TIME UNIWeb (https://uniweb.time.queensu.ca), a networking tool that maps the expertise and research platforms of its members, the hiring of three technical specialists to run core research facilities, and the creation of an innovative Translational Medicine Graduate Program that has already enrolled six trainees.

Dr. Vanner has provided strong leadership during this interim period, and there has been significant engagement within the Department of Medicine (DoM) and FHS in developing this

Institute. The Committee has no concerns regarding the stability of leadership of the Institute, given Dr. Vanner's interest in continuing as TIME Director and the existence of a number of suitable candidates within the DoM to fill this role at the end of his term. External candidates could also be sought via the recruitment of SEAMO supported clinician-scientists. TIME appears to be financially stable with strong support from the DoM, and growth anticipated through the development of multi-investigator grants and fundraising efforts. Planned internal research competitions will be targeted towards junior faculty, and present excellent opportunities to bring faculty together around different research areas, encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and involvement in TIME.

Importantly, while the TIME initiative was founded by the DoM, the leadership within the Institute have indicated their goal to expand outside DoM and FHS boundaries, welcoming the participation of scientists contributing to translational health research from across the University and beyond. As external funding agencies, such as CIHR, CFI, Genome Canada, and NSERC as well as the new mounted New Frontiers competition, are increasingly targeting grant programs towards high-risk/high-reward interdisciplinary research, it is important to mobilize research groups and encourage collaboration to be ready for these opportunities. The programs, tools, and initiatives developed by TIME will undoubtedly facilitate interdisciplinary collaborations, and the Institute has significant potential to become a resource benefiting the entire Faculty. Further, the new Translational Medicine Graduate Program will encourage co-supervision that crosses departmental boundaries. There is also excellent potential for linkages with the new Bachelor's of Health Sciences program, which would provide a strong pool of potential graduate students.

In summary, the Committee provides its unanimous and enthusiastic support for the formal application of TIME for faculty-based Institute status.

Sincerely, on behalf of the Research Advisory Committee,

Steven Smith, PhD
Chair, Advisory Review Committee