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Medical Sciences 4300A: Addressing
Healthcare Misconceptions Using Scientific
Inquiry

Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry:
Community Engaged Learning

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Stakeholders Surrounding Assisted & Affordable Housing (The Unity Project)

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Introduction

Homelessness affects an estimated 235,000 people in Canada in any given year and is a growing concern in Canada (Strobel et al., 2021). There are many structural problems leading to homelessness including low availability of low-cost housing, declining income supports, and absence of outreach programs (Cohen, 1999). Canada's housing challenges are partially caused by the significant undersupply in Canadian housing. Canada has the lowest housing supply in the G7. This is a significant contributor to the unaffordability of Canadian housing and the extreme price growth we have seen in recent years (Perrault, 2021). Our team worked with the Unity Project, a registered charity in London that provides emergency shelter and supportive housing. Our project aimed to provide the Unity Project with resources on the unavailability of affordable housing as our research indicated that this was a critical cause of homelessness that is especially prevalent in Canada.

Project Goals

Our primary deliverable is a report and slide deck that outlines key stakeholders including Real Estate Companies, General Population, and Non-Profits involved within affordable housing. In addition, we wanted to create resources that help assist homeless individuals by addressing some of their current needs. We created three infographics that contain useful information: 1) Job Related Resources 2) Relevant Charities that they can access 3) Government Resources that they can utilize.

Methods

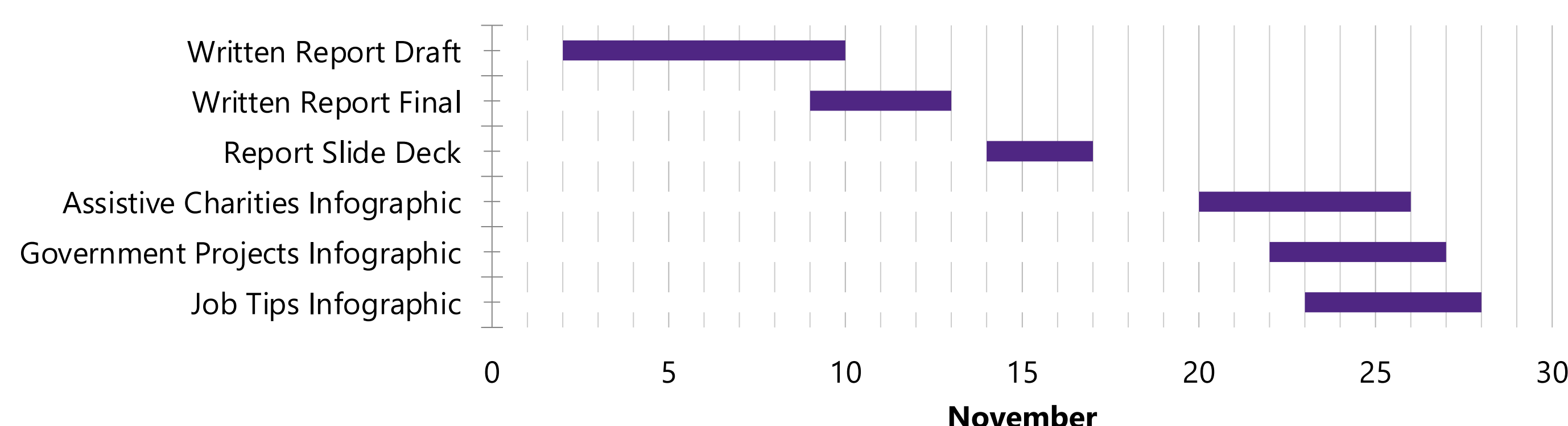


Figure 1. Gantt chart of group deliverables over the month of November

Began the literature search by splitting up sections by relevant stakeholders

- Decided the most key stakeholders would be real estate companies, non-profit organizations, general population and the government

Started the search using a combination of the following general key terms:
 Affordable/social housing policy Charities
 London, Ontario, Canada Real estate companies

After the search, the work gathered included information from public website resources, scholarly articles, and government documents.

Deliverable

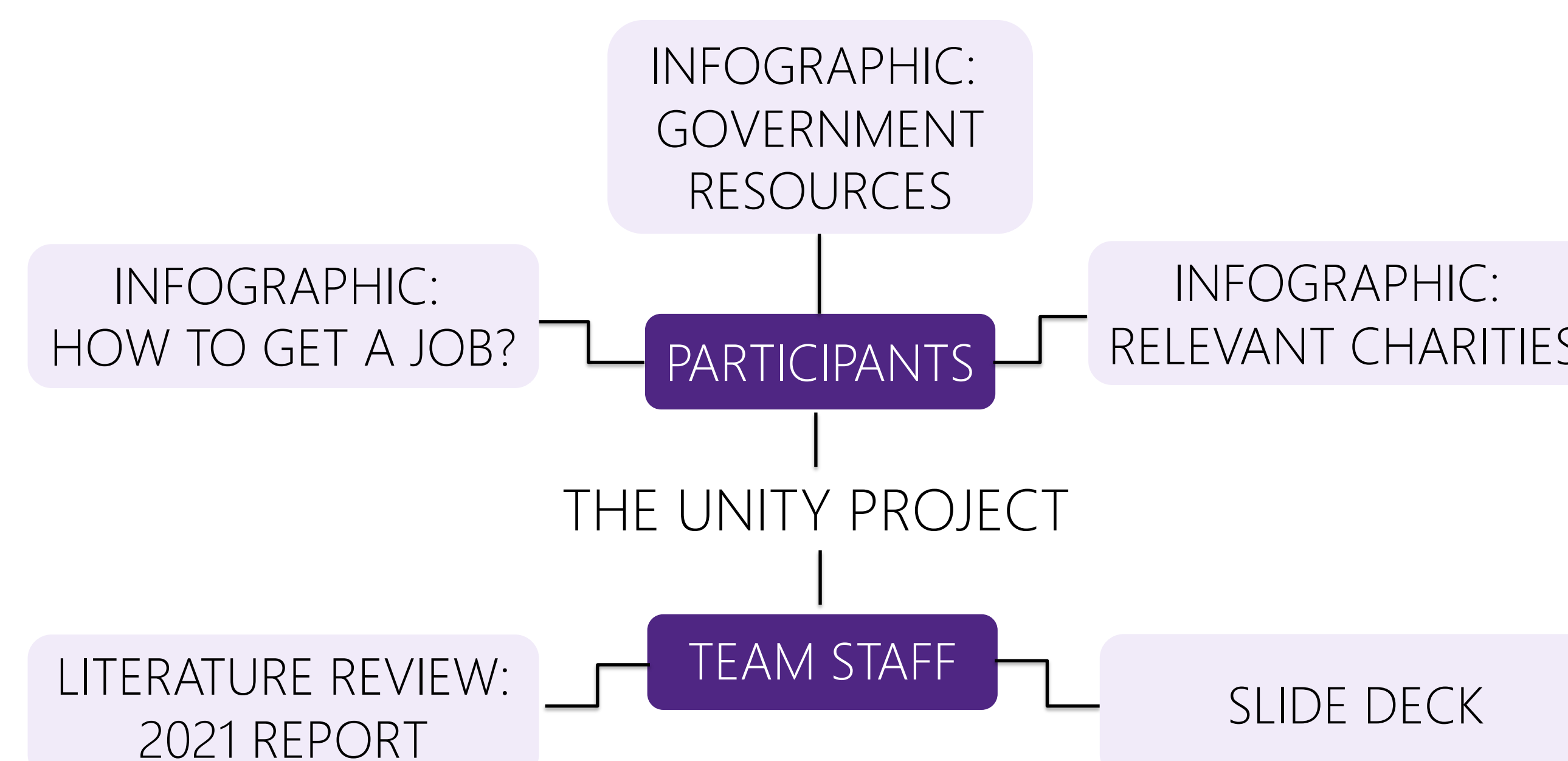


Figure 2. Overview of our final deliverables for the Unity Project and its intended targets. The dark purple indicates the intended target for the final deliverables. The light purple indicates the final deliverable.



Results & Impact

Report and slide deck. Provides the most value to Chuck Lazenby and the Unity Project, as they seek to expand their relationships with real estate companies and the government to better transition their participants into long-term, affordable housing solutions. The literature review outlines the objectives, roles, and capabilities of each stakeholder, which provides support to the Unity Project when informing the common ground necessary for the groups to coexist and achieve their individual goals. This deliverable will provide support for the upcoming court case regarding more affordable housing in units in new real-estate development plans (Newcombe, 2021).

Infographics. We believe the value lies in connecting the homeless community directly to resources and information that could assist them in learning about: Relevant government policies & affordable housing option, job search practices, supportive charities. The infographics provide an easy-to-read, widely distributable source for this information, with relevant contact information for participants to reach out to.

Future Directions

While our deliverables provide a framework and the starting step to inform and connect the Unity Project and its participants, future groups are encouraged to directly link the organization with government and private sector stakeholders.

- This can include a proposal to expand inclusionary zoning in London, a tool that permits municipalities to require a certain portion of new development to be affordable to low and moderate income populations. Toronto has recently enacted inclusionary zoning framework, so this could provide guidance in approaching this issue (Costello et al., 2021).
- Writing to government officials (ie. councillors and mayor) about current affordable housing issues

Future deliverables could include overseeing meetings between stakeholders, and the potential formation of a joint project under the Housing Development Corporation. One concern that was brought up in our community partner check-ins was the long wait-list for affordable housing in the London community, so improving communication with housing companies will help address this issue. The main barriers that need to be overcome would be reaching out to all of the organizations involved and finding common hours to set up a meeting. Limitations to the efficacy of this project would include balancing the needs of each stakeholder, as well as constructing a solution that works based on time and funding constraints.

Works Cited & Acknowledgements

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