

2007/2008 NSHRF Competition Announcement Knowledge Transfer/Exchange Grants: Funded Applicants

Program

The purpose of the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation's Knowledge Transfer/Exchange program is to support both researchers and research users in exchanging relevant knowledge that will influence health policy, health services, health outcomes and health research. The program provides opportunities for both competitive and non-competitive funding that assists researchers and researcher users in sharing this knowledge. In addition, it features opportunities for learning about new and innovative methods in knowledge transfer/exchange.

There are 3 funded applicants for 2007/2008. Total funding = \$49,576.00

1. Translating Resilience Research into a Strengthens-based Approach to Counselling for Challenging Contexts.

Michael Ungar

Dalhousie University
Maritime School of Social Work

Team members: Normand Carrey, IWK Health Centre; Veronica Marsman, Department of Community Services; Alison Little, Phoenix Youth Program; Wanda McDonald, Department of Health Promotion and Protection

A series of research projects under the umbrella of the International Resilience Project (IRP-www.resilienceproject.org) have been helping us understand how young people thrive despite growing up in stressful environments in Canada and around the world. Uniquely, this research explores both individual and cultural factors that help young people grow up well.

As is often the case with research such as this, those in direct practice with individuals, families and communities have wondered "So what? How do we put these findings into practice to work more effectively?" In workshops throughout Nova Scotia, across Canada and overseas, researchers with the IRP have been translating results into practical applications. This NSHRF Knowledge Transfer/Exchange Grant will fund the development and field testing of a series of 10 brief demonstration videos (case vignettes) that illustrate a model of practice based on the IRP's findings.

The videos have three purposes: 1) to train students and frontline service staff in approaches to their work that promote resilience; 2) to demonstrate whether the use of taped clinical vignettes are a good way to translate knowledge from researchers to colleagues on the frontlines of practice; and 3) to provide research tools that can be used to develop 'evidence-based' approaches to intervention by ensuring counselors use the interventions consistently in their practice.

The project has a host of partners from organizations in the community, such as the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, Phoenix Youth Programs, the IWK Health Centre, and our Provincial Department of Health Promotion and Protection.

Funded Amount: \$10,000

2. Mother-Infant Skin-to-Skin Contact Education Kit.

Ann Bigelow

St. Francis Xavier University

Team members: Doris Gillis, St. Francis Xavier University; Janis MacLellan-Peters, Guysborough Antigonish Straight Health Authority; Alex Marion, St. Francis Xavier University; Jean Anderson, St. Martha's Hospital; Anne Marie Murdock, Aberdeen Hospital; Claudette McDonald, Colchester East Hants District Health Authority, Jennifer Delaney, St. Francis Xavier University

The results of a recently completed NSHRF project investigating the effects of early mother-infant skin-to-skin contact indicate that by engaging in skin-to-skin contact with their infants for a few hours a day, mothers provide health benefits to themselves, to their infants, and to the mother-infant relationship: skin-to-skin contact enhanced breast feeding rates, reduced mothers' post partum depression, increased maternal sensitivity, and facilitated infants' social responsiveness. To communicate these findings to the ultimate research users—new and expectant mothers—as well as health professionals and community agencies providing support services for new mothers, a Skin-to-Skin Contact Education Kit will be produced. The Kit will include a DVD that portrays mother-infant skin-to-skin contact within a Canadian social-cultural context. The engaging visual/auditory format of the proposed DVD will present in accessible, practitioner- and lay-friendly terms the key research findings along with implications of these findings for health-relevant practice. The DVD will come packaged within a Kit that contains supportive materials describing ways to introduce the DVD to groups of new and expectant mothers, and suggestions for how to stimulate discussion within groups after viewing the DVD. Through discussing the material presented on the DVD in a facilitated context, mothers can share their own experience, be supportive of one another, and learn from each other. The anticipated facilitators are practitioners who have contact with mothers (e.g., health professionals providing perinatal assessment and counseling in clinics or home settings, or conducting prenatal education classes) and those in community agencies providing education and support services for mothers (e.g., Kids First, LaLeche League). Thus through the use of the Kit, research findings will be communicated to practitioners serving new mothers as well as to new mothers themselves.

Funded Amount: \$10,000

3. Interventions to Improve the Management of Asthma in Children and Adults in Emergency Department Settings

Janet Curran

IWK Health Centre

Team members: Martin Osmond, University of Ottawa; Eleanor Fitzpatrick, IWK Health Centre; Douglas Sinclair, Dalhousie University; David Johnson, University of Calgary; Amanda Newton, University of Alberta

Asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases, affecting over 300 million people globally. There is an increasing prevalence of both childhood and adult asthma and the resulting burden of care can be seen across many sectors. In Nova Scotia, asthma is the most common chronic condition among youth between the ages of 12 and 19. Within the Canadian child health care sector, respiratory diseases account for the largest physician care expenditure with a cost of \$244 million in 1998. The majority of patients hospitalized for asthma enter through the emergency department (ED). As EDs are currently facing a crisis with increasing numbers and long wait times it is vital to pay attention to the management of asthma in emergency department settings. The Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) has taken a lead role in synthesizing current scientific evidence and developing recommendations for the management of asthma. National groups have also adapted recommendations and developed guidelines to account for their local context and patient populations. However, despite the volume of scientific evidence and the existence of evidence based practice guidelines there continues to be variation in adherence to guidelines by both clinicians and patients.

Changing health behavior is challenging. Barriers to the uptake of evidence exist at many levels including organizational, social, professional, and individual. Intervention trials to change health behavior and improve the management of asthma have been wide and varied. Organizational interventions which target the structure or delivery of health care have been shown to improve professional performance and patient outcomes. Professional interventions, such as the use of clinical practice guidelines (CPGs), continuing education or audit and feedback initiatives, are also recognized as useful strategies for integrating research evidence into practice. Considering the prevalence of asthma and the burden of care in emergency practice settings it is critical to synthesize the implementation literature to facilitate the movement of best evidence to best practice. We propose conducting a review of all organizational and professional intervention strategies that focus on improving the health outcomes of adults and children with asthma in emergency practice settings. The Cochrane Collaboration is an organization dedicated to the development of systematic review methodology and the production and deployment of high-quality systematic reviews. Explicit systematic review methodology provides a means for summarizing scientific evidence resulting in data that is useful for decision-making by policy makers, health care providers and the public. Our review will follow the Cochrane methodology and we plan to register with the Effective Practice and Organization of Care (EPOC) review group. The EPOC group is interested in systematic reviews of interventions to improve professional practice and the delivery of effective health services.

Funded Amount: \$29,576.00