



The Need to Know...

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Director: Patricia Martens

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Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP)

The Need To Know Team Meeting #12: Forging Ahead

It was 'business as usual' at the 12th *Need to Know* meeting. The Team spent considerable time reviewing the latest data and graphs for the upcoming *Sex Differences Deliverable*—the third of three reports for *The Need to Know* project due to be released this fall.



Co-investigator Randy Fransoo updating *The Need to Know* Team on project progress to date

Co-investigator Randy Fransoo updated the Team on project progress. Team members then broke off into smaller groups to discuss findings in more detail.



Group discussion of graphs

Some meeting time was dedicated to discussing and formalizing plans for RHA site visits that will be taking place over the next few months. [See page 2 for more on site visits]

Need To Know Team member and Medical Officer of Health Dr. Eilish Cleary presented information about the position of Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and how it relates to public health. She led the group through an exercise that provided some insight into the day-to-day tasks of an MOH (e.g., assessing and responding



Dr. Eilish Cleary

to health threats in a region such as West Nile, contaminated water, etc.).

Part of the meeting was set aside for a review of quasi-experimental research designs (i.e., non-randomized, time series). [See *The Need To Know* newsletter Vol. 9, winter 2005, for an overview of this design] Team members then gathered with others from their RHA to brainstorm about ways of applying this research design. Specifics to be considered included thinking of (i) particular policies and/or programs in their regions that they would like to monitor and evaluate, (ii) target groups and (iii) potential outcome measures that would be available in the administrative data repository at MCHP.

Time was also set aside for Team members to report on the progress of the dissemination of the Mental Illness Report (released September 2004 and available on our website or by order) in their respective regions. Several strategies that had facilitated report dissemination were identified including: (i) making reports and summary 4-pagers available in public places, (ii) partnering with other groups, and (iii) trying to identify well-connected people that could facilitate dissemination. Overall, feedback regarding the dissemination of the Mental Illness Report has been very positive.

The meeting came to a close with a presentation by André Picard, a public health reporter for *The Globe and Mail*. [See page 2 for tips on getting your story in the newspaper and how to deal with the media!]

The Need to Know Project - Word About This " Best-Practice" Model is Quickly Spreading!!



The Need to Know project has been steadily gaining momentum and exposure since its inception in 2001. Project Director Dr. Patricia Martens has always been busy with project-related speaking engagements throughout the province, but the word is quickly spreading

beyond Manitoba's borders!

Increasingly, Dr. Martens is being invited to visit other provinces to talk about the project, its success and its knowledge translation and research collaboration models:

- The Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF) identified *The Need to Know* project as a "best-practice" model for knowledge translation and has recently funded Dr. Martens and other team members to conduct workshops in **Saskatchewan** and **Nova Scotia** that focus on the application of the knowledge translation model in other provinces.

- CIHR (Canadian Institutes for Health Research) president Alan Bernstein invited Dr. Martens to **Ottawa** to speak to CIHR's governing and scientific councils about the project and its knowledge translation model.
- Dr. Martens has had numerous invitations to speak about *The Need To Know* project in **Alberta**, including the University of Alberta, the Institute of Health Economics and the SEARCH group.
- The Board of Directors of **Ontario's** Workplace, Safety and Insurance Board recently asked Dr. Martens to speak about *The Need To Know* project.

The project has also recently received national attention. Senator Kirby has requested input from Dr. Martens and other *Need To Know* Team members for his mental health report. As well, Minister of State for Public Health, the Honorable Dr. Carolyn Bennett referred to *The Need To Know* project in a recent speech in Saskatoon.

It would seem that knowledge about this project is indeed being translated!

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www.umanitoba.ca/centres/mchp
(link to *The Need to Know* website from here)

F.Y.I.

- **NEW LOCATION!!** This year's MCHP **Rural and Northern Health Care Day** will be held **October 18, 2005 @ The Caboto Centre (1055 Wilkes Avenue)**
- **The Need to Know Team meetings:** May 30/31, 2005; October 17, 2005

Media 101: Getting the Right Message to the Right People

Newspapers are one of the main sources of information and an important influence on the attitudes of the general public. Because 'health' and 'research' tend not

to be as popular as other topics, it is important to be aware of things that can be done to increase the likelihood of media uptake. The following are some suggestions from André Picard, public health reporter for *The Globe & Mail*:

- Be **proactive** - don't wait for the media to contact you.
- Don't assume that because something is in the media, it is also in the **public consciousness**.



André Picard
Public Health Reporter
for *The Globe & Mail*,
speaking to *The Need to Know* Team

- The story should be **summarized** as simply and concisely as possible - this can save the reporter time and enables the original author to have input into *how* the story is summarized.
- The story should have a **'hook'** if possible.
- Briefly **justify** why this story should be reported; state your case or argument.
- Make stories **'results-focused'** (vs. process-focused).
- Incorporate **graphs** and charts into the explanation.
- Put a **'human face'** on a story when possible - include a picture of a person related to the story.
- **Piggyback** on related news stories if possible (e.g., President Reagan's prostate cancer increased the visibility of the disease and cancer organizations increased their media messages).
- **Re-submit** stories if the issue resurfaces in the media (e.g., results from a older report whose initial press release did not result in a story).
- Try to pick a good **time** for a stories' release (e.g., do not try to get your story covered the same day the Romanow Report is being released).
- If possible, try to **notify** the press a few days in **advance** about the story, journal publication, etc.

The Need to Know Team Members:

RHA MEMBERS:

- Jody Allan
- Faye White (Assiniboine)
- Bev Cumming
- Nancy McPherson (Brandon)
- Marion Ellis
- Mieke Busman (Burntwood)
- Shelley Buchan (Central)
- Randy Gesell (Burntwood/Churchill)
- Tannis Erickson
- Doreen Fey (Interlake)
- Sue Crockett
- Catherine Hynes (Nor-Man)
- Bonnie Frith
- Suzanne Dick (North Eastman)
- Maggie Campbell (Parkland)
- Betty MacKenzie
- Patti Fries (South Eastman)
- Maria Cendou (WRHA Liaison)

MANITOBA HEALTH MEMBERS:

- Deborah Malazdrewicz (Health Information Management)
- Lorraine Dacombe Dewar (Community Health Assessment)
- Valdine Berry (Strategic Planning)
- Eilish Cleary (Medical Officer of Health)
- Shirley Dzogan (Community Health Assessment)
- Shahin Shoostari (Regional Support Services)
- Heather Sparling (Community Health Assessment)
- Rachel McPherson (Health Information Management)
- Bob Li (Epidemiologist)

MCHP PROJECT STAFF:

- Pat Martens (Director)
- Randy Fransoo (Researcher)
- Sarah Bowen (Evaluation Researcher)
- Elaine Burland (Research Coordinator)
- Charles Burchill (Systems Analyst)
- Linda Kostiuik (Finance Coordinator)
- Darlene Harder (Planning Coordinator)
- Janine Harasymchuk (Website & Software)
- Jeremy Dacombe (Research Assistant)
- Keir Johnson (Research Coordinator for the Evaluation)
- Jen Magoon (Research Assistant)

On the Road with *The Need to Know* Project: RHA Site Visits



The Need to Know Team has been busy this spring! We are

beginning site visits' to the regional health authorities (RHAs) in Manitoba.

The Need To Know Team members from the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP) have started visits to the RHAs, to assist local Team members in conducting workshops that are similar to MCHP's Rural and Northern Health Care Day (i.e., a presentation on one or more MCHP deliverable, followed by round table discussions).

Site visits have already taken

place in Central RHA (April 8 & 9), Brandon RHA (April 15) and Parkland RHA (April 18).

So far, the site visits have been very well attended, including RHA executives, board members, front-line staff and representatives from non-government organizations. Initial feedback from participants has also been very positive. Many commented on how the session had helped to make the graphs and tables understandable and easier to use. Others mentioned how they appreciated the opportunity to dialogue with others, and some requested that site visits become an annual event.