



The Need to Know...

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Director: Patricia Martens

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Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP)

Record Attendance at MCHP's 10th Annual Rural and Northern Health Care Days



10th Annual Rural and Northern Health Care Days Meeting

The tenth annual Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP) Rural and Northern Health Care Days was very well attended. Participation has steadily been increasing since its inception in 1994, and this year there were over 140 representatives in attendance from the regional

health authorities (RHAs) in Manitoba, including CEOs, VPs, Board members and service providers.

The focus of this year's meeting was the newly released MCHP report *The Manitoba RHA Indicators Atlas: Population-based comparisons of health and health care use*. Following an oral overview of the report, each RHA gathered to discuss relevant findings and to profile the health care needs of their region.

Other presentations included *The Need to Know* project overview by some of the team members (Lorraine Dacombe Dewar, Sue Crockett and Bev Cumming) and *Rural Canada: From Strength to Strength* (Ray Bollman, Statistics Canada). In the afternoon concurrent session, participants could attend either (i) a presentation highlighting two of the many ongoing MCHP research projects (*Patterns of Health*

Care Use and Cost at the End of Life, Dr. Verena Menec et al.; and *Diagnostic Imaging Data in Manitoba: Assessment and Applications*, Dr. Bill Leslie) or (ii) a workshop on using *Excel* for making RHA maps.

Rural and Northern Day followed the regular fall *The Need to Know* team meeting, which took place the preceding day. As usual, this was an action-packed session. The day's activities were focused on (i) collaborative work on deliverable #2 - *The Mental Health Report*, (ii) discussion of the process to be used for deciding on the topic for the upcoming third deliverable, and (iii) facilitator training for team members in preparation for a discussion of the *RHA Atlas* with other representatives from their RHA at Rural and Northern Day the following day. Members also attended a workshop on using (i) *PowerPoint* to make full-size posters and (ii) *Excel* to create RHA maps that can be incorporated into these posters.

The dinner meeting was held at *Vivere Ristorante Mediterraneo* in Osborne Village. RHA CEOs and Board Chairs were invited to attend. With her typical creativity, Project Director Pat Martens managed to work in a review of basic statistics using team scores from the 'pick-up-sticks' competition!



Pick-up-sticks competition

Conference Re-caps from Newfoundland, Saskatoon & Montreal

Representatives from *The Need to Know* Team attended three conferences this fall. Project Director Pat Martens and team member Maggie Campbell from the Parkland Regional Health Authority attended a Canadian Institutes of Health Research-sponsored workshop in St. John's Newfoundland/Labrador October 9th and 10th to discuss rural indicators of health.

The second conference - the Fifth International Symposium *Future of Rural Peoples: Rural Economy, Healthy People, Environment, Rural Communities* - was held in Saskatoon (October 19-23). Each day was packed with sessions and posters pertaining to issues affecting rural people, communities, economics and the environment.

The third conference - *Strengthening the Foundation: Health Services and Policy Research and Canadian Health Care* - was held in Montreal (November 22-24). This was the inaugural national symposium for the Institute of Health Services and Policy Research (IHSPR). Canadian researchers and health care system policy makers and managers were brought together to discuss the roles of health services and policy research in an effort to resolve the most urgent issues affecting health care and service delivery.

The Need to Know project was well represented at these two conferences. In Saskatoon, there were two presentations and two

posters highlighting the project. Pat Martens presented information about the differences between rural and urban health and health care use in Manitoba, and Sarah Bowen spoke about lessons that researchers can learn from the community about 'knowledge translation'. Poster topics focused on the meaningful 'stories' that can be generated from analysis of health indicators (Randy Fransoo) and *The Need to Know* project results to date (Elaine Burland, Sarah Bowen and Pat Martens).

Pat Martens also presented at the Montreal conference (*Influencing Health Policy: What Works? Learning Along the Road*) and three project-related posters were accepted for entry into the poster competition: (i) *Health and Health Services Use of Rural and Northern Manitobans: Do They Differ from Urban Rates?* (Pat Martens et al.), (ii) *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Knowledge Translation Projects: A Utilization-Focused Approach* (cont'd)



The Need to Know Team Member Sue Crockett—Montreal Conference November 2003

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 (link to *The Need to Know* website from here)

F.Y.I.

- Next *Need to Know* team meetings: February 2 & 3; May 31 & June 1; September 27, 2004
- 11th Annual Rural and Northern Health Care Days: September 28, 2004 - **MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!!**
- The first *Need to Know* Deliverable—"The Manitoba RHA Indicators Atlas: Population-Based Comparisons of Health and Health Care Use" was released in June 2003. The following month, the pdf version of this report on the website received over 22,000 hits. Contact MCHP for copies @ (204) 789-3805 or visit the MCHP website under "Reports" (see above for URL). Every *Excel* spreadsheet in the report is also available - just go to the "Data Extras" link.

Conference Re-caps (cont'd)

(Sarah Bowen & Pat Martens) and (iii) *The Need to Know Project: A Work in Progress* (Elaine Burland, Sarah Bowen & Pat Martens). **Congratulations to Sarah who won second place for her poster!**

Team members from two Regional Health Authorities also attended the Montreal conference—Sue Crockett (Nor-Man) and Margaret Fern (Churchill). In her conference summary report Sue emphasized how being part of *The Need to Know* Team had contributed not only to her understanding of research, but to her greater use of research in daily work. Sue also mentioned feeling more comfortable at the conference than she would have before

joining *The Need to Know* Team - "As I sat and listened to the various presenters, reality hit about how much I have learned and grown over the last two years thanks to *The Need to Know* Team."



Sarah Bowen (left) and Laurel Jebamani by winning poster - Montreal Conference November 2003

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
- Donna Champagne (Central)
- Margaret Fern (Churchill)
- Tannis Erickson
- Doreen Fey (Interlake)
- Sue Crockett
- Catherine Hynes (Nor-Man)
- Eilish Cleary
- Bonnie Frith (North Eastman)

- Connie Chapen (Parkland)
- Maggie Campbell
- Betty MacKenzie (South Eastman)
- Patti Fries
- Val Austen-Wiebe (WRHA Liaison)

MANITOBA HEALTH MEMBERS:

- Deborah Malazdrewicz (Manager of Decision Support Services)
- Lorraine Dacombe Dewar (Director of CHA & Regionalization)
- Valdine Berry (Director, Strategic Planning & Emerging Issues, Health Accountability, Policy and Planning Branch)

MCHP PROJECT STAFF:

- Pat Martens (Director)
- Sarah Bowen (Evaluator)
- Randy Fransoo (Co-ordinator)
- Elaine Burland (Research Assistant)
- Laurel Jebamani (Research Assistant)
- Charles Burchill (Systems Analyst)
- Linda Kostiuik (Planning & Finance)
- Eileen Pyke (Website/Software)
- Darlene Harder (Planning)

Poster Making 101

Posters are an excellent method for conveying a lot of information in an eye-catching way. *The Need to Know* team members took part in a poster-making 'how to' session at the October meeting. The following outlines the basic steps and tips for making a poster:

- using PowerPoint, choose a blank slide from the auto-layout menu
- size the width and height of your slide using 'page set-up' under the file menu (the largest possible is 56 in x 56 in, but your choice should depend on the paper sizes available where you will have your poster printed)
- in the 'slide master' view, use auto-shapes to create a background for your poster; you can format your background by adding color, texture and/or patterns
- in the 'normal' view, use textboxes for putting text onto your poster
- insert pictures, maps and any other information to help explain your topic
- use a font that is at least size 24 (you should be able to read all text on your poster from 3 to 4 feet away))
- stick to common font styles such as Times New Roman and Arial (others may be incompatible with the printer's and get reformatted during the printing process)

An easy-to-follow poster-making manual is available on *The Need to Know* website:

[http://www.rha.cpe.umanitoba.ca/education/resources/poster workshop](http://www.rha.cpe.umanitoba.ca/education/resources/poster%20workshop)



The Need to Know Team—October 2003