



The Need to Know...

Funded by Canadian Institutes of Health Research
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Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP)

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Special points of interest:

- Tentative date for next NTK team meeting: June 3 & 4/02
- 1st NTK deliverable release date: Fall 2002
- Interested in a career in Health Services Research? For information about the "Western Regional Training Centre in Health Services Research (WRTC) the new collaborative training initiative of UBC and U of M, contact Elaine Dunn: (204)789-3368 or edunn@ms.umanitoba.ca

MCHP Data Being Used for Regional Planning

The development of contextual, valid, policy-relevant and user-friendly health services research requires collaborative researcher/decision-maker interaction. The "Need to Know" knowledge transfer model outlines *three* major activities that are essential to this collaborative research process, including the dissemination and application of research. The following is an illustration of some current applications of MCHP data.

The first involves MCHP, the province's 11 rural/northern regional health authorities (RHAs) and Manitoba Health. In preparation for the next community health assessment (CHA), a CHA Network subcommittee is developing a list of indicators to be used in the RHA profile documents. These indicators will include information from the MCHP follow-up report to *Comparative Indicators of Population Health and Health Care Use for Manitoba's Regional Health Authorities: A POPULIS Project*. Following the community consultations, RHAs will prepare comprehensive CHA reports to be submitted to Manitoba Health and to be used by Boards for strategic planning purposes.

MCHP data is also being used in the RHA of Parkland. MCHP's report *Assessing the Health of Children in Manitoba: A Population Based Study* is being incorporated into Parkland's regional overview data, which is in turn used for strategic and operational planning. RHA representatives were first presented with information

from this report at MCHP's Rural & Northern Health Care Day (Sep 17/01). For the members from the Parkland RHA, this report raised some interesting flags. For instance, the report indicated that children from certain RHAs (including Parkland) were more likely to be hospitalized for lower respiratory tract infections and injuries than the average Manitoba child. In an effort to disseminate this information more widely, arrangements were made for two of MCHP's researchers (Patricia Martens & Anita Kozyrskyj) to present an overview of this report at Parkland's Annual General Meeting. Highlights of the presentation were included in the region's *Community Links* newsletter. Copies of the presentation as well as the written report were distributed to all Parkland regional team leaders, including the Maternal Newborn Team.

The MCHP website has also proven to be a valuable information source. A member of the NTK Team is Connie Chapen, Parkland's Regional Coordinator of Quality and Risk Management. She finds it helpful to be able to access region-specific MCHP data via the website. Moreover, she appreciates the flexibility this offers in terms of being able to format the information according to individual need.

You can access MCHP's website at www.umanitoba.ca/centres/mchp.

Need to Know Team members: Don't forget to check out our secured NTK website @<https://rha.cpe.umanitoba.ca/>

Overview of NTK Team Meeting #3

The Need to Know Team met for its third team workshop January 15 & 16, 2002.

Things got underway with the NTK Advisory Committee meeting, during which committee members discussed the latest draft of the *Terms of Reference* for committee and team members.

Following the meeting, team members convened for the afternoon session. This consisted of updates regarding the progress of the project, the evaluation report and work still

to be done on the project.

Steve Mitchell from *CIETcanada* presented information regarding the use of maps for evidence-based regional planning.

The day concluded with a dinner meeting at the Tavern in the Park at the Assiniboine Park Pavilion.

Day #2 began with an intensive discussion of health indicators, including a review of those to be used in the

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Meeting #3 (cont'd)

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upcoming RHA 2002 report.

Deputy Minister of Education and Training & Advanced Education Ben Levin began the afternoon session with his presentation *Understanding How Governments Make Policy Decisions*.

Tannis Erickson, Interlake RHA's Project Manager, presented an overview of strategies they use in the dissemination of information within their region.

This was followed by the "I Need to Know" Interactive Client-Driven Session. NTK team members with requests for specific information were each assigned to an MCHP staff mentor who had expertise in the area, for a one-on-one discussion. Remaining participants had the option to join one of the ten different sessions. Topics included measuring client satisfaction, benchmarking, the Public Health Nurse survey on breastfeeding, quality of life issues, First Nations health issues, information on the use of Excel and crunching data from surveys.

The session ended with a review of the "homework assignment" due for the next team meeting. Members were asked to (i) think about how information flows within their own RHAs and how should it flow, (ii) consider possible topics for the next NTK deliverable and (iii) prepare to critique indicator graphs as they become available on the secured website.

The next team meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 3 & 4, 2002.

Conference Overview Regionalization In Health Care: What's Really Working?

Several members of the Need to Know team attended the national conference "Regionalization in Health Care: What's Really Working?" in Vancouver this February.

Conference workshops and sessions covered a wide variety of topics related to regionalization. Attendees could choose between two pre-conference workshops: (i) *Using CIHI performance indicators* (an applications-oriented session conducted by the Canadian Institute for Health Information) and (ii) *Public participation methods* (an overview by researchers from Quebec and Ontario, including deliberative and survey applications).

The full-day program opened with presentations from the Commissioners of Saskatchewan (Ken Fyke) and Quebec (Michel Clair) summarizing the findings from each province's recent public health system review.

Concurrent morning and afternoon sessions followed. People could choose between (i) *Service integration through organizational change in Alberta: what does it take?* and (ii) *Provincial-regional devolution of authority: is it working to improve effectiveness and accountability?* in the morning session. In the afternoon, the choices included (i) *Is regionalization necessary for service integration? the experience of different provinces* and (ii) *Accounting and responding to regional populations: strategies and issues for urban and rural situations*.

The day came to a close with the International Panel *Lessons from Italy and the UK: has regionalization improved*

health care? and the Keynote Debate *Is regionalization improving health status? Should regional health authorities be held accountable for health status?*

The conference was sponsored by the Canadian Regionalization Research Centre in an effort to share knowledge on regionalization and to build its membership and network. The Centre's HEALNet funding expires March 2002 and will be replaced with a membership fee. For more information about membership and fees call 1-800-804-6814.

Need to Know team members attended the conference as part of the NTK project's mandate—local health researchers are entitled to attend two conferences over the five years of funding—either to pursue further training or to share information nationally or internationally.



Members of the NTK Team attending the conference:

Back row: Margaret Fern, Valdine Berry, Pat Martens, Jody Allan, Elaine Burland

Front row: Lorraine Dacombe-Dewar, Sarah Bowen, Randy Fransoo