



National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools

Fall 2007

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The Official Launch, May 17, 2007

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The National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (NCCMT), hosted by the Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University and funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada as one of six National Collaborating Centres for Public Health across Canada, announced its official launch on May 17, 2007. The Centre is led by Scientific Co-Directors Helen Thomas and Donna Ciliska. The establishment of the Collaborating Centres are part of the Government of Canada's commitment to renew and strengthen public health across the country by translating existing and new evidence by academics and researchers in various areas in public health. The mandate of the NCCMT will be to focus on improving access to and use of evidence-based methods

and tools for stakeholders involved in policy-making, program decision-making, practice and research in Canada. The launch was attended by over 60 people, including public health stakeholders, McMaster University Faculty and Staff, members of parliament, PHAC staff, and the National Advisory Group of the

NCCMT. MP David Sweet had this to say "The idea is there is lots of research out there, but we need to get it into repositories where practitioners and public policy-makers can have access to it." The NCCMT intends to do this. Overall, the launch was most successful.



Picture: (L to R) Dr. P. George (McMaster President), Dr. J. Kelton (Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences), K. Clark (Admin Director), D. Ciliska (Scientific Co-Director), MP D. Sweet, C. Tompkins (Assoc Dean, Nursing), H. Thomas (Scientific Co-Director), Dr. M. Ricketts (PHAC)

Founding Meeting of the National Advisory Group

On May 16th and 17th, 2007, the founding meeting of the NCCMT National Advisory Group was held in Hamilton, Ontario. The Group currently has 18 members. The purpose of the founding meeting was to initiate the contact between all members, to identify the past, current, and future products of the NCCMT and to establish concrete goals and terms of reference for the Group. The primary role of the Advi-

sory Group will be to provide advice to the NCCMT through the Scientific Co-Directors. The primary responsibilities were defined by the members as:

- contributing to the ongoing identification, monitoring and analysis of the needs, priorities, opportunities and challenges to public health and to the application /adoption of methods and tools for knowledge synthesis, translation and exchange (KSTE);

...cont'd from Page 1 (National Advisory Group)



Members of National Advisory
Group Above: (L to R)

J. Marrone, T. Lovett, L. Hershfield,
G. Gurd, K. Clark, H. Thomas, B.
McKim, D. Ciliska, L. Parton, S.
Gravelle, E. Woodford, F.P. Gauvin,
A. McKibbin

Missing: M. Greenwood, R. Copes,
S. Hayward, A. Sowden, J. Sauve,
D. Mowat, R. Landry, J. Grimshaw,
L. Drasic

ABOUT THE NCCS

The Government of Canada's com-
mitment to renew and strengthen
public health includes the establish-
ment of a series of **National Collabo-
rating Centres (NCC)** for Public
Health. The five other Centres are:

National Collaborating Centre for
Aboriginal Health (NCCAHA)

National Collaborating Centre for
Environmental Health (NCCCEH)

National Collaborating Centre for
Infectious Diseases (NCCID)

National Collaborating Centre for
Healthy Public Policy (NCCHPP)

National Collaborating Centre for
Determinants of Health (NCCDH)

For contact info, visit www.nccph.ca

- advising the NCCMT on its strategic workplans and proposed activities;
- expanding the network of NCCMT con-
tacts and identifying new stakeholders
nationally and internationally;
- reviewing submissions to RFPs, publi-
cations and applications; and,
- communicating and promoting the
work of the NCCMT.

The National Advisory Group will meet
every six months to review activities,
current issues of the NCCMT; as well as
determine new goals as needed.

Highlight on NCCMT 2007-2008 Activities

1. Establish an active network with key people involved in public health across Canada and internationally.
2. Identify and critically appraise existing KSTE methods and tools.
3. Identify gaps in existing KSTE methods and tools, select one gap and collaborate with an appropriate group to address the gap.
4. Determine the knowledge needs and preferences of the other NCCs, PHAC, and other public decision and policy-makers, to support the development of an integrated knowledge management system.
5. In collaboration with others, create an online resource of evidence for public health practice.
6. Develop and test search strategies for finding studies of knowledge translation that will be synthesized and circulated nationally and internationally.

Highlight on the Effective Public Health Practice Project

The systematic literature reviews on the effectiveness of public health interventions, and the summary statements of other high quality reviews produced by the EPHPP are a resource for evidence-based decision-making in public health in Canada. Although EPHPP reviews focus on public health interventions, review methodology and results are frequently of interest to a broader audience of service and research professionals. The EPHPP involves public health researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers from across Canada. Professional collaboration ensures high-quality scientific work that is clinically relevant to consumers, practitio-

ners and policy-makers.

The EPHPP is committed to on-going consultation with health professionals to define and review appropriate public health topics, and to collaboration with other groups equally committed to evidence-based practice and decision-making. In this way, the EPHPP continues to develop research which is timely, evidence-based, and relevant to the delivery of public health services in Canada. For more information, please visit:

www.hamilton.ca/ephpp

ephpp@mcmaster.ca

Applicability and Transferability Tool

As a public health practitioner, one is constantly faced with the challenge of making decisions about which programs to create, continue or discontinue. To help make these decisions one requires readily accessible, up-to-date, good information. It is good news when a recent systematic review of the research related to the programs that are being considered is found.

However, it is still necessary to determine if the evidence is applicable and transferable to the particular setting and situation. To aid in achieve this, the NCCMT is developing a tool to assist public health managers and planners with decision-making about program priorities for their community.

The following is a draft version of the criteria from the tool. For more information, suggestions for process to use the tool, and a copy of the final version, please contact Carmen Savelli, NCCMT Project Assistant, at nccmt@mcmaster.ca

Assessment of Applicability & Transferability

Construct	Factors	Questions to Ask
Applicability (feasibility)	Political acceptability or leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will the intervention be allowed or supported in current political climate? ▪ Will there be public relations benefit for local government? ▪ Will this program enhance the stature of the organization? ▪ Will the public and target groups accept and support the intervention in its current format?
	Social acceptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will the target population be interested in the intervention? Is it ethical?
	Available essential resources (personnel and financial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who/what is available/essential for the local implementation? ▪ Are they adequately trained? If not, is training available and affordable? ▪ What is needed to tailor the intervention locally? ▪ What are the full costs (supplies, systems, space requirements for staff, training, technology/administrative supports) per unit of expected outcome? ▪ Are the incremental health benefits worth the costs of the intervention?
	Organizational expertise and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the current strategic plan/operational plan in alignment with the intervention to be offered? ▪ Does this intervention fit with its mission and local priorities? ▪ Does it conform to existing legislation or regulations (either local or provincial?) Does it overlap with existing programs or is it symbiotic? ▪ Any organizational barriers/structural issues or approval processes to be addressed? ▪ Is the organization motivated (learning organization)?
Transferability (generalizability)	Magnitude of health issue in local setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the need exist? ▪ What is the baseline prevalence of the health issue locally? ▪ What is the difference in prevalence of the health issue (risk status) between study and local settings?
	Magnitude of the "reach" and cost effectiveness of the intervention above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will the intervention broadly "cover" the target population?
	Target population characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are they comparable to the study population? ▪ Will any difference in characteristics (ethnicity, socio-demographic variables, number of persons affected) impact intervention effectiveness locally?

NCCMT Network

meth·od n.

A means or manner of procedure, especially a regular and systematic way of accomplishing something.

The procedures and techniques characteristic of a particular discipline or field of knowledge: This field course gives an overview of archaeological method.

The NCCMT is building a network of public health managers, and those working in public health organizations to share knowledge with their colleagues to assist in program and policy decision making.

Our focus is on ways to facilitate your timely access to up-to-date, quality public health information. We are currently developing a product to assess the applicability and transferability of evidence for use in making decisions about local public health programs.

In addition, we are working on developing a website which we plan to launch in the next few months. This free, easy-to-use interactive website will provide network members with opportunities to request and share knowledge and resources on issues you identify and allow the NCCMT to support your professional development regarding evidence-informed public health.

We are very interested in hearing from you about ways in which the NCCMT Network can best serve your information needs. Please share information about this network with your own networks, management colleagues, and those internal "knowledge brokers" in your organization.

For more information or to join the NCCMT Network, please contact Paula Robeson, NCCMT Knowledge Broker, at netmt@mcmaster.ca.

tool n.

Anything used as a means of accomplishing a task or purpose. *Education is a tool for success.*

Any instrument of manual operation. *To work or shape with a tool.*

Highlight on health-evidence.ca

Health-evidence.ca has expanded to include over 200 new reviews following January, June and September updates in 2007. The development and addition of 35 summary statements funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada further assists decision makers in applying research evidence in public health practice. Activities being completed this fall include work funded by the NCCs (MT, PPS/HPP, ED, ID, and AH). The result of this work will be a streamlining of the screening, quality assessment and summary work needed, with review references and accompanying summary statements being published online faster than ever. Additionally, areas in which the review literature has been sparse (EH, AH) have been supplemented by some additional searching and adding the ability to highlight the best available evidence (in non-review format) at health-evidence.ca, to complement the review literature. Plans are underway to generate additional summaries of the most recent, highest-quality and highest-priority systematic reviews at health-evidence.ca.

Staff Directory

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We're on the Web!!

Please visit us at www.nccph.ca for more information on all of our 6 NCCs.

Our primary website is coming soon! We'll keep you posted!!

If you have any feedback for us on topics for future issues, or if you wish to be added to our networking database for further information, please feel free to contact us at nccmt@mcmaster.ca. We look forward to hearing from you!!