



National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools

Winter 2007

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Season's Greetings from the NCCMT!!

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We would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a very happy holiday season! For the NCCMT, this is a wonderful time to reflect on 2007 and the progress we have made since our inception just one year ago.

2007-2008 Accomplishments:

- Official Launch (May 2007)
- Establishment of Advisory Group and first 2 meetings
- Background papers on which to build, e.g. Applicability & Transferability paper and tool
- Evaluation planning
- Knowledge transfer search strategy
- Joint NCC workplans
- 1st Regional Consultation
- Website development
- Development of communications and networking plans

2008-2009 Upcoming Highlights:

- Website release (January 2008)
- Suggested critical appraisal tools for assessing studies in public health
- Translation of health-evidence.ca summaries into French
- Knowledge Management Conference (November 2008)
- Registry of Methods and Tools Project



Picture: NCCMT Staff (L to R: Leslea Peirson, Donna Ciliska, Jenny Marrone, Helen Thomas, Kathie Clark. Out feeding the reindeer: Paula Robeson, Carmen Savelli)

We're On the Web!

Please look for our website due out early January 2008:

www.nccmt.ca (English) www.ccnmo.ca (French)

Knowledge Management Conference 2008

Book your calendars:

NCCMT will be hosting a Knowledge Management Conference in public health scheduled for November 4, 2008 in Hamilton, Ontario at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Centre.

Details on registration and keynote speakers to follow.

If you'd like to keep apprised of events such as this, please join our general information distribution list. You can join by emailing nccmt@mcmaster.ca with your contact details.

We Need to Simplify our Language

On November 14, 2007, the NCCMT invited key public health leaders from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the Northwest Territories to participate in a consultation on ways in which the NCCMT can facilitate activities and products to best meet the information needs of the Western regions in areas related to public health knowledge synthesis, translation, and exchange. 21 participants attended in total. The Consultation took place in Edmonton, AB.

This was a very engaging experience which produced some very relevant and tangible ideas and collaborative opportunities for the NCCMT. Main themes in 3 areas were identified.

Main themes in relation to networking:

- 1) Build upon existing networks and create a process for mapping those networks
- 2) Information networks are based upon proximity, trust and fulfilling a common need
- 3) Develop annotated linkages and feedback loops between networks

Main themes in relation to skills development:

- 1) Positive skills development includes targeting interested people. Possibility to conduct workshops such as 'Putting Evidence into Practice' or rapid reviews
- 2) Relevance of synthesis and translation needs to be transferred into practical use at various levels of understanding

Main themes in relation to knowledge transfer needs:

- 1) Considerable need for clear language! (What is KSTE anyway?!)
- 2) Defining whose job KT really is: researchers vs. others
- 3) KT needs may be supported or not supported based on organizational/cultural values and skills
- 4) Strong importance of organizational assessment (readiness) for KSTE

A report of this Consultation will be produced and available on our website in early 2008. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the NCCMT office.

We'd like to thank Sarah Hayward of SEARCH Canada and Bob McKim of Capital Health (AB) for their help and support in organizing this event.



Picture (L to R):
Bob McKim, Cathie Scott, Ron Schlegelmich, and Sarah Hayward engaged in conversation.

It's Time to Engage the Schools of Public Health

On November 14th and 15th, the NCCMT National Advisory Group met for the 2nd time, in Edmonton, Alberta. Several of the group members had participated in the Regional Consultation on the 14th. There was good discussion regarding the direction towards which the NCCMT should be heading:

- Meet with Health Educators Network to look at possible workshops with Masters of Public Health Programs
- In relation to KSTE, "identify early adopters and build a critical mass; be sure to foster dissemination"
- Identify a list of valuable resources that could be designed into a 'champion kit' of KSTE methods and tools to disseminate to target audiences
- Importance of plain language use in tools, and on website
- Focus on capacity building
- Suggestion to plan collaboration between NCCs on systematic reviews



Picture Above: Bob McKim presents findings of the Regional Consultation to the Advisory Group on November 15th

NCCMT Communications Strategies

The NCCMT has initiated its communications strategies. This e-newsletter is our first Communications tool. We are also attending key conferences where we make presentations and provide posters. For example, Kathie Clark (Administrative Director) attended the Cochrane Colloquium in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The following poster reported on the results of the NCCMT environmental

Determining the Knowledge Exchange Priorities for the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (Public Health in Canada)

Donna Ciliska, Kathie Clark, Helen Thomas, Ruta Valaitis, Colleen Van Berkel, School of Nursing, McMaster University

Background

The National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (NCCMT) is one of six National Collaborating Centres established by the Public Health Agency of Canada to promote evidence-informed public health decision-making. The NCCMT focuses on the identification, evaluation, development and dissemination of KSTE (knowledge synthesis, translation and exchange) methods and tools. Prior to the establishment of the NCCMT (November 2006) an environmental scan was conducted to support the identification and setting of work priorities for the Centre.

Methods

The environmental scan included four components:

1. A review of published and grey literature;
2. Key informant interviews;
3. An environmental scan survey; and
4. A series of three surveys using a modified Delphi technique to reach a consensus on the priority activities for the NCCMT.

Objectives

- 1 Identify and define what public health methods and tools mean to the target users.
2. Identify the existing methods and tools.
3. Identify methods and tools that are needed but not yet available (i.e., the gaps).
4. Identify and prioritize the activities for the initial workplan of the NCCMT.

5. Identify 'experts' across Canada to assist with the establishment of the national network and the NCCMT Advisory Group.

Results

The environmental scan identified the following top five work activities for the NCCMT:

1. Create a support structure for sharing of information across health units, agencies, and institutions;
2. Strengthen leadership to support the use of evidence in practice and policy;
3. Create user-friendly summary statements from systematic reviews;
4. Create an online resource (the 'go to place') of evidence for public health practice;
5. Integrate front line practitioners with the NCCMT from its inception.

Conclusions

The environmental scan results and a series of subsequent consultations have provided useful guidance for the short and long-term strategic planning of the NCCMT. Networking with national and international organizations such as The Cochrane Collaboration is one of the primary functions of the NCCMT.

Update

The current goals of the NCCMT are:

- 1 To identify, develop and evaluate methods and tools for the process of knowledge synthesis, translation and exchange (KSTE).
2. To improve the access to and use of relevant KSTE methods and tools for people involved in policy-making, program decision-making, practice and research.
3. To identify gaps in KSTE methods and tools and encourage researchers and others to fill these gaps.
4. To raise awareness of evidence-informed practice among those involved in public health.
5. To develop the capacity of those involved in public health to use KSTE methods and tools.
6. To build active and sustainable networks of KSTE experts and public health policy-makers, practitioners and researchers, as well as partnerships with other National Collaborating Centres and create linkages with their stakeholder groups.

Environmental Scan Report available from Kathie Clark (kclark@mcmaster.ca) at the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools
Production of this poster has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada.
The NCCMT is affiliated with McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Registry Project Advisory Group Update

As part of the NCCMT's mandate, there is a project started to create a Registry of Methods and Tools. The scope of this project will be to provide the foundation/baseline for the ongoing work of the NCCMT in relation to the development of KSTE methods and tools for public health practitioners, policy makers and researchers to access and use nationally and internationally.

In order to do this, the NCCMT has enlisted the help of a Registry Advisory Group made up of experts from Canada, the UK, Australia, and the U.S. The first meeting of this group took place on November 29th, 2007 via teleconference.

The initial objectives will be to agree on terms of reference, a guiding framework, glossary of terms, a project timeline, and to begin the collection of appropriate methods and tools. The advisory group will also aid in developing various other aspects such as an appropriate critical appraisal method for screening the tools and methods for inclusion in the registry. The plan is to eventually make this project interactive on our website. For more info, please contact Leslea Peirson (peirson@mcmaster.ca)

Can I use this Evidence in my Program Decision? Assessing Applicability and Transferability of Evidence

On November 16, 2007 NCCMT released their 1st published tool at the Journées Annuelles de Santé Publique (JASP) 11th Annual Conference in Montréal, QC: "Can I use this evidence in my program decision?". The purpose of this tool is to assist public health managers and planners in decision-making about program priorities for their community.

There is a background paper which summarizes the current literature and identifies criteria and a process for the evaluation of applicability (feasibility) and transferability (generalizability) of evidence to public health practice and policy.

The evaluation of applicability and transferability follows from the critical appraisal of any research; once the study results are judged to be valid, how do you determine whether the intervention could work with similar expected outcomes in other jurisdictions?

A copy of both the paper and the tool are available from the NCCMT office. For more information, please email us at: nccmt@mcmaster.ca. A special thanks to Colleen VanBerkel and Charlene Beynon for their helpful feedback with the tool and paper, as well as Jenny Marrone and Lina Tirillis for their work on references and formatting.



Picture: Donna Ciliska holds up a copy of the final paper and tool.

Network Update

Your NCCMT Network is growing! Together we are a force of well over 300 public health managers and planners who have signed onto this expanding informal network of colleagues to promote, support, and facilitate evidence-informed public health decision making through resource dissemination, knowledge sharing and co-creation, and by providing valuable input into NCCMT resource development to ensure local relevance and usefulness.

To join your colleagues on the NCCMT Network; for more information about us; or to share your existing KSTE networks (so we can build on what already exists), ideas, priorities, and needs please contact Paula Robeson, NCCMT Knowledge Broker, at netmt@mcmaster.ca.

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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!!



Logic: another thing that penguins aren't very good at.