



National Collaborating Centre
for Methods and Tools

Centre de collaboration nationale
des méthodes et outils

Newsletter

Fall • 2008 • Issue 4

Public Health+ ... in case you're busy

At NCCMT, we are committed to promoting evidence-based decision-making in public health. That's our mandate. But, we understand that keeping up to date can seem impossible for a busy public health practitioner or manager. After all, who has time to read even one journal a week? That's why we are happy to bring you Public Health+.

Public Health+ takes the aggravation out of keeping current with new and relevant public health research. You receive only the latest and best articles directly related to the work you are doing now.

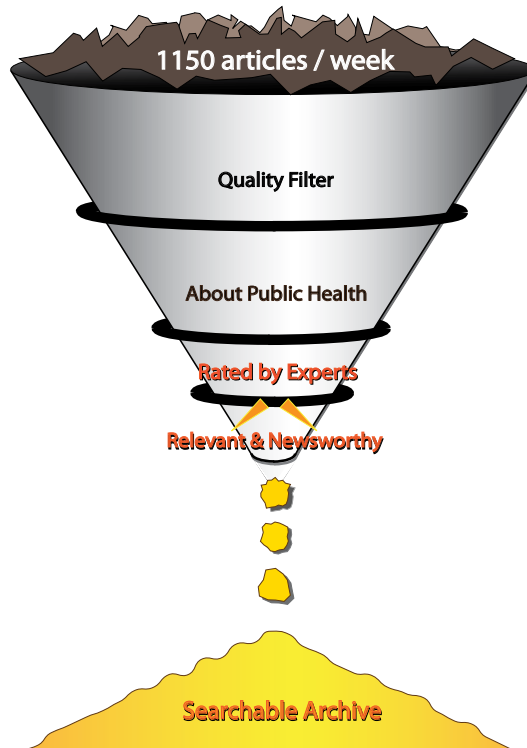
What is Public Health+ ?

Public Health+ is an online database service designed especially for busy public health decision-makers and managers that comes to NCCMT via the McMaster Health Knowledge Refinery.

Over 130 medical and allied health academic journals are read and every article is critically appraised. Only those articles deemed by clinicians to be methodologically sound, relevant and newsworthy are posted on the online Public Health+ database. The articles are updated weekly and a searchable archive is kept on the NCCMT website.

What about quality?

Articles concerning cause, course, prediction, diagnosis, prognosis, prevention and treatment are appraised according to basic quality criteria. Studies of prevention or treatment, and systematic review articles must meet additional stringent criteria. Ultimately, only about 8% of articles are accepted for further consideration. Research associates then identify the article type (i.e., original or review), purpose (e.g., therapy/prevention, diagnosis, quality improvement, etc.), patient populations, and clinical disciplines/specialties (e.g., public health, community health).



Articles that pass the filter process are forwarded to practising health professionals who rate the articles appropriate to their disciplines (i.e., articles related to public health are sent to public health readers). These Sentinel Readers then rate the articles for newsworthiness and relevance. Only relevant and newsworthy articles are added to the permanent, searchable database available on-line at Public Health+. The archive currently contains over 175 articles.

What's the bottom line?

From the 30,000 articles per year (about 580 per week) that Public Health+ staff read, you get only the "gold nuggets" -- about 3 articles per week. Best of all, you know that the articles you get have been rated high-quality, relevant and newsworthy by health practitioners in your own field.

INSIDE

2 Activities Updates:

Registry of methods
and tools for knowledge
translation goes live

Postdoctoral Fellowship
Announcement

3 Activities Updates:

New name for NCCMT
network: DialoguePH

www.health-evidence.ca:
Looking back at 2008 &
ahead to 2009!

4 Conference Report:

a brief report on the
recent knowledge man-
agement conference

Production of this newsletter has
been made possible through a
financial contribution from the
Public Health Agency of Canada.

The views expressed herein
do not necessarily represent
the views of the Public Health
Agency of Canada.

The NCCMT is affiliated with
McMaster University.

Activities Updates:

Registry of methods and tools for knowledge translation goes live

We have launched the newest addition to our website -- The Registry of Knowledge Translation Methods and Tools for Public Health.

The Registry is a free, easy-to-use, interactive online database of quality-appraised methods (processes) and tools (products) for moving evidence into practice. The Registry will assist public health policy and program decision-makers plan, do and evaluate their activities at every step in the knowledge translation process.

Visit the Registry to:

- perform a targeted, keyword or matrix search for specific methods and tools, or view all resources contained in the Registry;
- view search results your way (brief or detailed, contextualized summaries; online or printable PDF documents; written descriptions or icons);
- compare methods and tools across a number of key characteristics to help choose which ones best meet your needs and context;
- post comments or questions about specific methods and tools contained in the Registry;

- suggest a method or a tool for inclusion in the Registry;
- hear about new additions to the Registry as they become available.

An online forum, coming in early 2009, will facilitate ongoing discussion and provide support for Registry users on key public health knowledge translation issues. Additional interactive features are anticipated in the New Year. Currently, volunteer test-users are evaluating the Registry. Their feedback will inform any revisions to the layout, features or content.

The Registry inventory continues to expand as we find, evaluate and gather contextual information for published and unpublished methods and tools relevant to knowledge translation in public health. Sign up for e-alerts so you know when new methods and tools are added.

The Registry is accessible through the NCCMT website: www.nccmt.ca. For more information, please email registry@mcmaster.ca.

Prestigious Postdoctoral Fellowship Announcement

Leslea Peirson is one of eight applicants across the country to be offered a two-year postdoctoral fellowship by the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation and the CIHR's Capacity for Applied and Developmental Research and Evaluation (CADRE) program in health services and nursing.

Although Leslea took up the award in September, 2008, she remains at NCCMT and McMaster University as her host organization. Her postdoctoral program focuses on research and skill development in evidence-informed decision-making and knowledge translation in public health among decision-makers

from a regional public health department in Ontario (Peel Public Health) and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Leslea's program is supervised by Dr. Donna Ciliska (Scientific Director for the NCCMT and professor with the McMaster University School of Nursing) and Dr. Maureen Dobbins (primary investigator for the health-evidence.ca project and associate professor with McMaster University School of Nursing). Dr. David Mowat (Medical Officer of Health for Peel Region) and Ms. Barbara Medlar (Senior Program Advisor, Evidence Informed Practice, PHAC) are her decision-making mentors.

New name for NCCMT network: DialoguePH

DialoguePH is designed to engage public health professionals such as decision makers; individuals in knowledge management or capacity-building positions; as well as others who are interested in learning about, and helping to develop, methods and tools for translating or moving knowledge into practice.

DialoguePH is unique. Unlike other networks that focus on public health content areas (e.g., chronic disease, infectious diseases, health promotion or food safety), DialoguePH focuses on the process of moving that content, or knowledge, into practice. DialoguePH specializes in knowledge translation in public health and the methods and tools designed to support each step.

DialoguePH creates the spaces (face-to-face and virtual) where people who are interested or experienced in moving knowledge into practice can interact.

Become a member of DialoguePH to

- share new methods and tools;
- exchange practical ideas;
- help build effective programs and services to strengthen public health in Canada.

NCCMT's new Knowledge Broker will manage the network. Pamela Forsyth has 17 years of experience in public health, eight of which were in senior management. She understands the challenges facing management and staff who want to use evidence for decision-making, whether they are planning programs, responding to outbreaks, allocating resources or managing other public health related activities. According to Pam, DialoguePH will save people time and increase their ability to move evidence into practice.

If you'd like to join the network, visit DialoguePH online <www.nccmt.ca> or e-mail us at DialoguePH@mcmaster.ca

www.health-evidence.ca: Looking back at 2008 & ahead to 2009!

2008 was a busy year! With three updates that added 346 new reviews, health-evidence.ca is the only place you need to stop to find reviews evaluating the effectiveness of public health interventions. Other enhancements to the site included:

- an 'Additional Resource' highlighting the chronic disease literature featuring a set of automated searches organized by disease, audience, setting or intervention strategy;
- 15 summary statements funded by the City of Hamilton Public Health Services Branch, with 25 more coming soon, thanks to funding from the National Collaborating Centers (Methods and Tools and Infectious Diseases);
- links to the two quality assessments completed for each review;
- links to full text articles published in free access journals (e.g., BMJ, CMAJ), for the range in which they are available to the public, and to all Cochrane reviews through IP authentication, meaning for users who have subscriptions, Cochrane will recognize your subscription when you pass through from health-evidence.ca, providing you are in your IP authenticated range.

In 2009, health-evidence.ca will be part of a cluster randomized controlled trial funded by the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. The registry will continue to be updated quarterly.

Other upcoming improvements will include:

- customized quarterly e-mails to users in their language of preference, outlining new additions to the registry in their areas of interest;
- enhanced search options for creating focused searches.

We will continue to offer services to develop capacity for evidence-informed decision making at the local, regional, provincial and federal levels, through one-to-one consultations and customized workshops. Check out www.health-evidence.ca in 2009 for more details.

We welcome your feedback.

Send your comments or questions to nccmt@mcmaster.ca.

This newsletter is edited by Jeannie Mackintosh, communications coordinator for the NCCMT

Clean, clear knowledge - as vital to a healthy society as clean, clear water

a brief report on the recent knowledge management conference

Clean, clear knowledge – that is what knowledge management should be all about in public health, according to Sir Muir Gray, Director of the National Knowledge Service, and Chief Knowledge Officer to the UK's National Health Service. Sir Gray was

the keynote speaker at the recent knowledge management conference hosted by the NCCMT in Hamilton. Over 200 public health managers, policy makers and 'knowledge brokers' at local, provincial and federal levels attended the conference on November 4, 2008, and reported it to be interesting and useful.

The presentations of Sir Gray and the other speakers (Ruta Valaitis, Jocelyne Sauvé, Brian Haynes, Rob Hayward, Neil MacAlpine, Ellen Detlefsen, Réjean Landry, Steve Kingston, Jason Bonander, Roz Lasker, John Lavis, Sean Murphy and Kirby Wright) are currently available in the Events section of the NCCMT website <http://www.nccmt.ca/events/index-eng.html>. In January, we will post the full conference report along with a report of the invitational forum that was held on November 5.



Keynote speaker Sir Muir Gray inspired discussion with his analogy.

If you would like more information about knowledge management (KM) – what it is and the potential benefits for public health – the background paper on knowledge management prepared for both the conference and the forum is available at <http://www.nccmt.ca/tools/index-eng.html>. The paper provides a quick history of the development of KM, a review of basic concepts and models, as well as some practical approaches to dealing with KM culture, content, process and technology.

The NCCMT will be deciding the next steps in relation to this project in the weeks and months to come. If you or your organization would like to explore the application of knowledge management in your work setting or share information about your own KM project, please let us know by contacting Kathie Clark, Administrative Director, at kclark@mcmaster.ca.



Dr. David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health for Peel Region, and Dr. Donna Ciliska, Scientific Director for the NCCMT, at the opening reception.



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