

Newfoundland & Labrador Centre for

APPLIED

HEALTH

RESEARCH

www.nlcahr.mun.ca

Annual Report 2008-2009

Message from the Chair of the Board

On behalf of the Board of the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research, I am pleased to present this report on our activities for the fiscal year ending March 31 2009.

As you will see, NLCAHR has been extremely active this year. The Centre's flagship knowledge translation and exchange program, CHRSP, was fully realised; it produced excellent research syntheses on implementation of PET-CT programs and on interventions for childhood overweight and obesity.

CHRSP engaged both the research community and health system decision-makers in a process that produced truly valuable and timely work. Most importantly, the CHRSP projects generated reports that included the particular context of Newfoundland and Labrador in assessing the high-level research that was used, providing important information and guidance for decision makers. NLCAHR's contextualization process is an initiative that is receiving accolades from across the country.

This year also featured the implementation of a new research funding program on healthy aging. NL-HARP, which is funded primarily by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, aims to build capacity for research on aging and to address a number of pressing research questions on this important theme. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research- Institute of Aging is a partner in this program.

The Centre has also worked hard at building and sustaining networks through its Research Affinity Groups; these groups have burgeoned this year with several new groups emerging and existing groups involved in a variety of joint activities including the submission of a number of major team grant applications to external funding agencies. The Research Affinity Groups have now emerged as one of the most significant ways in which the Centre fulfills its mandated objective to support the development of the province's research capacity in applied health research.

As Chair of the Board, I would like to thank the Director, the staff, and the many others who participated in the Centre's activities or contributed their time to making this year an eventful one.



Dr. James Rourke, Chair of the Board

Message from the Director

The 2008-2009 fiscal year was both an exciting and a challenging one for NLCAHR. This was the second year under our current strategic planning cycle based on the Strategic Plan adopted in consultation with our stakeholders in 2007.

As a result of budgetary constraints, adjustments had to be made to our programming, including reductions or suspensions of some grants and awards and postponement of our annual research forum. Yet even with this limited budget, the Centre has managed to realize most of its objectives and continues to play a leadership role in applied health research both within the province and at the regional and national levels.

The body of this report describes our activities in detail. We are particularly proud of the work being conducted by teams under the Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program. CHRSP has begun attracting the attention of researchers and decision makers in other provinces as well as key people at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation.

The Centre's Awards Program continues, even under our budgetary challenges, to operate effectively as a device for building local research capacity. In this fiscal year the number of applications for our various programs of fellowships and grants has almost doubled. This increase in demand for our very limited number of awards highlights the important role that our programs play for our province's researchers and graduate trainees.

As in previous years, the Centre depended heavily on the work of our dedicated board, our many committees, and of course our excellent staff team. I would like to thank them for their efforts, and especially note the important contribution of members of the peer review committees whose volunteer efforts are essential to the operation of our awards programs.

Finally, I wish to thank the various researchers and decision-makers who have worked tirelessly on CHRSP teams and who have produced such excellent results.

I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year.

About NLCAHR

The Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Applied Health Research was created in the fall of 1999 as the product of a partnership among three organizations: Memorial University of Newfoundland, the Department of Health and Community Services of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Health Care Corporation of St. John's (now Eastern Health). It is constituted as a centre within Memorial University under the auspices of the Board of Regents and is led by a Director and a Board.

The Centre is funded primarily by an annual grant from the Department of Health and Community Services of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, with project funding from various granting agencies and administrative support from the Faculty of Medicine.

NLCAHR's mission is to contribute to the effectiveness of the health and community service system of Newfoundland and Labrador and to the physical, social, psychological health and wellbeing of the province's population by supporting the development and the use of applied health research in this province.

The Centre's work revolves around three principal goals:

- to help build human capacity and organizational resources for undertaking and supporting high-quality applied health research in the province;
- to increase the amount and impact of high-quality applied health research undertaken on the priority research themes of Newfoundland and Labrador; and
- to help increase the effective and efficient use of research evidence in the province's health and community services system.

These goals are achieved through our funding programs, collaborative activities, research and knowledge exchange activities (including the Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program) and our capacity development activities.



Governance

NLCAHR's Board Of Directors 2008-2009

Dr. James Rourke (Chair)	Dean, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University
Mr. Don Keats	Deputy Minister, Department of Health and Community Services
Dr. Ray Gosine / Dr. Christopher Loomis	Vice-President (Research), Memorial University
Dr. Penny Moody-Corbett/ Dr. Don McKay	Associate Dean, Research & Graduate Studies Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University (Research Advisory Council Delegate)
Mr. Mike Barron	CEO, NL Centre for Health Information
Mr. John Peddle	Executive Director, NL Health Boards Association
Ms. Louise Jones	Interim CEO, Eastern Health
Dr. Stephen Bornstein (ex officio)	Director, NLCAHR

During the period under review, the Board met on five occasions. We welcomed new Board member Ray Gosine and returning member Penny Moody-Corbett. Thanks to outgoing members Christopher Loomis and Don McKay for their contributions.

Personnel

NLCAHR Staff 2008-2009

Dr. Stephen Bornstein	Director
Janice Butler	Research Officer, CHRSP Project Coordinator
Jerry Coffey	IT Consultant
Robert Kean	Research Assistant, CHRSP
Theresa Mackenzie	Manager, Communications and Partnerships
Annette McGrath	Operations and Events Coordinator
Pablo Navarro	Research Officer
Patti Thistle	Administrative Officer
Tyrone White	Awards and Research Affinity Group Coordinator

We wish to thank Todd Jeans, who worked with NLCAHR as our IT Specialist until October 2008, as well as GradSWEP student Ceysa McKechnie and MUCEP student Amanda Blackwood.

Funding Programs

The Centre has been mandated by government to support applied health research and graduate training in the province both directly, through the allocation of grants and fellowships, and indirectly by helping to attract and leverage funding from external granting agencies. These programs help build research capacity within the province while increasing the amount of high-quality applied health research undertaken on priority research themes.

NLCAHR operates a regular annual awards program as well as a special program that focuses on aging research. The Centre's funding programs are aimed at research initiated by investigators who are resident in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The NLCAHR awards program currently offers Project Grants, Development Grants and Graduate Fellowships.

For all awards except the Master's Fellowships, preference is given to applications with direct relevance to one or more of NLCAHR's priority themes.

The following research themes were confirmed by the NLCAHR Board of Directors for 2008:

- Population health and health services challenges of NL
- Health promotion and wellness
- Efficiency and effectiveness of the provincial health system

Many thanks to the volunteer peer review committee members who reviewed applications for this round of competitions.

Development Grants

NLCAHR's Development Grants provide up to \$10,000 per project to assist in the creation of effective research teams in Newfoundland and Labrador that are capable of obtaining funding from national and international research granting agencies. These grants are intended to fund the development of new letters of intent and research proposals and/or to support the enhancement and resubmission of research proposals to external funding agencies.

NLCAHR received three applications for the 2008-2009 Development Grant competition. Two of these applications were awarded funding (see table, above).

Project Grants

Project grants of up to \$40,000 are designed to support small research projects of high scientific quality that may not be eligible for funding from external sources and that are of direct relevance to the mandate and priorities of the Centre. During the 2008-2009 funding cycle, there were nine applications received for this competition; one was successful (see table, below).

Fellowships

As part of the Centre's mandate to support the training and development of new health researchers in the province, the Fellowships Program is designed to facilitate applied health research through awards to students and post-doctoral fellows who are studying in Newfoundland and Labrador. Fellowships are awarded in three categories: Master's Fellowships, Doctoral Fellowships, and Post-Doctoral Fellowships.

For the 2008-2009 competitions, NLCAHR received thirteen applications for Master's Fellowships and awarded two fellowships of \$18,000 per year, each renewable for up to two years. The Centre received three unsuccessful applications for Doctoral Fellowships. Finally, one successful candidate was chosen from two applications received for

the Post-Doctoral competition. The Master's and Doctoral Fellowships are funded on the basis of an arrangement for partial co-funding with Memorial University's School of Graduate Studies. Funding for three fellowships was continued from the previous fiscal year. See the table on the following page for details.

Development Grant Recipients 2008-2009		
Dr. Peter Wang (with Dr. Angela Loucks-Atkinson)	Healthy Aging in Newfoundland and Labrador: An Epidemiological Study to Enhance Mobility and Participation in Society	\$10,000
Dr. Karen Parsons (with Dr. Pauline Duke and Dr. Pamela Snow)	Effectiveness of an intensive intervention during pregnancy and for one year postpartum on breastfeeding initiation and duration rates in Newfoundland and Labrador	\$5000
Project Grant Recipient 2008-2009		
Dr. Barbara Roebathan (with Dr. Veeresh Gadag, Daphne LeDrew, Susan Greene and Ann Ryan)	What are the determinants of successful and sustainable program delivery as it applies to child nutrition programs in Newfoundland and Labrador?	\$40,000

NL-HARP

NLCAHR has partnered with the Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS), and an interdepartmental committee of government, to develop a program aimed at fostering research on aging and seniors: the Newfoundland and Labrador Healthy Aging Research Program (NL-HARP). The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has committed \$200,000 per year for three years to finance this endeavour, to be administered by the Centre, through various grants and fellowships.

To further enhance the commitment to aging research, NLCAHR has partnered with CIHR's Institute of Aging to increase funding for outstanding fellowship applications. The Newfoundland and Labrador Gold Prizes for Research on Aging are awarded

to the top rated applications (with scores of 3.9 or higher out of 5) in the Master's, Doctoral and Post-Doctoral fellowship categories. These awards, which are valued at up to \$3500, are awarded by CIHR on top of funding already awarded to applicants.



CIHR-IA also funds one of two research synthesis grants per year.

In the first year of NL-HARP, NLCAHR received fifteen applications for a variety of funding opportunities, including fellowships, research grants and faculty awards. Of the fifteen submitted applications, seven were selected for funding (see table below, right).

The call for applications for the second year of NL-HARP funding is set to begin in June 2009, with an application due date of October 13, 2009.

NL-HARP Steering Committee

Alice Kennedy – Eastern Health

Evan Simpson – Department of Philosophy, MUN

Stephen Bornstein – NLCAHR, Faculty of Medicine, MUN

Farah McCrate – Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Kelli O'Brien - Western Health

Sharon Buehler – Faculty of Nursing, MUN

Suzanne Brake – Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

NLCAHR Fellowship Recipients 2008-2009

Elizabeth Russell Master of Science, Psychology	Exploring Psycho-Social And Health-Related Predictors of Body Dissatisfaction: A Quantitative and Qualitative Approach	\$18,000 per year for up to 2 years
Patrick Fleming Master of Science, Community Health and Humanities	Retention of Specialist Physicians in Newfoundland and Labrador	\$18,000 per year for up to 2 years
Jill Allison Post-Doctoral, Sociology	Community Identity and Genetic Risk: Determining Knowledge Pathways related to Genetic Predispositions in Newfoundland and Labrador	\$38,000 (plus up to \$5,500 for additional expenses) per year for up to 2 years
Total fellowships awarded for the 2008-2009 funding cycle		\$ 79,500

NLCAHR Fellowship Recipients (ongoing awards from the 2007-2008 funding cycle)

Sarah Hollett Master of Science, Psychology	Perceptions of Quality of Medical Care: Perspectives from Children and Adolescents and their Parents	\$18,000
Zhuoyu Sun Master of Science, Community Health and Humanities	Dietary Factors and Microsatellite Instability in Sporadic Colorectal Cancer	\$18,000
Dr. Stacey Wareham Post-Doctoral, Psychology	Exploring the Health Impacts of Newfoundland and Labrador Make-Work Projects: A Community Based, Participatory Action Approach	\$43,500
Total fellowships awarded for the 2008-2009 funding cycle		\$ 79,500

NL-HARP Award Recipients 2009

Dr. Marshall Godwin, Faculty of Medicine, MUN	NL-HARP Project Grant Assessing Criterion Validity and Developing Population Norms for the Simple Lifestyle Indicator Questionnaire (SLIQ) in the Elderly	\$40,000 per year for up to 2 years
Dr. Victor Maddalena, Faculty of Medicine, MUN	NL-HARP Seed Grant Palliative and End of Life Care in Newfoundland's Deaf Community	\$20,000 for six months
Dr. Wendy Young, School of Nursing/ Faculty of Medicine, MUN	NL-HARP Seed Grant Development of an Age-Friendly Communities Research Team	\$20,000 for six months
Jared Clarke, Division of Biomedical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, MUN	NL-HARP Post-Doctoral Fellowship Healthy Aging with a Chronic Neurological Disorder - A Profile of Community-Based Programs and Service Gaps	\$40,000 (plus expenses) per year for up to 2 years
Geoff Power, School of Human Kinetics and Recreation, MUN	NL-HARP Doctoral Dissertation Award Muscle Fatigue Resistance in Old and Very Old Women	\$24,000 (plus expenses) per year for up to 2 years
Fang Liu, Community Health and Humanities, Faculty of Medicine, MUN	NL-HARP Master's Research Grant Measuring Health Status of Aging Population with Disabilities in NL	\$5,000 for six months
Ellen Haskell, Department of Sociology, MUN	NL-HARP Master's Research Grant More Sunsets: The Social Organization of the RV Sub-Culture	\$5,000 for six months

Collaborative Activities

1. Collaboration with Other Newfoundland & Labrador Research Organizations

As in previous years, the Centre has been working with a number of other research organizations in the province. These include the Atlantic Regional Training Centre in Health Services Research, the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information, the Division of Community Health of the Faculty of Medicine, the Harris Centre, the E-Health Research Unit, the Clinical Epidemiology Research Unit, and the Primary Healthcare Research Unit.

2. Rural Health Research

The Centre continues to play an active role in the development of rural health research in this country. The Director serves on the executive of the Canadian Society for Rural Health Research. In addition, the Centre has been involved in a number of rurally-oriented research projects this year. The Director is a co-investigator on a CIHR-funded team working on enhancing rural dentistry in Atlantic Canada as well as of a team that is examining ways of enhancing oral health in Labrador, with particular attention to aboriginal communities.

3. National Health Research Funding Networks

The Centre has been an active member in two networks that bring together the various organizations from across the country that fund health research. The first of these organizations is the National Alliance of Provincial Health Research Organizations (NAPHRO), which brings together the directors of the country's principal provincial health research funding organizations. The group meets three times a year to share best practices in the management and allocation of health research grants and to discuss mutual concerns. In October 2008, NLCAHR hosted a meeting of NAPHRO in St. John's.

In addition, the Director sits on (and co-chaired for the current year) a larger national organization, the National Forum of Health Research Funders, which brings together the members of NAPHRO, the major national funding agencies (CIHR, CHSRF and SSHRC) and the principal national health charities that provide research funding. Like NAPHRO, this group meets two or three times a year to discuss shared concerns and activities. Participation in these groups gives the Centre a voice at these important tables, insights into the approaches and best practices of related organizations, and ideas for new programs.

For the past two years, the Director has also served as chair of the Network of Centre Directors in Health Services and Policy Research. The network brings together, both through telephone conferences and through bi-annual face-to-face meetings, the directors of eleven university-linked applied health research units from various parts of the country to share ideas on administrative approaches, knowledge exchange and capacity development; to facilitate data sharing and collaborative research activities;

and to coordinate efforts to enhance national funding of applied health researchers and centres. The network receives multi-year funding and administrative support from CHSRF and CIHR's Institute for Health Services and Policy Research.

4. Canadian Institutes of Health Research

NLCAHR staff members continue to collaborate with CIHR in various ways. In June 2009, NLCAHR was invited to present on the CHRSP program to the Institute Advisory Board of the Institute for Health Services and Policy Research. Also in June, NLCAHR organized a launch of new research funding initiatives from the Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health. In October 2009 the Centre organized a visit to Memorial University by the incoming president of CIHR, Dr. Alain Beaudet.

As previously noted, NLCAHR has formed a partnership with the Institute of Aging to fund aspects of the NL-HARP program, and the Director participates in the CIHR-supported National Forum of Research Funders.

Theresa Mackenzie, the Centre's Manager of Communications and Partnerships, continues to serve as a community reviewer on one of CIHR's peer review committees. She is also a member of the KT Funders Network, and has participated in workshops on communicating the value of health research to the public. She has been consulted in the development of CIHR's new Citizen Engagement Framework. In addition to building relationships within CIHR, Ms. Mackenzie's participation in these activities maintains an important link to CIHR, providing helpful information to shape NLCAHR's training programs and to support researchers as they prepare grant proposals to CIHR and other external funders.

Also in 2008, NLCAHR was successful in two applications under CIHR's Meetings, Planning and Dissemination Grants Program. A grant of \$24,560 from the Institute of Gender and Health and the Partnerships and Citizen Engagement Branch will fund a conference on Gender and Health, scheduled for October 2009. Dr. Nicole Power was the principal investigator on this grant. A second grant of \$25,000, from the Institute for Health Services and Policy Research and the Knowledge Translation Branch, funded an evaluation and KTE meeting on CHRSP, which was held in May 2009. Dr. Brendan Barrett was principal investigator on this grant.

5. Health Canada's Science Advisory Board

The Director is in the third year of his term as a member of the Science Advisory Board/Council to the Minister of Health of Canada. This body meets three or four times a year to provide advice to Health Canada and to the Public Health Agency of Canada on the relevance and quality of their internal scientific activities and on the science underpinning the issues addressed by them.



6. Evidence-Informed Practice Council

NLCAHR continues to collaborate with Eastern Health's Evidence-Informed Practice Council. The EIPC is a committee established to support and encourage the development, implementation and evaluation of evidence-informed practice within the organization. The EIPC brings together clinical and administrative committees from within Eastern Health to foster research initiatives and knowledge translation and uptake, as well as to develop a working model for EIP within the organization.

7. Wellness Plan Evaluation Committee

The Centre participates in the evaluation committee of the Provincial Wellness Plan. This Committee is overseeing an external program evaluation of the Wellness Plan's implementation and administration.

8. Provincial Wellness Advisory Council

The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council (PWAC) is comprised of a broad range of government departments, professional associations and community groups. PWAC provides advice and guidance on the wellness priorities to government, through the Minister of Health and Community Services. PWAC seeks to create opportunities to build and strengthen our partnerships to support the actions for wellness. Toward this end, PWAC has invited NLCAHR to observe and participate in Council meetings and to explore opportunities for further collaboration through CHRSP and other NLCAHR programs.

9. Aboriginal Medical Education Project

Under the leadership of the Dean of Medicine, Stephen Bornstein coordinated a team that developed and submitted a successful grant application to the Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative competition. The team is now working to reconfigure the Faculty of Medicine's recruitment, admissions and student affairs procedures, its undergraduate curriculum, and the curriculum of the new master's program in public health. The objective of these proposed changes is to increase the Faculty's recruitment and retention of aboriginal students. It is also hoped that the changes will make the Faculty's programs more sensitive to the needs and concerns of aboriginal students and that the training provided will be more attentive to aboriginal issues.

10. The Harris Centre

NLCAHR has worked with the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development in various capacities over the years. In early 2009, NLCAHR initiated a discussion about a possible partnership between the Harris Centre and NLCAHR, especially with respect to the new Yaffle search engine. We are currently exploring ways that we can collaborate to increase the involvement of the health research community in this important resource.

11. Provincial Child and Youth Obesity Expert Advisory Committee

NLCAHR was invited to participate in a new committee established by the Department of Health and Community Services to address child and youth obesity in the

Province. This group will meet regularly to review health promotion and obesity prevention policies, programs, services, resources, trends, data and research. The Provincial Child and Youth Obesity Expert Advisory Committee will offer advice on interventions to prevent and treat childhood overweight and obesity and link with a number of partner organizations.

12. Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health

In May, 2008, NLCAHR joined the *Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) Exchange*, a network of health technology assessment (HTA) producers and users. The mandate for this group is to share information, coordinate and leverage resources for HTA work, and to seek continuous quality improvement in the production and use of evidence-based information. Since the synthesis of existing HTAs is an integral part of the methodology employed in our Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program, the CADTH Exchange is an opportunity to both contribute to and learn from this valuable network of experts.

The release of two CHRSP reports in March 2009 (PET/CT and childhood obesity) has marked the official completion of activities under the original capacity-building grant received from CADTH in 2006, the grant that spawned the creation of CHRSP. Project Coordinators under CHRSP continue to collaborate with the CADTH Liaison Officer for NL, Sheila Tucker, on new and upcoming contextualized synthesis projects as well as other HTA-related initiatives.

In September 2008 we collaborated with CADTH on the "All About Evidence" workshops: see details in the section on events.



13. NLCAHR Participation at Meetings & Conferences

Event	Date	Participant(s)
NAPHRO meeting	Apr. 24-25 08	Stephen Bornstein
CADTH Invitational Conference 2008	Apr. 29 - 29 08, Edmonton	Janice Butler, Stephen Bornstein
CIHR Peer Review Committee	May 14-16 08, Ottawa	Theresa Mackenzie
Provincial Forum on Adverse Events	May 26 08, St. John's	Janice Butler, SG, TM
Centre Directors Network Meeting	May 28 08, Ottawa	Stephen Bornstein
CAHSPR Conference	May 26-28 08, Ottawa	Stephen Bornstein
CPHA Session on	June 1 08, Halifax	Stephen Bornstein
NLHBA Consultation on CHRSP	June 12 08, Corner Brook	Stephen Bornstein
CIHR- IHDCYH launch session	June 17 08, St. John's	Theresa Mackenzie, Janice Butler, Pablo Navarro
Eastern Health: consultation on CHI ROSE evaluation	June 20 08, St. John's	Janice Butler
Canadian Rural Health Research Society	Sept. 3 08, St. John's	Stephen Bornstein
CADTH/ HTA Exchange Network	Sept. 15-16 08, Ottawa	Stephen Bornstein
Forum of Health Research Funders	Sept. 26 08, Ottawa	Stephen Bornstein
NL Research & Development Council: Presentation	Sept. 30 09, St. John's	Stephen Bornstein
Knowledge in Motion Conference, Presentation	Oct. 15-18 08, St. John's	Stephen Bornstein, Janice Butler
NAPHRO Meeting	Oct. 24-25 08, St. John's	Stephen Bornstein, Theresa Mackenzie
CIHR /MUN researchers meeting	Oct. 25 08, St. John's	Theresa Mackenzie
CIHR Workshop: Communicating Value of Health Research	Nov. 14 08, Ottawa	Theresa Mackenzie
Community for Excellence in Health Governance, Editorial Advisory Committee	Nov. 28 08	Stephen Bornstein
CIHR Peer Review Committee	Dec. 1-2 08, Ottawa	Theresa Mackenzie
Network of Centre Directors in Health Services and Policy Research	Jan. 19 09 - Teleconference	Stephen Bornstein
Trudeau Foundation Retreat	Jan. 27-28 09, St. John's	Stephen Bornstein
CIHR KTE Funders Meeting	Feb. 11-12 09, Ottawa	Theresa Mackenzie
Provincial Wellness Advisory Council Meeting	March 10 09, St. John's	Pablo Navarro

Event	Date	Participant(s)
Cochrane Conference, presentation on CHRSP	March 11-12 09, Halifax	Janice Butler
CADTH meeting: The Use of Health Economics in Decision Making	March 17 09	Pablo Navarro
Inter-professional Health Research Day: keynote presentation	March 20 09, St. John NB	Stephen Bornstein
Health Canada Science Advisory Board	March 30-31 09, Ottawa	Stephen Bornstein
NLCHI Conference, Raising The Bar	March 30-31 09, St. John's	Janice Butler, Pablo Navarro, Patti Thistle
Eastern Health EIPC Meetings	Bi-monthly meetings	Janice Butler, Pablo Navarro

Research and Knowledge Exchange Activities

1. All About Evidence Workshop Series & Media Seminar

On September 24 & 25 2008, more than 70 health care professionals, managers, researchers and students attended a series of workshops in St. John's on the use of evidence in healthcare. *All About Evidence* explored the use of Cochrane Systematic Reviews and of Health Technology Assessments in healthcare practice, and also offered an introduction to health economics. It was hosted by NLCAHR, the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH), and the Canadian Cochrane Centre. Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw, Director of the Canadian Cochrane Centre, was a keynote speaker at the event, along with presenters Drs. Brendan Barrett, Mike Doyle and Roger Chafe, and Ms. Alison Farrell of the Health Sciences Library at Memorial.



Participants were overwhelmingly positive in their evaluation of these workshops. More than 80% of participants said that they had learned things at this event that would help them in their decision-making role.

NLCAHR also offered a professional development session for members of the media on the use of evidence (Cochrane database and CADTH HTAs) in their reporting. Eight journalists attended this session; one reporter said that this was one of the most informative sessions she had ever attended.

2. Applied Health Research Directory

Designs to expand the Applied Health Research Directory (AHR Directory) to include decision-makers and knowledge users in the health systems were developed over the summer and fall of 2008. NLCAHR consulted with stakeholders in the four Regional Health Authorities and the Department of Health & Community Services on the content of the new module. At the same time, the original AHR Directory continued to register users and provide online access to the public. The launch of Yaffle in February 2009 prompted NLCAHR to initiate a partnership with the Harris Centre to integrate the AHR Directory into the Yaffle platform.

3. Workshops on Producing Effective Research Posters & Presentations

The Centre has produced two comprehensive workshops on developing and delivering effective research posters and research presentations. The workshops are structured around a two-hour presentation and provide guidance in basic theory, organization, design and delivery of posters and presentations. The workshops are primarily intended for applied health researchers at the university, but have also been attended by basic health science researchers and research staff from the health system. The workshops will continue to be given on an annual basis.

Communications Activities

NLCAHR Website

NLCAHR continues to develop its website, updating it on a regular basis with news and information that is relevant not only to applied health researchers but also to students, decision-makers, clinicians, and the general public. New sections have been added to highlight the work of our Research Affinity Groups.

The website includes reports on research projects funded through the Centre. To date, we have posted 23 research reports and abstracts from grant recipients; these reports are now posted on our website with links to published articles where available. Recently-added reports include:

- Dr. Fabien Basset, *Effect of Short-Term Normobaric Hypoxia on Substrate Utilization in Sedentary Overweight Males: A Pilot Study*
- Duyen Nguyen, *Influences on Earliest Memories and Memory Fluency of Young Adults*
- Joan Crane, *Transvaginal Ultrasonography in the Prediction of Preterm Birth After Treatment for Cervical Intraepithelial Neoplasia*

NLCAHR Newsletter and E-bulletin

NLCAHR distributes a quarterly newsletter highlighting research being conducted within Newfoundland and Labrador. We also distribute, on a frequent basis, an electronic bulletin. The e-bulletin draws attention to special events, funding opportunities, and other items of interest to the research community. More than 500 people are now on the mailing list for these publications.



Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program

NLCAHR is working with decision makers in the provincial healthcare system to identify and address issues of pressing interest to Newfoundland and Labrador on which guidance from the research evidence is important. These issues are being addressed through our Contextualized Health Research Synthesis Program (CHRSP).

CHRSP does not conduct original research, but rather analyzes the findings of high-level research (systematic reviews, meta-analyses and health technology assessments) that have already been done on the issue in question. The findings of these studies are synthesized and are subjected to a systematic process of 'contextualization': they are analyzed in terms of their applicability to the conditions and capacities of the unique context of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Our contextual analysis includes assessment of the specific forms that the issue takes in this province as well as the applicability of proposed solutions and methods to locally available physical and human resources, cultural conditions and financial capacities.

CHRSP uses a combination of external experts and local networks to carry out and contextualize the research synthesis and to facilitate the uptake of the results by research users.

The first CHRSP project on provision of dialysis services in rural and remote Newfoundland and Labrador was released in 2007. Two additional reports were released in February/ March 2009 and planning is underway for new CHRSP projects for 2009-2010.

CHRSP: Interventions for Childhood Obesity

This synthesis focused on assessing non-clinical prevention and treatment interventions for childhood obesity. The research team was led by Dr. Sara Kirk, Canada Research Chair in Health Services at Dalhousie University. The team included Dr. Stephen Bornstein and Pablo Navarro from NLCAHR. The research question was: *What are the most effective non-clinical interventions that could be applied to prevention and reduction of childhood overweight and obesity rates in Newfoundland and Labrador?* The project was completed in February 2009. The initial dissemination of the project was in March 2009 and continues through the spring and summer of this year.

CHRSP: PET/CT Technology

In March 2009, the second CHRSP Report on the development of a PET/CT program in NL was released. This project, funded by CADTH, was led by Dr. Sandor Demeter, Head of Nuclear Medicine at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The research question was: *Given the geographic, demographic, fiscal and political context of Newfoundland and Labrador, what is the most appropriate, effective, and efficient way to operate a PET/CT program so that the population derives the maximum benefit at the best possible cost?* The team, under the coordination of Senior Research Officer Janice Butler, included Dr. Stephen Bornstein, Louise Jones (Interim CEO of Eastern Health) and local subject experts Drs. Peter Hollett and Benvon Cramer.

CHRSP: Future Projects

The CHRSP team is currently working on one of the priority topics identified by Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) during the last round of topic identification. The Government of Newfoundland & Labrador has announced the creation of two residential treatment centres: one for youth with complex mental health needs and one for youth with addictions. The new residential treatment centres will provide youth with treatment options that were previously unavailable in this province.

Decision makers in the Department of Health and Community Services, Labrador Grenfell Health and Eastern Health are working with Team Leader Dr. Stanley Kutcher (Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health at Dalhousie University and the IWK Medical Centre, Halifax, NS) and the CHRSP team to identify and evaluate the best available evidence on residential treatment health services for youth with complex mental health needs and/or addictions. The research evidence will be analysed in the context of the capacities and characteristics of the province. The CHRSP team expects to complete this project in Summer 2009.

An additional project on reuse of single-use medical devices is in development. NLCAHR is exploring a partnership with Québec's principal health technology assessment organization, AETMIS (Agence d'Évaluation des Technologies et des Modes d'Intervention en Santé); we are hoping to secure funding for a translation of AETMIS's recent French-language health technology assessment of single-use medical device reprocessing, which would then serve as the basis for our own contextualized analysis of this issue in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Capacity Development Activities

As noted in our strategic plan, one of the Centre's goals is to help build human capacity for undertaking and supporting high-quality applied health research in the province. The Centre's capacity development strategy included activities and programs that address training, networking and other support needs. Capacity development activities of the Centre include:

Research Affinity Groups

The Research Affinity Group program continues to be one of our most successful capacity development activities, bringing together people from the university, the health system and the community who share a common interest in a key area within the domain of applied health research. These groups meet on a regular basis to share information on current research and to discuss possible research collaborations.

Since the initial group on Rural, Northern and Aboriginal Health was formed in 2005, the Centre has formed an additional nine groups which meet regularly to discuss key issues pertaining to the group's specific subject area. These groups include: Aging; Eating Issues, Disordered Eating and Body Image; Women's Health/Gender and Health; Quantitative Analysis in Applied Health Research; Environment and Health; Arts and Health; Substance Abuse; and Vitamin D.

In addition, the Centre will be creating two new groups in 2009 on the topics of patient safety and health literature searches. NLCAHR will also be partnering with the Autism Research Committee to form an affinity group on autism research.

These groups have produced very positive feedback from participants and provide valuable networking opportunities for researchers and like-minded individuals from various fields of expertise and interests. NLCAHR's upcoming 2009 research symposium was proposed by the research affinity group on Women's Health/Gender and Health; it will be held in October 2009.

In addition, three groups of researchers who began collaborating through NLCAHR's Research Affinity Groups have secured funding to further their research. A research team formed from the NLCAHR Research Affinity Group on Aging, and led by Dr. Wendy Young, received a \$10,000 seed grant from the Centre for Urban Health Initiatives for a comparative study on the Health Literacy of Ethnic Seniors in Toronto and St. John's.

A second research team from the Aging Affinity Group, led by Dr. Lan Gien, has

received a grant of \$225,000 over three years for the project: "Working Late: Strategies to Enhance Productive and Healthy Environments for the Older Workforce- the Canadian Context."

Finally, a team formed from NLCAHR's Research Affinity Group on Environment and Health has been successful in securing funding for the project 'Bio-monitoring for Environmental Lead Exposure in Children From Pre-1960s Housing in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.' The project is led by Principal Investigator Jacinthe David.

Applied Health Researcher Support Program

Since 2005, NLCAHR has offered support to new researchers through the Applied Health Researcher Support Program. The Program provided services such as research advising, proposal pre-review, mentoring and grantsmanship training activities. This program was suspended in 2008-2009 due to resource limitations; we hope to be able to offer it again in 2009-2010.

Other Resources and Activities

In addition to the capacity-building activities described above, NLCAHR has continued to use its website to share details on new and recurring funding opportunities, upcoming conferences, and other information of use to our stakeholders.



Financial Overview

For the fiscal year April 1 2008- March 31 2009

Income	
Balance as of March 31, 2008	11,766
Grant from Department of Health & Community Services	500,000
Total Income	511,766
Expenditures April 2008 – March 2009	
Salaries and benefits	289,379
Operations/travel/conferences	61,432
Awards Programs	162,425
Other Funded Research Activities	8,974
Total Expenditures	522,210
Balance as of March 31, 2009	-10,444

For the end of the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 we have a small shortfall of \$10,444. We have tried very hard to follow the Department of Health and Community Services injunction that we balance our budget despite the fact that the \$500,000 we were allocated fell far short of our actual program costs for 2007-8 and well below our budget request for 2008-9. We did so by cutting back on many key programs including fellowships and grants, travel, communications, capacity building and knowledge transfer.

What prevented us from achieving a balanced budget was the additional obligation for salaries that resulted from a mandated 8% across-the-board increase (retroactive to April 1, 2008) for all non-academic staff at Memorial.