



ENHANCING  
INTERDISCIPLINARY  
COLLABORATION IN  
PRIMARY HEALTH  
CARE INITIATIVE

## *Teamwork:* E-news from the Enhancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care (EICP) Initiative

### Letter from the Steering Committee

After months of research, intensive consultations and outreach, the EICP Steering Committee has developed a draft of the ***EICP Principles and Framework*** that can be considered by their national organizations. The document, now posted on our web site, suggests the elements required to truly enhance and encourage collaboration and teamwork among the primary health professions.

The Steering Committee hopes the document will enjoy wide acceptance as it moves through a ratification process with each of the volunteer boards of all of the EICP Steering Committee organizations. Other health stakeholder organizations will also be asked to consider ratifying the document. The Steering Committee believes the *EICP Principles and Framework*, which will be in their final form next spring, will guide the effective evolution of collaboration in primary health care in this country.

The current version of the *EICP Principles and Framework* reflects a growing consensus about how interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork can change and improve health outcomes, system efficiencies and even the well-being of health professionals.

*"Interdisciplinary collaboration refers to the positive interaction of two or more health professionals, who bring their unique skills and knowledge to assist patients/clients and families with their health decisions."*

*—Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT), 2005*

### EICP Steering Committee

- Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
- Canadian Association of Social Workers
- Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists
- Canadian Medical Association
- Canadian Nurses Association
- Canadian Pharmacists Association
- Canadian Physiotherapy Association
- Canadian Psychological Association
- College of Family Physicians of Canada
- Canadian Coalition on Enhancing Preventative Practices of Health Professionals
- Dietitians of Canada

The vision, the words and the direction for these principles and framework all come from what we've heard and learned from the professionals, health organizations and government officials we consulted.

This autumn, we'll be back on the road, taking an even closer look at leading practice sites in interdisciplinary collaboration. Information we gather will provide quality resources for our planned EICP toolkit.



## EICP Principles and Framework

### Evolving Principles and Framework

The full text of the *EICP Principles and Framework* can be found on the EICP web site at [www.eicp-acis.ca/en/principles/default.asp](http://www.eicp-acis.ca/en/principles/default.asp)

Highlights of the *EICP Principles and Framework* are:

#### EICP Principles (September 2005)

- Patient/client engagement
- Population health approach
- Best possible care and services
- Access
- Trust and respect
- Effective communication

#### EICP Framework (September 2005)

- Health human resources
- Funding
- Liability
- Regulation
- Information and communications technology
- Management and leadership
- Planning and evaluation

## Spotlight on Collaboration

### Camrose Kids and Interdisciplinary Collaboration

When you talk to Brian Match, you realize very quickly that working in collaboration with others is pretty much second nature to him. As a social worker, partnering with different professionals—whether in the health field, education arena or other areas—is at the heart of his discipline’s whole philosophy.

That makes Brian the perfect fit for his current job as the manager of a preschool development assessment team (PDAT) in Camrose, a small community in rural Alberta. The team has been up and running for three years now and, in that time, has established itself as a successful model for interdisciplinary collaboration.

“The idea for the team came about when a group of professionals representing various disciplines sat down and looked at how they were delivering health care to the children of Camrose and the surrounding area,” explains Brian. “We had a situation where some kids would sit on a list, waiting to be assessed for one thing, such as speech or motor skills issues, and end up being referred for other services, once their assessment was done. That would mean another waiting list and that’s clearly not the best way to provide health care.”

(To read the rest of this story, visit our web site at [www.eicp-acis.ca](http://www.eicp-acis.ca) and look for the Spotlight on Collaboration).



## What's New?

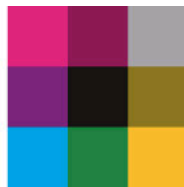
### We've Joined the Canada Health Network

The EICP Initiative is now listed with the Canada Health Network (CHN)! CHN is a national, non-profit, bilingual, web-based, health information service with a goal of helping Canadians find the information they're looking for on how to stay healthy and prevent disease. The CHN network of health information providers includes the Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada and national and provincial/territorial non-profit organizations, as well as universities, hospitals, libraries and community organizations.

We are proud to be a CHN "network contributor" since this busy web site is one of the most popular and frequently used Internet services for Canadians looking for health information. The CHN web site can be found at [www.canadian-health-network.ca](http://www.canadian-health-network.ca)

### National Primary Health Care Public Awareness Campaign Is Launched

National  
Primary Health Care  
Awareness Strategy



Stratégie nationale  
de sensibilisation aux  
soins de santé primaires

Primary health care was front and centre as a national advertising campaign was launched in late September. The National Primary Health Care Awareness Strategy involves a pan-Canadian awareness campaign that focuses on four pillars that underpin primary health care: health care providers working in **teams**; improved sharing of **information** among health care providers and patients; better **access** to health information and the right services; and **healthy living**.

The campaign is the result of a collaboration under Health Canada's Primary Health Care Transition Fund (PHCTF). The federal government contributed \$9.5 million over two years to Saskatchewan Health for the development and implementation of the National Primary Health Care Awareness Strategy. The PHCTF has funded more than 66 initiatives across the country with a view to improving the organization and delivery of primary health care to Canadians.

The primary health care television and newspaper ads can also be viewed at the National Primary Health Care Public Awareness Strategy web site at:

• [www.primaryhealthcare.ca](http://www.primaryhealthcare.ca)

• [www.phc-ssp.ca/home\\_eng.html](http://www.phc-ssp.ca/home_eng.html)

## Talking about Interdisciplinary Collaboration

*"...primary health care is the secret to a qualitatively preferable health care system. It's the secret to reducing illness and enhancing health, in a way that is otherwise not possible."*

—Stephen Lewis, Address to the EICP Leader's Forum 2 (Montreal, June 2005)



## What's Ahead?

The EICP Initiative also has a mandate to start putting tools in the hands of everyone and anyone interested in moving forward with the concept of collaboration or teamwork in primary health care. Work is underway to build an EICP toolkit that supports stakeholders at all levels—individual health professionals, policy-makers, health professional associations, regulators, educators, private insurers and health administrators. The toolkit will have two tracks—one with applications and information for those who need hands-on, practical help on the front line and another for officials and policy-makers who are creating system-wide changes.

Grounded in the *EICP Principles and Framework*, the toolkit will also be informed by five case studies of leading practice sites which will be undertaken this fall. The EICP research team will visit these sites to take an in-depth look at how professionals and institutions across Canada are making interdisciplinary collaboration a reality.

On one track, the toolkit will likely include tips, templates, lists and guidelines useful to health professionals themselves. The idea is to give them support and samples that might, for example, help them plan a meeting, co-ordinate patient/client care, develop a staff work roster, track a patient file, or use new health information technologies. This part of the toolkit will include tools we've seen in action and that have been successful.

On the second track, the toolkit will have information for governments, policy-makers, institutions and regulatory bodies. Guidelines for system design, regulatory change, and liability and funding considerations will be packaged along with an economic analysis.

## Get Involved

All Canadians have a stake in this dialogue about primary health care transformation. You can provide your comments or become more informed about the trends in interdisciplinary collaboration. Check out our web site at [www.eicp-acis.ca](http://www.eicp-acis.ca).

## For More Information

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