



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

### Letter from the Steering Committee

As we come into the home stretch, the Enhancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care (EICP) Initiative has turned its attention to generating the best possible advice for all those keen to build or sustain an interdisciplinary team.

Since November, our research team identified practice sites of interest across the country and then fanned out to meet with those who know what it means to put teamwork and collaboration into practice in primary health care settings. Our research team interviewed the innovators, the leaders and the hard-working front-line staff who are making it happen in large and small centres across Canada. Our questions assessed the organizational and funding models they had in place, their capacity to track satisfaction levels (for patients, clients and providers), physical location issues, communications and administrative practices, and roles and responsibilities.

Between November and January, the team visited the following sites:

- Rosedale Medical Group (Hamilton, Ontario)
- Dr. Charles L. LeGrow Health Centre (Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland)
- Mid-Main Community Health Centre (Vancouver, British Columbia)
- Taber Associate Medical Centre (Taber, Alberta)\*
- NorWest Co-op Community Health Centre, Inc. (Winnipeg, Manitoba)

*\* As Taber was just incorporating to the Chinook Primary Care Network Associate Medical Centre, which represents nine rural communities in southern Alberta, we decided to include a couple of other clinics as part of this network: Pincher Creek Medical Group (Pincher Creek) and Family Medical (Lethbridge)*

Now, they've returned home with their heads and briefcases stuffed with great ideas, practical tips, sample policies and procedures, and a sense of the complex challenges associated with the delivery of primary health care services. Our thanks go out to everyone who made these visits so productive, fun and educational!

### 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



A follow-up report from these visits will be posted shortly on the EICP web site at [www.eicp-acis.ca](http://www.eicp-acis.ca). It, along with other practice information gathered through our research, will provide the backbone for a toolkit the Initiative plans to deliver along with its final report to government, the public and the broader health community. That report will include the final *EICP Principles and Framework* for interdisciplinary collaboration, a set of specific recommendations and the aforementioned toolkit. The toolkit will include practical tools for health professionals, as well as strategic advice for policy-makers and system planners.

We are pleased to report that the *EICP Principles and Framework* now have official support from a number of national, regional and local health organizations. A list of the organizations that support the principles and framework is growing, and is posted on our [web site](#).

Before we launch the *EICP Principles and Framework* in late April, we plan to hold one more information session to provide more background about its development. ([Click here](#) for more information about the EICP Ambassador's event, March 22 in Toronto.)

On April 25, the EICP Initiative will conclude its work with an official event in Ottawa. We trust that the principles, framework and toolkit will make a significant contribution to primary health care reform and renewal in Canada.



Mid-Main Community Health Centre  
Vancouver, BC



Dr. Charles L. LeGrow Health Care Centre  
Port Aux Basque, Newfoundland

## **EICP Principles and Framework**

The text of the *EICP Principles and Framework* is now final and can be found on the EICP web site. These documents, along with a toolkit, will comprise the Initiative's final deliverables to governments, the public and the health care community. Together, they provide a roadmap leading to change and renewal in primary health care in Canada.



## Spotlight on Collaboration

**A New Kind of Learning** - The University of British Columbia's (UBC's) Continuing Studies is offering a new Certificate in Practice Education for Health and Human Services and the reviews from its inaugural class are excellent. Response has been positive largely because this program is a first of its kind in Canada – offering skills and support to a broad range of professionals in the health and human services field whose responsibilities include educating students and/or peers in their working environments.

The idea for the program came about as the result of an evaluation of the Preceptor and Mentor Initiative for Health Sciences in BC – a provincial strategy to facilitate preceptoring and mentoring within the health sciences education continuum. Carol Mitchell, the program coordinator for UBC's new Certificate in Practice Education for Health and Human Services, was intricately involved with the Preceptor and Mentor Initiative. "The Initiative was borne from the recognition that one of the key challenges for Canadian healthcare leaders, managers and educators involves preparing health professionals to work effectively and efficiently in a technologically complex, demanding and changing environment," explains Mitchell. "It's a situation that is not unique to any one discipline within the health and human services field, so part of the solution would logically be to address this from a multi-disciplinary approach. I think this new certificate program at UBC is one way to do it."

(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?

### Health Council of Canada Calls for More Teams

In its annual report, *Health Care Renewal in Canada: Clearing the Road to Quality*, the Health Council of Canada gave interdisciplinary collaboration a boost with its recommendation that the number of teams in primary health care needs to be increased beyond the original goal set out by Health Ministers in their agreements in 2003 and 2004. Those agreements called for 50 per cent of residents to have 24/7 access to health care teams by 2011.

The report, the Council's second annual, also tracks how well the federal government, the provinces and the territories have done in meeting the commitments they made to renew health care under the federally funded 2003 and 2004 health care agreements.

The report sets out three pathways to improving the accountability, co-ordination and sustainability of our health care: quicker access to needed care; better quality services; and improved population health that factors in the need for support inside and outside the health care system.

"And we'll get better health for all Canadians when we pursue public policies that reduce inequalities in health among communities and populations and help people live healthier lives," said Council Chair, Michael Decter.



## Dates to Watch

- **March 22** - EICP Ambassador's event: (Toronto, Ontario). The EICP Initiative will provide a detailed briefing to leaders in the health sector about its research and consultation program, and the development of the *EICP Principles and Framework*.
- **April 10** - Last date to officially endorse the *EICP Principles and Framework*.
- **April 25** - Release of the *EICP Principles and Framework*, along with an Initiative toolkit and video.

## Talking about Interdisciplinary Collaboration

*"We'll get safer care when there is an electronic health record for all Canadians. We'll get more appropriate care when the right health care providers are available to the public in the right numbers at the right time in the right place. We'll get better care when primary health care teams equipped with the right electronic tools offer effective chronic disease management and better health promotion."*

*Health Council Chair, Michael Decter, as he introduced the Council's report entitled Health Care Renewal in Canada: Clearing the Road to Quality)*

## What's Ahead?

### The EICP Toolkit

When the Initiative hands off its final recommendations, and the *EICP Principles and Framework*, to governments and the health community, it will also release a web-based toolkit designed for both policy-makers and health professionals. Based on its visits to practice sites, and reflecting other research and consultations, the Initiative will synthesize some of the good practical tips that will be of interest to anyone establishing or improving an interdisciplinary health team. The toolkit will include elements such as checklists, sample duty rosters, vision and policy statements, floor plans and organization charts.

### 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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