



OTRU Knowledge and Evaluation Support Team Newsletter

Welcome to the first of four 2015-2016 updates from OTRU's Knowledge and Evaluation Support Team! We are excited to be sharing information about our activities and progress this year.

Who We Are

Dr. Pamela Kaufman, Dr. Shawn O'Connor and Dr. Robert Schwartz are the 2015-2016 project leads. The work is supported by a team of qualitative and quantitative research officers who have experience in cessation, prevention and protection. This group can also call on the expertise of the full OTRU team of scientists and research officers.

What We Do

Our team responds to knowledge needs, evaluation and research requests from Ontario Public Health Units (PHUs), Tobacco Control Area Networks (TCANs), and other tobacco Transfer Payment Agencies (TPAs). We provide services to our stakeholders by:

- Supporting TCAN and PHU planning activities, including providing input on prioritizing evaluation and measurement needs
- Responding to questions about general research and evaluation approaches (e.g., giving suggestions for evaluating innovative initiatives, narrowing research questions, providing advice about design, sample, data collection methods)
- Reviewing and providing feedback on research plans and protocols
- Supporting development of data collection tools (e.g., survey questions, interview and focus group discussion guides)
- Assisting in data collection, analysis and interpretation
- Providing feedback on ethics protocols and applications

In addition to supporting individual projects, we also help in identifying and facilitating collaborative opportunities among PHUs, TCANs and other tobacco TPAs to further improve coordination of tobacco control evaluation and knowledge generation efforts occurring throughout the province.

Current Projects

As of April 1, 2015, OTRU has received 50 evaluation and knowledge needs requests from across the province for the coming year (please see Table 1): 14 new requests and 36 requests that have continued



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from the previous fiscal year. Forty-three requests have been from TCANs or PHUs and seven requests have come from other Smoke-Free Ontario partners.

Table 1: Number of Requests from Organizations

TCAN	PHU	# of Requests
Provincial	All TCANs	4
South West (n=6)	TCAN Wide	3
	Middlesex-London	1
	Oxford	1
	Windsor-Essex	1
Central West (n=6)	TCAN wide	3
	Haldimand-Norfolk	1
	Niagara	1
	Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph	1
Central East (n=6)	TCAN wide	4
	Peel	1
	Peterborough	1
Toronto (n=7)	Toronto	7
East (n=5)	TCAN Wide	4
	Ottawa	1
North East (n=7)	TCAN wide	3
	Algoma	4
North West (n=3)	TCAN wide	1
	Thunder Bay	2
TPAs (n=6)	SHAF (Non Smokers' Rights Association)	3
	Ontario Coalition for Smoke-Free Movies	2
	Youth Advocacy Training Institute	1

The team classifies requests by their complexity and the amount of time taken to complete them. Since April 1st, 2015, we have received 19 brief requests, 21 moderate requests and 10 intensive requests that can take a month or more to complete.

Types of Requests

Our team receives requests across all three pillars in tobacco control. Table 2 provides a sample of requests that we have received so far this year within each pillar.



Table 2: Examples of Types of Evaluation Support Requests

Pillar	Key theme/topic	Type of Support
Cessation	Health Care Professional Capacity	Scan of existing cessation services offered by health care professionals, assessment of capacity to provide 5As tobacco cessation services, train the trainer materials
	Pharmacy Pilot Program	Exploring the effectiveness of pharmacists delivering cessation counselling in combination with free NRT
Prevention	Smoke-Free Movies	Provision of literature/research updates about smoking in the movies; analysis of provincial data about public support for tobacco-free movies; program specific evaluation design, instrument development, data collection and analysis
	Tobacco Industry Denormalization	Evaluation design, instrument development, data collection, analysis and reporting, support for social identities project, mass media campaigns and youth engagement
	Young Adult Prevention	Update of a literature review
Protection	Smoke-Free Outdoor Spaces	Evaluation design, review/development of instruments, data analysis and reporting, toolkit development
	Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Dwellings (MUDs)	Evaluation design and review of smoke-free multi-unit dwelling surveys

Highlights: New Requests

Pan Am/Parapan Am Games

This summer, communities in Ontario will be hosting the 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games (2015 Games). Thanks to the coordination of Toronto Public Health, the 2015 Games has adopted a smoke-free policy. The goal of the T02015 Smoke-Free Games Policy is to reduce social exposure of young people to non-traditional tobacco use¹ by sending the message that it is incompatible with sports, physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. It further aims to reduce attendee exposure to second-hand smoke.

The T02015 smoke-free policy bans the use of all non-traditional tobacco products² within the 2015 Games venues including outdoor spaces within the perimeter of the venues. The Policy complies with the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*, as well as Toronto Municipal Code Chapters 608, 709, 636 and 237, but extends existing legislation to establish the T02015 Smoke-Free Games Policy as the strongest sporting event policy to date. The policy will be in effect for 24 hours per day during the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games from July 10-26 and August 7-15, 2015 and will apply to athletes, coaches, officials, media, volunteers, staff and spectators at the Games.

¹ It is important to understand the difference between traditional and nontraditional tobacco use. Traditional tobacco is used in Aboriginal communities as a prayer offering, an offering in sweat lodges, and as medicine (Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Tobacco Control: Traditional Uses of Tobacco <http://www.tbdhu.com/Tobacco/TraditionalUses.htm>. Accessed July 2010).

² Tobacco products: cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, pipe tobacco, chew tobacco, snus, flavored tobacco products and waterpipes



OTRU has been working with Toronto Public Health to design an evaluation of the smoke-free policy. The purpose of the evaluation is to answer:

1. To what extent are people who are attending the Games aware of the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games Smoke-Free policy?
2. To what extent are attendees protected from secondhand smoke?
3. To what extent has the smoke-free policy prevented social exposure of young people to tobacco use?
4. What is the level of support for the smoke-free policy among attendees?
5. To what extent was the smoke-free policy developed and implemented as planned (display of signage, enforcement, promotion)?

During the Games, Toronto Public Health will be carrying out street intercept interviews, conducting structured observations of tobacco-use behaviours and analyzing administrative documents. Results from this evaluation will be available later this year.

Young Adult Prevention: Rapid Literature Update

Young adults have the highest prevalence of smoking in Canada; however, there is a lack of strong evidence to inform policy and practice on smoking prevention for this population. Central East TCAN put in a request for prevention literature concerning young adults (18-25 years) to help inform priorities for their tobacco control program planning. A rapid literature review was conducted to understand what strategies and interventions work best for young adults. The evidence gathered includes literature about young adult smoking prevention and smoking behaviour from scientific and grey literature.

Based on the literature the strategies most highly recommended for preventing young adult smoking are:

- Price/tax increases
- Advertising restrictions
- Smoking restrictions
- Mass marketing campaigns
- Decreased tobacco availability

Overall, comprehensive approaches which include several of these strategies are consistently recommended in the literature. Preliminary results were presented at the “TCAN Planning for 2016” meeting that was held in Toronto in June and will be presented to the Central East TCAN in July 2015.



Niagara Pharmacy Pilot Program

There is robust evidence supporting the efficacy of combining smoking cessation counselling with nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) to increase the likelihood of cessation success. As more health care professionals are trained in smoking cessation, pharmacists have become an important health-care provider in the initiation of tobacco cessation support and practices, particularly as they are easily accessed by the public.³

Starting this summer, Niagara Region Public Health (NRPH), with support from Smokers' Helpline (SHL), is offering a smoking cessation program which combines the strengths of proactive behavioural counselling and distribution of no-cost NRT through community pharmacies. NRPH has recruited 6 community pharmacies located in areas that serve high risk and priority populations in Niagara. Funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will enable NRPH to reimburse the pharmacies for the NRT they distribute.

OTRU is partnering with NRPH to conduct an evaluation of this intervention. The evaluation will explore the feasibility and effectiveness of the program and investigate the following questions:

1. What is the reach of the program?
2. How many quit attempts occurred as a result of the program that would not otherwise have occurred?
3. To what extent has the program changed participants' smoking behaviours?
4. What is the NRT compliance rate associated with the program?
5. Is it feasible and/or desirable to implement this as a routine practice?

A mixed-method evaluation is planned to include: program participant surveys, pharmacy tracking forms and key informant interviews. Results from this evaluation will be available later this year.

Planning to evaluate some of your work plan activities?

- Invite OTRU to your next TCAN or PHU meeting
- Contact OTRU to have your work plan reviewed for evaluation possibilities

³ Hudmon K.S., Prokhorov A.V., Corelli R.L., Tobacco cessation counseling: Pharmacists' opinions and practices. Patient Education and Counseling. 2006. 61:(152-160).



Looking for Help?

If you would like to discuss your support needs further, please complete our [Knowledge and Evaluation Support Request Form \(http://216.34.99.34/votingmodule/s180/f/420080/1143/\)](http://216.34.99.34/votingmodule/s180/f/420080/1143/) online or contact our team members:



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