

at work

Information on workplace research from the **Institute for Work & Health**

This Issue

For Workplaces

Transforming research knowledge

For Policy-Makers

Centre of excellence for occupational health and safety

For Research Transfer

Let the networking begin: CRTN web site launched

Liaising with Ontario's HSAs

At Work's supplement, *Infocus*, will return in October.

To be notified by e-mail when a new issue of *At Work* is published and available on our web site, send your e-mail address to atwork@iwh.on.ca.



Research Excellence
Advancing Employee Health

Founding member new chair of RAC

Dr. Clyde Hertzman, one of the founding members of the Institute's Research Advisory Committee (RAC), is its new Chair. Hertzman, a professor in the Department of Health Care and Epidemiology at the University of British Columbia, took over the role of Chair at the Committee's annual meeting at the end of May. He replaces Dr. Len Syme from the University of California at Berkeley who stepped down after serving as chair for six years.

Syme took on the job of chair during a time of transition at the Institute. Hertzman and Syme agree that since then the Institute has grown and matured a great deal. The work is more interdisciplinary and broader in its focus; the research staff is more experienced and sophisticated in the approaches to research in this challenging field.

"As I leave the Chair and the Committee, I am enormously impressed with the current state of the program," says Syme. "The work being done is some of the very best in the world... It is a true Canadian treasure."

The RAC, whose membership comprises leaders in work-health issues and research from around the world, has seen its role change over time—from one of detailed project-by-project review to one of observation and advice on the scope of the research program. Yet, as Hertzman steps into the role of Chair, the Institute is again in a time of transition. The results of the Institute's



Drs. Clyde Hertzman and Len Syme

Five-year Review and their implications for the future were at the centre of the RAC's discussions.

Effective knowledge transfer and exchange are among the key challenges for the future of the Institute, say Syme and Hertzman. "There is a lot of very good information being produced by the Institute. Our challenge now is to roll out the results and get the information out there. Part of that is a connectedness and relevance to stakeholders, as well as knowing the policy implications of our research and allowing people to have access to the information when it's timely."

"My relationship with the Institute has been one of the most rewarding of my career. It has been an honour and a privilege to be associated with this important and special activity," says Syme. In recognition of his contribution to the Institute's growth and development, the Institute is establishing the S. Leonard Syme Training Fellowship in Work & Health, a research training fellowship program. 🏔️

The Institute for Work & Health is an independent, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to research and promote new ways to prevent workplace disability, improve treatment, and optimize recovery and safe return to work.

CHAIR

Lorna Marsden
President and Vice Chancellor
York University

VICE-CHAIRS

Marilyn Knox
President, Nutrition
Nestlé Canada, Inc.

Mark Rochon
President & CEO
Toronto Rehabilitation Institute

CHAIR EMERITUS

Fraser Mustard
Head
The Founders' Network of The Canadian Institute for Advanced Research

INTERIM PRESIDENT

Cameron Mustard
Institute for Work & Health

DIRECTORS

Lesley Bell
Chief Executive Officer
Ontario Nurses' Association

Clyde Hertzman
Professor, Department of Health Care and Epidemiology
University of British Columbia

Linda Jolley
Vice-President, Policy & Research
Workplace Safety & Insurance Board

Andrew King
Department Leader, Health & Safety
United Steelworkers of America

Pearl MacKay-Blake
Executive Vice President
United Food & Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) Local 1000A

Rosemary McCarney
Executive Director
Street Kids International

John O'Grady
Labour Market Consultant, Toronto

Dorothy Pringle
Member, Board of Directors
Workplace Safety & Insurance Board

Ed Welch
Director
Workers' Compensation Center
Michigan State University

Glen Wright
Chair
Workplace Safety & Insurance Board

The Institute for Work & Health operates with the support of the Ontario Workplace Safety & Insurance Board.



Research Transfer

LET THE NETWORKING BEGIN: CRTN WEB SITE LAUNCHED

The Canadian Research Transfer Network (CRTN) launched its virtual network in mid-July with the introduction of its members' web site July 15. The Network was organized by a national group of research and knowledge transfer practitioners in response to a growing need to share information and best practices about research transfer and knowledge exchange. The Network is a virtual organization that uses the web site as both an on-line resource and meeting place for members. Membership in the network is open to any individual or organization involved or interested in research/knowledge transfer.

The Network is governed by a 10-member board of directors chaired by Irving Gold from the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF). The Secretariat for the Network is based at the CHSRF, which provided the development funding for the web site. The Board's Executive also includes Sarah Hayward of the Alberta Heritage

www.research-transfer.org



Foundation for Medical Research, Maureen Bingham from Health Services Utilization and Research Commission in Saskatchewan, and Kathy Knowles Chapeskie from the Institute for Work & Health in Toronto.

The web site address is www.research-transfer.org. More information about the Network, membership and events, as well as an on-line membership form are available on the site. Or contact Irving Gold at membership@research-transfer.org.

LIAISING WITH ONTARIO'S HSAs

The Institute's Health and Safety Association (HSA) advisory group's name has changed to the HSA Liaison Committee. Introduced in the February issue of *At Work*, the new name better reflects the part of the committee's mandate to foster information exchange.

Consistent with the concept of sharing ideas and knowledge about transferring research to workplace stakeholders, a workshop for HSA consultants is being planned for this fall. The workshop will focus on workplace organizational factors, including risk factors. Institute researchers will share their findings on studies in this field with the participants and provide some potential

strategies for introducing the concepts at the firm level. HSA participants will bring their perspectives on workplace needs and acceptance of the research findings. It will be a shared initiative, with an emphasis on a collaborative approach to research/knowledge transfer.

An important function of the committee is the opportunity for the HSAs, on behalf of the workplaces, to generate questions for review/research that can be appropriately directed for consideration within the research agenda. Additionally, it will be critical to build the research-transfer process into the regular activity cycle of the HSA network.



Policy-Makers

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

The three main participants in the provincial health and safety system in Ontario (Workplace Safety and Insurance Board [WSIB], Ontario Ministry of Labour and the Health and Safety Associations) have been working on an initiative called the Centre of Excellence for Occupational Health and Safety. The project's main objectives are:

- Collaborating for more efficient use of existing resources;
- Sharing services where feasible and cost-effective;
- Providing a focal point for the practical application of health and safety learning and research;
- Facilitating knowledge transfer among partners to enable better service to their sectors;
- Researching and developing joint solutions to common problems;

- Fostering collaboration in creating new programs, products, and services; and
- Promoting Ontario's achievements in workplace health and safety provincially, nationally, and globally.

A feasibility study was undertaken during the first quarter of 2002, with working groups identifying and analyzing opportunities for shared services as part of the Centre of Excellence proposal. The topics covered were grouped as:

- Marketing, communications, media relations, and event management;
- Strategic planning, business development, and strategic performance measurement;
- Product and service research and development; learning and distribution strategies; best practices;

- Information services and technology, telecommunications, and training administration; and

- Purchasing, materials management, human resources, legal and financial services.

The Institute was represented at the third topic group and is also providing input on the steering committee.

A feasibility study was submitted to the steering committee in March. The next step is to use the report outline to design and develop the detailed business measures that will ensure effective implementation.

Detailed proposals on these issues should be completed by the fourth quarter of this year. 🏔️



Workplace

TRANSFORMING RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE

Although taking research knowledge directly to the workplace is complex, if the knowledge-transfer intervention has an adequate time commitment and involves enough workplace decision-makers, change can take place. With the right KT intervention, decision-makers will “transform” the research knowledge to their own specific workplace problems and will use the research as a way to solve these problems.

Institute Research Transfer Associate Dee Kramer found this in her PhD dissertation research. The study was called: *From knowledge transfer to knowledge transformation: A manufacturing workplace intervention study*. Institute Senior Scientist Dr. Donald Cole was on her thesis committee providing her with guidance based on his knowledge and experience in workplace intervention research.

Kramer's qualitative research into the knowledge-transfer process was conducted during eight months at a large Ontario auto-manufacturing plant. “The field of knowledge transfer is more than any one of translating, training, communication, or change management. It is probably a combination of all of these,” says Kramer. “There cannot be a cookie-cutter approach. Each audience is unique, with decisions being made differently in different contexts. Yet with enough time and involvement to understand the organizational culture, there is an increased opportunity for knowledge utilization.”

Some lessons emerged from the study that can be generalized to the practice of knowledge transfer and knowledge utilization. Knowledge brokers need to:

- Have a sustained, intensive, interactive engagement with the work-

place parties through many different forms of communication;

- Find areas of convergence between the research and what the workplace is already doing;

- Offer decision-makers the opportunity to engage in group dialogue so that they can work through the implications of the research for their own workplace;

- Regard each knowledge-transfer intervention as establishing the groundwork for future interventions;

- Evaluate the knowledge-transfer intervention using a number of perspectives such as instrumental outcomes (structural and procedural changes), conceptual outcomes (changes in thinking about problems), as well as social processing outcomes (receptivity, perceptions of relevance, and political barriers). 🏔️



Institute president resigns

The Institute regrets to announce that Dr. Stephen Bornstein has decided to leave the Institute. Bornstein, who joined the Institute as its new president in January, resigned in June to return to his former position in Newfoundland for personal and family reasons.

"While we accepted Stephen's decision to leave, we are very sorry to see him go," said Dr. Lorna Marsden, Chair of the Board of Directors. "During his short stay, Stephen made great strides in charting an exciting course for the Institute's future. We thank him for his contributions and wish him well."

Dr. Cameron Mustard, the Institute's Scientific Director, will be acting as Interim President. The Board is currently considering how it will proceed with a search for a replacement.

Five-year review panel delivers report

The international panel reviewing the Institute's programs, operations and accomplishments of the past five years has delivered its final report to the Board of Directors. The panel, chaired by Dr. Robert Elgie, spent three days meeting with Institute staff, researchers and stakeholders at the end of March.

"Overall the report has provided very positive feedback about our progress and successes to date," says Interim President Cameron Mustard. "The panel has suggested some new directions which we are discussing with the Board; we will be taking these recommendations into consideration as we move forward with our strategic planning process for the next five years."

Web site update

Do you have some ideas on what would make our web site more useful to you?

The next time you visit our web site (www.iwh.on.ca), you may notice a pop-up window survey. The survey, part of the Institute's communications products evaluation process, will help us to evaluate your needs for receiving the Institute's information via the web site. With your feedback and ideas, we plan to redevelop the site over the coming months.

Questions or comments may be directed to IWH Communications Associate Katherine Russo by e-mail at krusso@iwh.on.ca or by phone at (416) 927-2027 x2148.



*Published by Institute for Work & Health
481 University Ave., Suite 800, Toronto, ON Canada M5G 2E9
E-mail: atwork@iwh.on.ca Web site: www.iwh.on.ca*

Manager, Communications: Kathy Knowles Chapeskie

Editor: Katherine Russo

Layout & Design: Carol Holland

*Contributors: Kathy Knowles Chapeskie, Dee Kramer,
Steve Oakley, Rhoda Reardon, Katherine Russo*

Issue #29 August 2002 ISSN # 1261-5148

© Copyright 2002

