AN EVALUATION of the Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative

Findings & Future Plans

"When people ask me [...] if they're just getting into interprofessional education, so they haven't really had a lot of experience. If they ask me questions I always send them there [to the CIHC website] because that's the place that's got the information that they're going to need."

Background and Purpose

The Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative (CIHC) began in 2006 as a Health Canada funded initiative aimed at building a national collaborative of partners to advance the field and implementation of interprofessional education (IPE) and collaborative practice (CP). Due to its success in its first two years of operation, Health Canada provided an additional year of funding. An annual evaluation has been undertaken to assess the activities, outputs and impacts of the CIHC. This poster provides information based on the findings from the third phase of the evaluation (2008–09) as well as a comparison of data over the past 3 years.

Methods

SAMPLE: All CIHC members as of January 31, 2009 (n=890)

DATA COLLECTION: CIHC members were invited to complete an electronic survey to elicit their perspectives about the CIHC. 242 CIHC members completed the electronic survey (27% response rate) and 20 members representing different provinces, organizations, professions and CIHC roles participated in follow-up interviews.

DATA ANALYSIS: Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the survey data and to describe quantitatively key aspects of the CIHC's work. A thematic approach was employed to analyze the qualitative data. Survey and interview data were triangulated.

Findings

1. The CIHC sub-committees are undertaking a range of high profile activities (e.g. knowledge exchange activities, creation of the CIHC Library, developing an inventory of interprofessional tools and resources, networking activities to support multi-site research, the development of a national competency framework).
2. The Collaborative website continues to be enhanced and many individuals recognize it as a valuable resource.
3. The CIHC Library development is well underway; respondents viewed it as a valuable resource although there were some concerns about sharing and ownership of materials.
4. The Collaborative has sponsored or organized conferences and meetings with a range of participants which were highly valued by respondents.
5. The CIHC is succeeding in supporting the development of partnerships locally, provincially and nationally.
6. The Collaborative is having an impact at various levels, although it was perceived that much of the activity had been occurring within education and research contexts.

"I think it's [the CIHC] very much raised the bar and I would say that talking to people at the [recent IPE] conference that we just had, several people said to me that they really felt that we've come a long way in raising the level of scholarship."

"I think as we build partnerships based on the knowledge exchange process, we will be able to more influence that policy making part [...] I would say that CIHC has had in some areas an influence in raising the profile of IPE to make it more of a national issue within health care."

Three Year Comparison

Evaluation data now exists for three years, which enables the following reflection on the CIHC progression as an organization since its inception:

- » CIHC steering committee and sub-committees have led and guided IP activities, although continued need for improving representation of groups connected with IPE and CP.
- » Membership has consistently grown over the years. Now nearly 1000 members receive newsletters and updates, and information about the CIHC, and thus are more knowledgeable about IPE and CP.
- » The e-library has been developed in response to continued feedback about the need for a central resource, and while it is in its early stages of development and implementation, it has the potential be of immense value for members.
- » The CIHC has worked with people from across Canada to promote a national approach to IPE and CP. It has invested a range of resources into its communication and knowledge exchange strategies. Through these and other activities it is making a significant impact on the IP field across the country.

Future plans to Evaluate CIHC

An important strand of CIHC's future work is focused on its knowledge production and exchange activities. CIHC is developing a network of health and education stakeholders and partners. The next phase of the evaluation aims to assess these knowledge networks.

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