

### **The Canadian Best Practices System: One year after the portal launch**

In the year since the launch of the Canadian Best Practices Portal for Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Prevention (<http://cbpp-pcpe.phac-aspc.gc.ca>) at the November 2006 CDPAC Conference, there have been literally thousands of visitors to the site!

The Portal is the first product of the Canadian Best Practices System (CBPS) which is funded and managed by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The purpose of the CBPS is to enhance the quality of policy and program decision-making by enabling access to the best available evidence on chronic disease prevention and health promotion. The Portal is a virtual front door to an array of online best practices in health promotion and chronic disease prevention. The CBPS targets decision-makers who influence chronic disease prevention and health promotion practice and policy through its development, implementation and evaluation.

One year since the launch, there have been a number of developments in an attempt to increase the use of best available evidence in health promotion and chronic disease prevention decision-making. Significant energy has been focused on the following five areas:

- Developing and building collaborative partnerships with national and international stakeholders
- Developing knowledge exchange activities to enhance the dissemination and uptake of best practices by decision-makers in Canada
- Developing a classification system that will serve as a guide for incorporating “promising practices” into the Portal
- Researching additional interventions and systematic reviews to be added to the Portal content (both in existing and new topics relating to chronic disease prevention and health promotion)
- Planning and designing the Phase 2 version of the Portal (unveiling scheduled for November 2008)

#### **Partnership Building**

The CBPS is nothing without provincial/territorial, federal and international partnerships from both governmental and non-governmental agencies. Throughout the past year there have been a number of dedicated efforts to engage stakeholders in an inclusive and comprehensive manner for the on-going development, implementation and evaluation of the CBPS. The CBPS is preparing a Partnership Development Strategy to guide specific activities. One partnership activity specifically related to the Portal is a Champion Kit which contains Portal promotional materials. Individuals interested in helping to spread the news about the Portal are encouraged to contact Nina Jetha ([nina\\_i\\_jetha@phac-aspc.gc.ca](mailto:nina_i_jetha@phac-aspc.gc.ca)) for a copy of the Champion Kit. Developing and building collaborative partnerships will continue to be an important focus of the CBPS.

#### **Focusing on Knowledge Exchange**

A core function of the CBPS is knowledge exchange. The overall goal of the CBPS knowledge exchange function is increased opportunity and capacity for knowledge exchange to support use of evidence/best practices in health promotion and chronic disease prevention policy and program decision-making. To guide this function, the CBPS invited knowledge exchange experts from across Canada to form the Knowledge Exchange Working Group. The group has developed a knowledge exchange framework to guide the CBPS efforts in evidence-informed practice and practice-based evidence. Efforts are concentrated in three components: needs/assets analysis, strategic collaboration initiatives, and capacity building.

### **A Classification System to Incorporate “Promising Practices”**

Since the spring of 2007, CBPS partners have been working to determine how to incorporate “promising practices” into the Portal collection of interventions. “Promising practices” are interventions which have positive impact evaluation results but do not meet the strength of evidence criteria. National and international experts in health promotion and chronic disease prevention worked with PHAC on the development of an intervention classification system which will incorporate practices at the best, promising and insufficient evidence levels. Consultation about the classification system has been achieved through:

- An environmental scan of promising practices work in Canada and internationally prepared by Dr. Roy Cameron and Heather McGrath<sup>1</sup> of the Centre for Behavioural Research and Program Evaluation (CBRPE);
- Discussions during a Promising Practices Workshop<sup>2</sup> in early May with forty national and international leaders;
- Key informant interviews with methodology leaders during the summer of 2007 to help refine the proposed classification system; and
- Discussion and refinement by CBPS Advisory Committee members.

The CBPS intervention classification system is in the final approval stages and will be released in the next several months. This will set the stage for the addition of many more annotated interventions into the collection.

### **Increasing the Portal Collection: Additional Interventions and Systematic Reviews**

The Portal is designed to offer interventions, systematic reviews, and resources that may contribute to evidence-informed decision making in practice and policy. As the CBPS expands to provide additional thematic topics, users can confidently access more material that has undergone the CBPS review process. In addition to increasing the content in existing thematic areas, efforts are focused on increasing content in the following:

- Obesity prevention
- Mental health promotion
- Determinants of health
- Interventions with multiple approaches (e.g., interventions focused on education, environmental support and policy development).

In partnership with leaders in these topic areas and dedicated searches for content, Portal users will soon see links to more interventions and systematic reviews when they visit the Portal.

### **Plans for a Phase 2 Portal Redesign**

Since the Portal launch one year ago, the CBPS has used feedback from Portal users to develop a simplified and more interactive version of the Portal. New technological features to significantly increase the user experience of the Portal are being developed and tested to go live for the fall of 2008 when Phase 2 of the CBPS Portal is revealed.

### **Make your contribution!**

The CPBS is preparing to conduct a survey with Portal users in the winter of 2008. If you have visited the Canadian Best Practices Portal for Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Prevention and you are interested in participating in the online user survey submit your email address at the “Evaluate the Portal” page ([http://cbpp-pcpe.phac-aspc.gc.ca/rate/index\\_e.cfm](http://cbpp-pcpe.phac-aspc.gc.ca/rate/index_e.cfm)).

If you want to know more about the CBPS or you are interested in receiving customized training about using the evidence on the Portal in your community, please contact: Nina Jetha, Lead, Best Practices, Public Health Agency of Canada at (613) 952-7608 or [nina\\_i\\_jetha@phac-aspc.gc.ca](mailto:nina_i_jetha@phac-aspc.gc.ca).

<sup>1</sup> McGrath, H. & Cameron, R. (2007). *Promising Practices in Promising Practices: An Environmental Scan of Promising Practices Work in Canada and Internationally*. Ottawa, ON: Public Health Agency of Canada.

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, Public Health Agency of Canada. (2007). *Promising Practices Workshop Proceedings*. Ottawa, ON: Public Health Agency of Canada.