

“Transforming our Health System: The Power of Evidence-Informed Decision-Making”

Conversations with....

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

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“Transforming our Health System: The Power of Evidence-Informed Decision-Making”



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Why was this resource developed?

The video-cast and accompanying resources were developed to stimulate conversation, among interested people within or across health care organizations, around making better use of evidence in policy and decision-making as a means to improve our health system.

The video-casts were developed from two presentations by Sister Elizabeth Davis during a visit to Calgary in May 2007 as part of the 12th Annual Health Research Methods course:

I. KEYNOTE PRESENTATION – Health Research Methods 2007, May 3rd, 2007, Calgary, Alberta

Is Research Evidence? Is Evidence Research?

Health care professionals are being challenged to use research as they design policies and make decisions for and within the health system. This presentation explores what evidence-informed decision-making means, how it is best approached and how its effectiveness can be measured.

Sr. Elizabeth Davis

*II. Opening Comments - **A Conversation with Sister Elizabeth Davis** hosted by the Knowledge into Action (K2A) Department, Calgary Health Region and the Health Research Transfer Network of Alberta (RTNA) on May 3, 2007*

As a former Executive Director of St. Clare’s Mercy Hospital and CEO of the Health Care Corporation of St. John’s, Sr. Elizabeth shares her insight about the realities of making decisions and designing policies in a health care system where clear evidence is often lacking or difficult to access. This conversation provides a unique perspective about the importance of evidence-informed decision making, and the social and political demands placed on decision makers.

Sr. Elizabeth Davis

How can people use this resource?

This discussion guide, as a supplement to the viewing of the video-cast, is intended to: provide you with a foundation for starting a conversation among your colleagues and within your organization about what evidence-informed decision making means to you; and, to help you generate ideas about how you can improve access to meaningful and timely information to assist with local planning and policy development. We encourage you to use this resource with your staff and health care teams - perhaps to facilitate a lunch hour seminar or as part of a staff meeting. Additional resources are provided throughout this document, along with contact information.

What could people expect to get out of viewing the video-casts and participating in a conversation?

- A better understanding of how evidence-informed policy and decision-making can be a means to system transformation (i.e., transformation to a system that continually delivers the highest quality, patient and family centered care)
- Renewed energy and enthusiasm for evidence-informed policy and decision-making
- Some ideas about how to engage others in these processes
- An understanding of the values that need to guide this work, as well as the interplay between values and evidence in policy and decision-making processes

What are some questions for stimulating conversation?

These questions may be helpful to stimulate discussion around why evidence-informed decision-making is the path we should take to guide our health system transformation.

WHO ARE OUR STAKEHOLDERS?

Resources:

- **Partnership Self-Assessment Tool.** Centre for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health. Available at: <http://www.cacsh.org/psat.html#brief>
- ***A Learning Guide to Public Involvement in Canada.*** By Mary Pat MacKinnon, Sonia Pitre, Judy Watling, Canadian Policy Research Networks. Available at <http://www.cprn.org/doc.cfm?doc=1622&l=en>

- ***What are the major groups that have a stake in our health system, and how do they view evidence?***
- ***How can we begin to involve the public in this dialogue?***

WHAT IS THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE IN OUR ORGANIZATION?

Resources:

- **Is Research Working for You? CHSRF Self-Assessment Tool** to help organizations generate internal discussion about how well they use research, discover strengths, identify gaps, and make plans for identifying priority areas in the future. Available at: http://www.chsrf.ca/other_documents/working_e.php
- **A Tool for Identifying and Sharing Internal Best Practices.** D'Adamo M and Kols A (2005). *A Tool for Sharing Internal Best Practices.* INFO Project 2005. United States Agency for International Development (USAID).
<https://my.calgaryhealthregion.ca/http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/research/k2a.htm>
- **Glossary of Terms related to Knowledge Use and Evidence-Informed Decision Making**
<https://my.calgaryhealthregion.ca/http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/research/k2a.htm>

- **What current structures and resources are available to support evidence-informed decision-making in our organization?**
- **How do we currently access information to support our decision making processes?**
- **What are some positive examples of evidence-informed decision-making in our organization(s)?**
- **How can we learn from each other and move forward to make evidence more accessible and relevant - in a way that is timely and in-tune with our work environment?**
- **Is there potential to link with other organizations to build capacity for accessing and using evidence to improve our planning and decision making?**

WHAT COUNTS AS EVIDENCE?

Resources:

- **What Counts? Interpreting evidence-based decision making for management and policy.** Report of the 6th CHSRF Annual Invitational Workshop. Vancouver, BC. March 2004.
http://www.chsrf.ca/knowledge_transfer/pdf/2004_workshop_report_e.pdf
- **What Counts as Evidence in Evidence-Based Decision Making?** Rycroft-Malone J, Seers K, Titchen A, Harvey G, Kitsen A & McCormack B (2004) What counts as evidence in evidenced-based practice? *Nursing and Healthcare Management and Policy* 47(1), 81-90.

- **How is evidence currently being defined? What kinds of evidence are you familiar with?**
- **What are some characteristics of evidence that make it useful to inform the kinds of decisions you need to make?**
- **Is science value-free?**
- **Why do we need to interpret evidence?**
- **If you believe that there are many different kinds of evidence that we can use to help make better decisions, how can we begin to bring them together?**

HOW CAN EVIDENCE HELP US IN OUR PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING?

Resources:

- **Leveraging Knowledge: Tools and Strategies for Action.** Report of the 7th CHSRF Annual Invitational Workshop. Montreal, Quebec. March 2005.
http://chsr.ca/knowledge_transfer/pdf/2005_workshop_report_e.pdf
- **Tools to Help Organizations Create, Share and Use Research.** Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF)
http://www.chsr.ca/knowledge_transfer/tools_e.php
- **Analysis for Policy: Evidence-Based Policy in Practice.** Government Social Research Unit, UK.
<https://my.calgaryhealthregion.ca/http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/research/k2a.htm>
- **Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature.** Report from the National Implementation Research Network. Department of Child & Families, University of South Florida, USA.
<http://nirn.fmhi.usf.edu/resources/detail.cfm?resourceID=31>

- **How can we use evidence to inform how we address priorities in our organization?**
- **How can we use evidence to change the health care system to be more responsive to the needs of people?**
- **How can we use evidence to help us think outside the box, and to look at the system through lenses we aren't used to looking through?**
- **Where does evidence fit in the decision making process, in relation to other influences such as political will, organizational culture, social pressures and financial constraints?**

IDEAS FOR MOVING FORWARD?

- **Identify 3 or more positions that this conversation has led you to, with an aim of finding some common ground upon which you can move forward.**

Related Articles

- Greenhalgh T, Robert G, Bate P, MacFarlane F & Kyriakidou O (2005). **Diffusion of innovations in health service organizations: a systematic review of the literature.** Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing – BMJ Books.
- Birdsell J & Omelchuk (2006). **Using Health Research in Western Canada: A scan and assessment of capacity.** Edmonton, AB: Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. Available at: <http://www.ahfmr.ab.ca/publications/?dept=9>
- Scott CM & Gall VN (2006). **Knowledge use in the Calgary Health Region: a scan of initiatives that support use of evidence in practice.** Calgary, AB: Calgary Health Research, Calgary Health Region. Available from <http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/research/publications.htm>
- Birdsell J, Zerbe W, O'Connell P, Thornley R & Hayward, S (2006). **Building Capacity for Evidence Based Management in Health Regions.** In Ann Casebeer, Alex Harrison and Annabelle Mark (Eds.) *Innovations in Health Care: A Reality Check*, pp.142-156. Palgrave Macmillan, UK.

Additional Resources and Links

- Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF)
http://chsr.ca/home_e.php
- Health Research Transfer Network of Alberta (RTNA)
 - o Basics of Research Transfer: On-line learning modules
<http://www.ahfmr.ab.ca/rtna/wiki.php>
- Knowledge Into Action (K2A) Website
 - o *Clinical Decision Support Tools & Resources*
<https://my.calgaryhealthregion.ca/http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/research/k2a.htm>
- SEARCH Canada Website
 - o Bringing research closer to practice in health care by developing people in health service and research organizations, building relationships across academic and practice sectors, and providing local research information and access
<http://www.searchca.net/users/folder.asp>
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
 - o CIHR (2006). (1) Moving population and public health knowledge into action: a casebook of knowledge translation stories. (2) Evidence in action, acting on evidence: a casebook of health services and policy research knowledge translation stories. Ottawa, ON: CIHR – IHSPR. Available at: <http://www.irsc.gc.ca/e/30744.html>
- Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF)
 - o SHRF (2007). Health Research in Action: A Framework for Building Capacity to Share and Use Health Research.
<http://www.shrf.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.asp?DocID=6558,6285,6233,2,Documents&MediaID=5071&Filename=Health+Research+in+Action.pdf>

Sponsors & Contributors

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Contact information

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Download document and video-casts at:

***** [\[RTNA Web Link\]](#)*****