

## **Centre for Studies in Primary Care (CSPC) Advisory Review Committee Report**

**Centre for Studies in Primary Care (CSPC) Advisory Review committee membership:** Drs. Marcia Finlayson, John Fisher (Chair), Sudeep Gill, Eva Grunfeld and Geoffrey Hodgetts. Ms. Gladys Smith (Administrative Assistant, Office of the Vice-Dean Research).

**Face-to-face Review (February 17, 2015):** Drs. Gill and Fisher participated in the face-to-face meetings, with Dr. Grunfeld participating by teleconference. Due to unforeseen circumstances Drs. Finlayson and Hodgetts were unable to attend.

In conducting its assessment of the CSPC, the committee reviewed the material submitted as per the Senate document on the review of Research Centres and Institutes. The committee also met with the following individuals or groups:

1. Dean Richard Reznick and Vice-Dean (Research) Roger Deeley
2. Dr. Birtwhistle, Director of the CSPC (Department of Family Medicine, DFM)
3. CSPC Advisory Council – Drs. Edge (Nursing), Groome (Public Health Sciences), Tranmer (Nursing), Kotecha (DFM & Assistant Director CSPC) Shultz (DFM Post grad Director) and Sloan (DFM)
4. Dr. Levitt, College of Family Physicians of Canada
5. Dr. Medves, Director School of Nursing
6. Dr. Green, (Associate Director CSPC, Director of Centre for Health Services & Policy Research – CHSPR, DFM)

**The committee unanimously recommends that the CSPC be authorized for a further period of five years.** This is based on the documents and records submitted by the CSPC and the feedback received during the face-to-face meetings.

### **Recurrent themes:**

- CSPC provides national and international leadership in research
- Traditional research deliverables are strong and cohesive
- Leadership has been strong, however, succession planning is critical – a Chair in DFM provides an excellent opportunity to recruit an outstanding candidate as leader
- Dr. Brown, Head of the Department of Family Medicine (DFM), the Department, and the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) provide strong support for the Centre.
- Ongoing funding discussions for CPCSSN with a balanced view of corporate funding
- CSPC is a mature centre that is ready to consider fertile links to other groups or areas of expansion
- CSPC is a mature centre, which is capable of expanding its research vision
- Knowledge translation represents an opportunity to strengthen the Centre's research impact on practice
- Governance framework between CSPC and CPCSSN is important

## OVERVIEW OF THE CENTRE:

### **1. Evolution of the Centre, Research Environment and Training:**

The current review of the CSPC represents the third review cycle for the Centre:

- The Centre has maintained or enhanced its impact, funding and presence in research.
- CSPC provides advanced post graduate research opportunities for trainees in the Family Medicine program.
- CSPC serves as the research arm of the DFM.

In terms of research impact and the environment, the progress and success of the Centre has been excellent.

- The latest annual report of the Centre to the VPR (2014/15) lists annual revenues of \$1.4M, which represents a 40% increase over those recorded in 2008/09 and is accompanied by a projected \$1.84M for 2014/15.
- The centre reported approximately 70 peer review papers in the past 2 years (2012-2014).
- CSPC receives active support from the members and trainees of the Department of Family Medicine and from the Head of Department, Dr. Brown.
- The Head of Department, Dr. Brown and the Department of Family Medicine invests financial support in the centre.
- CSPC is the coordinating/lead centre for the Canadian Primary Care Sentinel Surveillance Network (CPCSSN).
- Dr. Birtwhistle, the CSPC Director, is also the Director of CPCSSN.
- CPCSSN has brought significant additional research presence and budget that impacts the CSPC.
  - CPCSSN is recognized for its leadership in providing a national network consisting of regional networks from 8 provinces and 1 territory.
  - CSPC success has been enhanced by the excellent performance of CPCSSN over the past 5 years.

### **2. Leadership of CSPC:**

Dr. Rick Birtwhistle (RB) has provided excellent leadership to the Centre since its inception and continues to do so.

- RB has been worked with the FHS leadership in the transition of CPCSSN to Queen's and continues to be a sought after clinician scientist.
- A recurring theme in the meetings with the review committee was the challenge of succession planning and the need for a transition plan to recruit a new Director for the CSPC.
- The committee was informed of plans for an Endowed Chair in DFM, which has yet to be designated for a specific use, as well as a second faculty position, yet to be filled.
- The Chair appears to represent a logical source of investment in CSPC for the Department and Faculty, and it is an opportunity to maintain the current

- excellence in research pursued by the Centre, as well as adopting new initiatives.
- The committee discussed the Chair as an innovative and rare opportunity within the Family Medicine community, which has the potential to attract excellent applicants.
- A Chair coupled with the Centre provides distinct advantages with respect to resources for research and the committee noted recent examples within the Family Medicine community where such a strategy attracted leaders of international reputation and accomplishment.

### **3. CSPC Change Management:**

An extension of Dr. Birtwhistle's term as Director of CSPC, at least until 2016, is important for the stability of the Centre.

- Dr. Birtwhistle's leadership has been a significant contributor to the success of both CSPC and CPCSSN (see leadership below).
- Both the CSPC and CPCSSN are on the cusp of a significant period of change.
  - Dr. Birtwhistle and others pointed to the need for continued succession planning for CSPC as his term comes to completion. This may also impact CPCSSN leadership.

CPCSSN will transfer assets and continued leadership to Queen's University from the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) and following the completion of previous base funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

- Queen's will be the signatory for research initiatives and contracts of CPCSSN for the immediate future.
- The transfer is to occur by spring 2015 and will continue to embrace the national network and strong affiliation with the CFPC.

A third change is the shifting landscape for Electronic Medical Record (EMR) data coupled with the current state of national health research funding.

- With respect to the former, CSPC and CPCSSN can provide leadership via local expertise, as well as the CPCSSN network of networks as government or the CMA develop goals for EMRs.
- CSPC may also wish to consider creative arms-length relationships that allow novel assessment of pharmaceutical outcomes
- The emergence of the Foundation and Project Schemes by CIIHR should provide opportunities for CSPC Investigators.

***Thus, the Centre is entering a dynamic period that will benefit from active stewardship and support from the Department of Family Medicine and the Faculty of Health Sciences.***

### **4. Role in the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) and Department of Family Medicine (DFM):**

Feedback from FHS leadership:

- Dean Reznick and Vice-Dean Deeley noted the CSPC has played a key role in the

DFM in meeting the SEAMO-related research deliverables, which are part of the alternative practice plan at Queen's.

- Dean Reznick also noted the excellent performance of the Centre and its position as a leader in advancing primary care research in Canada.
- The Faculty of Health Sciences provides the support costs for space and overhead of the Centre.

DFM impact and support:

- The Head of Department, Dr. Brown and DFM fully embrace the CSPC. The DFM provides significant support to the CSPC by way of base funding.
- The CSPC delivers critical research opportunities within the DFM for Family Medicine residents to meet their College of Family Physicians' research experience requirements, although this is not the only mechanism to do so within the Department.
- The CSPC regional network (as well as CPCSSN) is a significant component for the provision of research opportunities that embrace a health services or health policy focus.
- The CSPC is sufficiently mature to encourage additional research opportunities.
  - CSPC recently embraced, with the DFM, a research theme to examine education within the primary care post graduate program, which aligns with other emerging research initiatives on medical education at Queen's.
  - The Director and members of the CSPC recently recognized research opportunities with respect to people with developmental disabilities.
  - It was suggested that it may be advantageous for CSPC to embrace "clinical research" within Family Medicine to complement the current high reputation for Health Services and Policy research. New areas are worth developing (e.g. Monieson Centre or School of Nursing), however, they should be pursued in a measured fashion, so as not to compromise the excellent accomplishments and focus of the Centre.