



March 2012 » E-news

NSHRF NEWS



The REAL Issue

In a few weeks the provincial budget will be tabled. This announcement will receive close attention, as we are operating in a time of fiscal constraint. Last month I discussed how evaluation can play a key role in revitalizing our health care system and now others are raising this point as well. As we wait for the provincial budget announcement, I am continuing to spread the word of the importance of evaluation and the role the NSHRF can play.

The importance of making the right decision is even more pronounced when working with limited resources. Limited resources can change how an organization operates and can have a significant impact, but this can be managed through informed decision making and evaluation plays a key role.

As an activity of self reflection and assessment, evaluation allows an organization or program to look at impacts, successes, gaps in services and inefficiencies such as duplication. By evaluating what you do, you have the knowledge needed to make tough fiscal decisions based on evidence, rather than making across the board budget cuts. This type of informed decision making can be the deciding factor in whether an organization survives or is defeated by a difficult fiscal environment. By reflecting on your own performance and the work your organization or program is doing, you can uncover opportunities and strengths that you may not have been aware of and work to protect such organizational assets during periods of uncertainty.

At the NSHRF, we continually evaluate all aspects of our programs, work and organization. We have always been champions of evaluation and we want to help others benefit from our experience and expertise. We offer a series of evaluation services to not only health organizations, but others as well. Through this support we can help organizations build evaluation capacity and culture through supporting all stages of evaluation including planning, implementing and utilization. By strengthening evaluation culture, organizations engage in evaluation in a manner that promotes a learning attitude where people are ready to adapt and be flexible to change – a definite strength in times of fiscal constraint.

When making informed decisions and applying evaluation it is important to remember the role research plays and the extraordinary health research resources we have in our

own province. It is now more important than ever to access our academic community to inform decisions. The [Nova Scotia Directory of Health Researchers](#) can be found on our website and allows you to search for the right expert here in our own province. I encourage you to look at this, as well as our [evaluation services](#), and start thinking of how you can apply research and evaluation to the decisions you're making for your program or organization.



Krista Connell, CEO

Establishment and Development/Innovative Grants Application Deadline

The application deadline for the Establishment and Development/Innovative Grants is Thursday, March 29, 2012 2:00 p.m. (AST). Only those who have already registered may apply. The Establishment Grants are intended to assist in building research capacity and to provide initial support for new health researchers in Nova Scotia over a 1-3 year period. The Development/Innovative Grants are intended to provide funding for Nova Scotia health research initiatives that will strengthen a grant submission to a peer reviewed provincial, national or international health research competition.

To learn more, please visit our [website](#).

**Note*

The NSHRF wishes to advise the health research community that potential strike action at individual institutions, such as those situations currently underway at Dalhousie University, will not affect the application of process requirements for funding competitions of NSHRF.

Specifically, the deadlines and requirements for the Establishment Grants and Development Innovative Grants will remain as specified in [Research Programs' Requirements Document for: Establishment Grants Development/Innovative Grants](#).

Individual faculty with further questions should contact [Jennifer McNutt, Manager, Research Programs](#).

Individual research trainees should contact their Faculty of Graduate Studies for information relating to internal institutional deadlines.

Scotia Scholarship Research Trainee Funding Opportunity

The Scotia Scholarship funding opportunity is available under our Research Trainee funding program. The Scotia Scholarship is intended to provide financial support to high caliber trainees engaged in health research related academic study at Nova Scotia universities. The goal of the Scotia Scholarship is to support the development of the next generation of highly qualified health researchers and leaders in the Nova Scotia

health research enterprise. The Scotia Scholarship will be offered at both the masters and doctorate levels this year.

Applicants will be evaluated based on their past academic, leadership, and research achievements. For the 2012-13 competition, each university will have a minimum [quota](#) of one (1) scholarship. Additional scholarships beyond the minimum will be based on the percentage of past NSHRF student specific funding (i.e., Student Research Award allocations between 2000 and 2010) allocated to each university.

Interested research trainees are encouraged to learn more about the funding opportunity through our [website](#) and contact their institutions for internal deadlines and processes.

Call for Peer Reviewers

We are currently accepting nominations for the 2012 Peer Review Committees. Our Biomedical Peer Review Committee and the Health Policy, Health Services, Health Outcomes Peer Review Committee review grant applications for funding. Further information on the Peer Review Committees and the nomination process can be found on our [website](#). If you are interested, please contact us by April 6, 2012.

Peer Review Observer Program Application Call

We are currently accepting applications for our Peer Review Observer Program. The program provides an opportunity for those with an interest in health research to learn about the peer review process through first-hand observation of our Peer Review Committee during their deliberations.

The peer review process subjects a researcher's scholarly ideas to the scrutiny of others who are experts in the field. We, like the national funding agencies and others, use the peer review process to assure that the research funded meets the highest standards of excellence.

For more information and to apply for the Peer Review Observer Program, click [here](#).

Call for applications: CONSUP- Research Team Development Award

The Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP) is looking for a research team that will conduct a survey to support their initiatives on generating awareness and understanding within the university student community about the long-term value of healthy food choices and active lifestyles.

CONSUP is committed to supporting a healthy environment for students, faculty and staff at Nova Scotia's universities. In order to better understand the current status of student food choices, lifestyles and related issues and to support the long-term program objectives, the working group intends to identify a research team to design and conduct a benchmark survey that examines food choices, lifestyles and other health issues of

undergraduate students across Nova Scotia's universities and the Nova Scotia Community College system.

This Team Development Award is intended to support the development of a research team that will apply for additional funding in order to conduct the benchmark survey. The team may choose to apply to any provincial, national, or international research funding competition that is peer reviewed. This Award will support activities related to team and proposal development.

For more information on the Award and apply, please visit our [website](#). Applications are to be submitted by **April 5, 2012**.

OTHER NEWS

Student Essay Competition sponsored by the Justice Emmett M. Hall Foundation

Undergraduates, masters and doctoral students are invited to submit an essay on important topics in Canadian healthcare services and policy for the student essay competition sponsored by the Justice Emmett M. Hall Foundation. The deadline is Friday, March 23, 2012. Winners will be recognized at the annual Canadian Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) conference May 29 – 31, 2012.

Learn more [here](#).

Provide feedback on CIHR's Proposed Changes to Open Suite of Programs and Enhancements to the Peer Review Process

On February 9, CIHR opened its feedback period to its proposed changes to the Open Suite of Programs and enhancements to the peer review process. We are encouraging everyone within the health research enterprise to get involved and share feedback by March 30, 2012.

The Design Discussion Document can be found on the CIHR [website](#) along with more information regarding the process and how you can be involved.

We are pleased to host an Open Forum on March 27, 2012 at the Q.E. Smith Auditorium, IWK Health Centre. The Open Forum will run from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. All participants in Nova Scotia's health research enterprise are invited to join in a discussion with Dr. Jane Aubin, Chief Scientific Officer/Vice-President, Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Dr. Aubin will outline the changes to CIHR's Open Suite of Programs and Peer Review Process. This will be your opportunity to address any questions or concerns regarding the proposed changes.

If you would like to attend, please RSVP by March 21, 2012 to Linda Waterhouse (Linda.Waterhouse@gov.ns.ca).

The Institute of Aging of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) has the mandate to support research and build research capacity in the field of aging. The Institute of Aging is currently embarking on a strategic planning process to define priorities in research on aging and knowledge translation for the next five years (2013-2018).

To this end, and as first step in this process, the Institute of Aging has launched a web-based survey targeting a broad array of organizations and stakeholders: the Institute of Aging is seeking their input on the opportunities and challenges of an aging population, eliciting opinions and diverse points of view on the priority research areas in the coming years.

We encourage you to participate in this short (10-15 minutes) survey of four open-ended questions. Please respond [here](#).

CIHR Innovation Team Grants in Community-Based Primary Healthcare

We are pleased to partner with CIHR for the Innovation Team Grants: Community-Based Primary Healthcare (CBPHC) funding opportunity. The CBPHC funding opportunity will provide support for teams undertaking programmatic, cross-jurisdictional and interdisciplinary research to develop, implement, evaluate and compare innovative models for chronic disease prevention and management in CBPHC and improving access to appropriate CBPHC for vulnerable populations.

You can learn more about the full funding opportunity [here](#).

Funding

- Up to \$ 31,665,000 over five years is available through this funding opportunity to support Canada-based teams (additional funds through partners in Australia and New Zealand will available to components of the teams based in those countries).

Important Dates

Competition: Phase 1: Letter of Intent

Application Deadline: 2012-05-01

Anticipated Notice of Decision: 2012-07-03

Funding Start Date: n/a

Competition: Phase 2: Full Application

Application Deadline: 2012-10-15

Anticipated Notice of Decision: 2013-04-01

Funding Start Date: 2013-04-01

IN PROFILE: NOVA SCOTIA RESEARCH

Project Title: The Quest, The John Ruedy Award Recipient

Jennifer Wong was the 2011 recipient of The Quest, The John Ruedy Award, for her study examining the psychological and physiological demands of working in long-term care facilities. Jennifer is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology at Saint Mary's University with her main interests in occupational health and well being.

Jennifer's undergraduate degree was in behavioral neuroscience. She chose to pursue psychology because she was drawn to the scientist-practitioner model of conducting research and applying it to help organizations and people at work. This type of empirical knowledge can be applied to workplaces in forms of job redesign, training and development, interventions, or promotional and learning programs. In her current studies, Jennifer draws from her experiences in experimental and health psychology, allowing her to approach her research with a multidisciplinary perspective.

For her thesis, Jennifer is examining the psychological and physiological demands of working in long-term care facilities. This is a timely topic as long-term care facilities in Canada are currently undergoing substantial growth. Nova Scotia facilities are also changing their physical design – moving from an institutional layout to more intimate residential style facilities. Little research has been done on how the changes are affecting caregivers, something that is surprising considering the changes not only affect caregivers, but also the quality of care received by residents and potential costs to the organizations.

Caregivers participating in Jennifer's research will wear an ambulatory blood pressure monitor cuff that is preprogrammed to automatically collect hourly readings. After each reading, caregivers will fill out a diary entry. Each diary entry will assess the sources of work place stress – systems-level, task-based, and relationships – along with caregivers' psychological reactions. In using ecological momentary assessment data sampling, Jennifer will be able to map the psychological and psychological stress reaction onto the sources, allowing for "real-time" evaluation of work day dynamics.

"Jennifer's research not only shows how disciplines can work together and support research, it also shows how evidence and knowledge from research can be applied to daily lives," says Krista Connell, CEO Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation (NSHRF). "Long-term care facilities will be able to look at the results of this research project and make changes to support caregivers, ultimately making evidence informed decisions."

In receiving this award, Jennifer hopes to bring attention to multidisciplinary research, by expanding the discourse of occupational health psychology to broaden perspectives and encourage research creativity and innovation. Jennifer also sees the award as a motivator to continue her research and studies, as she plans to pursue a PhD in Industrial/Organizational psychology at Saint Mary's University and aspires to carry on the scientist practitioner tradition of her field by conducting high-quality research and then applying the knowledge to help organizations in need.



Jennifer Wong receiving The Quest, The John Ruedy Award from Dr. Kevin Vessey, Chair of NSHRF's Research Advisory Committee, Associate Vice-President Research and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at Saint Mary's University

DID YOU KNOW?

Looking for a colleague, possible collaborator, or expert source of information? Take a look through the [Nova Scotia Directory of Health Researchers](#), available online at the NSHRF website.

If you are a Nova Scotian researcher working in a discipline either directly or indirectly related to health, please take a minute to add your name to the directory through your [Canadian Common CV](#).

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