



September 2011 » E-news

NSHRF NEWS

Helping Nova Scotians receive the right treatment at the right time

We are pleased to have been asked by the Premier of Nova Scotia, to take the provincial lead in the possibility of establishing a Support for People and Patient-Orientated Research and Trials (SUPPORT) unit in Nova Scotia. The SUPPORT unit is part of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's Strategy for Patient Orientated Research (SPOR). We have been involved in SPOR since its beginning. Krista Connell, was a member of the President's Advisory Board, who advised on SPOR's development. The vision of SPOR is to improve health outcomes and enhance patients' health care experience through integration of evidence at all levels in the health care system. For more information, visit CHIR's [website](#).

A key part of SPOR is patient-oriented research. The goal of patient-oriented research is to better ensure the translation of innovative diagnostic and therapeutic approaches to the point-of-care, as well as to help the provinces and territories meet the challenge of delivering high quality, cost-effective health care. It involves ensuring that the right patient receives the right clinical intervention at the right time, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.

We have funded the Nova Scotia SPOR Working Group through a REDI Catalyst Award to develop a Maritime SPOR application. This application will demonstrate how Nova Scotia would be an ideal location for a SUPPORT Unit.

Scotia Scholarships

We are pleased to announce the launch of our second funding opportunity for research trainees this year, the pilot of the **Scotia Scholarships (Master level)**.

In 2010 we undertook an in-depth analysis and consultations process for the student funding component of our Research Programs. The results of the analysis and consultations process helped us shape the Research Trainee Funding Program. This program is designed to help research programs recruit and fund top research trainees based on evaluation of the research learning environment (Scotia Support Grant) and support individual research trainees based on their achievements (Scotia Scholarships).

In fiscal year 2011-12, we piloted the Scotia Support Grant and are now rolling out the Scotia Scholarships at the Master level. The Master level Scotia Scholarships offers a one-time, non-renewable 12 month award, valued at \$10,000. Successful applicants

must take up their awards in January 2012. In fiscal year 2012-13, the Scotia Scholarship will be offered at both the Master and Doctorate level. More details on the next round of the Scotia Scholarships will be available in early 2012. The Scotia Support Grant will next be offered in fiscal year 2013-14.

Students interested in being considered for a Scotia Scholarship (Master level) are to review eligibility, application requirements and evaluation criteria details [here](#) and then check with their university for internal deadlines and processes. Universities must submit the lists of recommended and alternate applicants and their applications to us by November 24, 2011.

Overview Scotia Scholarships (Master level)

Value: \$10,000

Duration: 1 year (non-renewable)

Application Deadline: The university sets its own internal deadline before forwarding the evaluated applications to us by November 24, 2011.

Results Announced: December 15, 2011

Again, visit our website for detailed information on the Scotia Scholarships funding opportunity.

If you have any questions please contact Jennifer McNutt, Manager, Research Programs (jennifer.mcnutt@gov.ns.ca or 424-3370). As this is our pilot year for the Scotia Scholarships, we will be evaluating all aspects of this funding opportunity and welcome feedback.

Video debut

In July, we made our video debut at the International Health Economics Association's (iHEA) 8th World Congress on Health Economics. The five minute video featured our contribution to the health research enterprise, four Nova Scotia health researchers, and the Minister, Department of Health and Wellness. The video can be viewed [here](#).

Healthy Eating Nova Scotia Team Development Award

The Healthy Eating Nova Scotia (HENS) Guiding Group, with sponsorship from Cancer Care Nova Scotia, Cardiovascular Health Nova Scotia (CVHNS) and Diabetes Care Program of Nova Scotia (DCPNS), and support from NSHRF, is pleased to release [a call for applications for research team development related to the chronic disease prevention framework and HENS priority areas](#).

Research or community organizations are invited to apply for support to development research teams focused on healthy eating in one (or more) of the following areas:

- Breast Feeding
- Children and Youth
- Fruit and Vegetable Consumption
- Food Security

Proposals must be submitted by November 10, 2011

Update on the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy

We are continuing to support the Government of Nova Scotia and the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy Advisory Committee in the development of a Strategy for the province. The Advisory Committee has met several times over the summer as the Strategy moves into its final stage, and will have their final recommendations to the Minister of Health and Wellness by the end of October, 2011.

OTHER NEWS

Congratulations to Dr. Jill Hayden

In June, Dr. Jill Hayden was awarded the CCRF Dalhousie University Professorship in Epidemiology. She took up her new role on July 1, 2011. The Research Professorship is funded by a partnership between Dalhousie University and CCRF and builds on CCRF's research capacity program which establishes Research Chairs and Professorships in universities across Canada.

Dr. Hayden has made significant contributions to the Nova Scotia's health research community and we are pleased to have funded and supported her work in building Cochrane Collaboration activities in the province. We wish her plenty of success in her new role.

CIHR Clinical Trials

We offer our congratulations to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies, and the Association of Canadian Academic Health Care Organizations for their release of the Model Clinical Trial Template Agreement (mCTA).

The mCTA was proposed jointly by representatives of both ACAHO and Rx&D who worked with legal counsel, through funding provided by CIHR. The mCTA is a direct response to recommendations from the field for a standard clinical trial template agreement that can help to streamline and expedite start up times. During the pilot period (October 1, 2011 - March 31, 2012), the mCTA is intended to be used as the basis of regular Phase II and III Clinical Trial agreement negotiations between clinical sites, sponsors, and principal investigators.

This is an excellent opportunity for Nova Scotia hospitals and universities and we encourage you to learn more here: <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/44186.html>

Congratulations to Dr. Gerald Johnston

Congratulations to [Dr. Gerald \(Gerry\) C. Johnston](#), Dalhousie University who was inducted as a Fellow to the [Canadian Academy of Health Sciences](#) (CAHS). Dr. Johnston was inducted during the [6th Annual CAHS Forum and Annual General Meeting](#). CAHS

Fellows will have demonstrated leadership, creativity, distinctive competencies and a commitment to advance academic health science. The CAHS provides timely, informed and unbiased assessments of urgent issues affecting the health of Canadians.

IN PROFILE: NOVA SCOTIA RESEARCH

Project Title: **Hypertension in Type 2 Diabetes in Primary Care: How Much do Drugs Matter in Reaching Target Blood Pressures?**

Principal Investigator: Dr. Wayne Putnam (Dalhousie University)

The prevalence of type 2 diabetes is rising, and the majority of the patients do not reach target blood pressure (BP) levels for a wide variety of reasons. Dr. Putnam and his team conducted a practice-based, cross-sectional observational and mailed survey study to identify characteristics of patients and providers associated with achieving target BP levels in community-based practice.

The study took place in the practices of 27 family physicians and nurse practitioners in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. Data was collected from each patient's medical record and from each patient and physician/nurse practitioner through a mailed survey. The main outcome measures were overall blood pressure at target (< 130/80), systolic blood pressure at target, and diastolic blood pressure at target. Analysis included initial descriptive statistics, logistic regression models, and multivariate regression using hierarchical nonlinear modeling (HNLM).

The results of the study concluded that when primary care health professionals are working with blood pressures above target in a patient with type 2 diabetes, they should pay attention to two factors. They should inquire about dietary salt intake, strongly emphasize the importance of reduction, and refer for detailed counseling if necessary. Similarly, they should inquire about adherence to the medication regimen, and employ a variety of patient-oriented strategies to improve adherence.

A detailed article on the study can be found [here](#).

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 roster through your [Canadian Common CV](#).

KEEP IN TOUCH

To stay up-to-date on NSHRF announcements, visit www.nshrf.ca. To receive a text version of this newsletter or unsubscribe from this mailing list, please contact info@nshrf.ca.