Developing a team to address oral health disparities in Canada & Le Réseau de recherche en santé buccodentaire et osseuse

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Developing a team to address oral health disparities in Canada

(Christophe Bedos & CIHR)

- Background to project
- Goals of project
- Who are we
- Work
- Outcomes
Methodological framework

Detecting
- Define vulnerable populations
- Identify subgroups within vulnerable populations

Understanding
- Determinants of oral health
- Determinants of access to dental services
- Links between oral and general health

Improving oral health & reducing disparities
- Intervene
- Evaluate
- Translate and disseminate
- Change policy
Conceptual framework

SOCIETAL CONTEXT

LOCAL CONTEXT
(Geographical, familial, etc.)

LIFE COURSE

Childhood  Adolescence  Early adulthood  Late adulthood

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Working poor

Welfare recipients

? (other as yet not identified groups)

First Nations

Recent Immigrants
Overall goal

• The overall goal of this project is to form a team with a view to developing a multidisciplinary and multi-methodological approach to describe and understand the main determinants of oral health among and access to care of vulnerable groups in Canada. Our team will comprise researchers, health care professionals, health service decision-makers and individuals and organisations representing under-privileged groups.

• In the longer term our overall goal is to develop means to improve the oral health and oral health care of vulnerable groups and reduce disparities between vulnerable and more privileged groups in Canada.
Specific objectives

1. Identify individuals and organisations who/that can contribute to the aforementioned goals;

2. Invite these individuals and organisations to be part of a research team that will work with a philosophy of knowledge exchange towards the aforementioned goals;

3. Identify the main vulnerable groups in Canada;
Specific objectives

4. Identify “knowledge deficits and needs” that are pertinent to a good understanding of the determinants of oral health and oral health care in these vulnerable groups;

5. Identify methodological approaches to investigate the determinants of oral health and oral health care within these vulnerable groups;

8. Plan a program of research to address our current lack of understanding of the problem
Develop Team

Interview team members

Workshop A

Knowledge needs and deficits

Literature searches concerning determinants of oral health and health care, plus interventions in up to 5 vulnerable groups

Literature search reports

Workshop B

Identify research questions and objectives

Develop outline plans of research

Workshop C

Agree research approaches and program plan

Funding

Collaboration
Vision

In the spirit of social justice, we are committed to the promotion of good oral health and quality of life among all members of society.

- All partners involved in this project are considered equal partners in all aspects of the research.
- Continuous consultation and collaboration should characterize the partnership.
- Favourable conditions should be established to encourage discussions within the research team.
Values such as active listening, respect to people’s right to speak, openness to different opinions, belief that knowledge is always changing, will be strongly encouraged.

The research should be relevant and beneficial to the community and help reduce disparities in oral health in Canada.

All partners should have the will to change things and be open to new ideas.

Developing this research program will require compromise and consensus. Partners should be open to this process.
Organisational structure

Comité organisateur / Steering committee
Paul Allison
Christophe Bedos
Marie-Claude Loignon
Vanessa Muirhead
Frances Power

Employment-assistance beneficiaries (social assistance) / Prestataires de l’assistance-emploi (aide sociale)
Low income workers / travailleurs à faible revenu
Rural population / population rurale
Personnes âgées / Elderly
Premières Nations / First Nations
Outcomes

Working groups on oral health care services for the following groups:

- The elderly (Mary McNally)
  - ? CIHR & NSHRF
- Those living in rural areas (Elham Emami)
  - CIHR operating grant application
- Those in poverty (Christophe Bedos)
  - CIHR operating grant application
  - CIHR PHSI program application
- First nations peoples (Mary Ellen Macdonald)
  - CIHR operating grant application
  - CIHR and FRSQ salary award applications
Reorientation of Oral Health Services to Become Inclusive

**Oral Health Care Services**

Questions:
1. What oral health care delivery systems exist to address the needs of the “vulnerable groups”?
2. Is there evidence that the care delivery system (i) improves oral health (ii) improves access to dental care and/or (iii) reduces inequities?
3. What are the main reasons for their success or failure?

**Dental School Environments**

Questions:
1. How are oral health inequities incorporated into dental school environments (e.g., curricula, admissions and outreach)?
2. What are the goals of the oral health inequities initiatives (e.g., increasing diversity, raising awareness, improving communication, or the developing clinical skills)?
3. Are there indicators of success or failure?
4. How are health inequities incorporated into other health professional teaching environments (e.g., nursing and medicine)?

**Policies**

Questions:
1. Are there public policies that target access to dental care for vulnerable groups in (i) Canada and at the provincial level and; (ii) internationally?
2. Is there evidence that these policies: (i) improve oral health (ii) improve access to dental care and/or (iii) reduce inequities?
3. What are the main reasons for success or failure?

Vulnerable groups: Elderly, First Nations and Inuit, Working Poor and People on Social Assistance (Welfare Recipients)
Le Réseau de recherche en santé buccodentaire et osseuse

- The history, background, funding etc.
- Who were we and who are we now?
- What do we do?
  - Our goals
  - our programs
FRSQ background

- FRSQ (www.frsq.gouv.qc.ca) funds research...
  - Networks
  - Groups
  - Centres
  - Operating grants
  - Salary awards
  - Training awards

- Network program objectives:
  - To enhance Québec's research capacity
  - To create a critical mass of research investigators capable of satisfying new research expectations, especially through networking and inter-institutional and interdisciplinary synergy
  - To improve the collective competitiveness of Québec investigators, especially through projects aimed to help structure research, technology platforms and common services, or by pooling expertise
  - To enhance the reputation of Québec investigators outside Québec, especially by organizing events designed to facilitate dissemination, promotion and scientific exchange
  - To promote knowledge transfer and serve as Québec’s science showcase
## RSBO history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Name of Network</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Directorship</th>
<th>Members</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>Network for Oral and Bone Health Research</td>
<td>FRSQ: $325,000 Partners: $100,000</td>
<td>Paul Allison McGill; 2005-2008</td>
<td>Approx 60</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007-2011</td>
<td>Network for Oral and Bone Health Research</td>
<td>FRSQ: $450,000 Partners: $100,000</td>
<td>Rene St. Arnaud Shriners &amp; McGill; 2008</td>
<td>Approx 77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who are we and what do we do?

- www.frsq.gouv.qc.ca
- www.rsbo.ca