

# Making Systematic Reviews More Useful for Community-Based Organizations in Canada

Mike Wilson, PhD student  
Health Research Methodology Program  
McMaster University

## Presentation Outline

- Background
- Description of my thesis
  - 4 component studies
  - 4 sectors (HIV/AIDS, cardiovascular disease, cancer and mental health and addictions)
- Fit with KT ICEBeRG

## Background (1)

- Community-based organizations (CBOs) have been neglected as research users
  - Growing culture of research use in CBOs
    - e.g. AIDS Committee of Toronto
    - CIHR (dedicated CBR funds) and SSHRC (CURA)
  - Need to have research made available in a usable format
- Where are the rigorously evaluated large-scale knowledge transfer (KT) platforms?

## Background (2)

- Survey of 39 CBOs in the HIV/AIDS sector found that they have a culture that supports community-based research.
- Survey (*Is Research Working for You?*) of 25 CBOs and 3 focus groups in the HIV/AIDS sector found only a moderate organizational capacity to **acquire, assess, adapt and apply** research.
- Feedback we received from focus groups:
  - Need research in a timely manner
  - Provide research in a usable format
  - Need capacity building opportunities for skills to conduct lit. reviews
  - Facilitate partnerships between community, researchers and policymakers for enhanced research production and uptake

## Background (3)

- What type of research should be targeted to CBOs?
  - **Systematic reviews**
    - Natural building block for KT initiatives.
    - Starting to answer full-range of questions that can be asked
- How should the research be presented?
  - Two methods (extrapolated from Lavis et al. 2005)
    - **Graded-entry formats** ("friendly front ends")
    - **Relevance assessments** (categorization of reviews to facilitate assessments of relevance)

## Thesis Overview

### *Making Systematic Reviews More Useful for Community-Based Organizations in Canada*

- **Objective**
  - To make systematic reviews more useful for community-based organizations in Canada in the fields of HIV/AIDS, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and mental health and addictions by developing graded-entry formats (i.e., "friendly front ends") and relevance-assessment mechanisms and assessing their usefulness through a randomized controlled trial.
- **Four studies**
  - Analytical assessment
  - Scoping review
  - Qualitative study
  - Randomized controlled trial (RCT)

## Study #1 – Analytical Assessment

- **Objective:**
  - Assess the current efforts of CBOs in 4 sectors to link research to action and to derive implications for organizations that want to engage in evidence-informed advocacy, programming and service delivery.
- **Methods:**
  - WHO framework for assessing country level efforts to link research to action (Lavis et al. 2006).
    - Foster a general climate for research
    - Support production of relevant research
    - Activities to link research to action
    - Evaluating efforts to link research to action

## Study #1 – Primary messages

- Community involvement in systematic review production:
  1. Further enhances climate that supports research
  2. Provides capacity building for opportunities
  3. Adds to a stream of community-relevant systematic reviews
  4. Uses an exchange model of KT, which will contribute to an integrated model of KT in the future (more on this later)

## Study #2 – Taxonomy of CBOs

- **Objective:**
  - Develop a taxonomy of CBOs in each of the 4 sectors in order to create a categorized sample frame for Studies 3 and 4.
- **Methods:**
  1. Scoping review of existing literature about CBOs
  2. 4 - 6 focus groups with executive directors and/or managers of CBOs from each sector (constant comparative method)
  3. Websites and contacts to identify CBOs in each sector

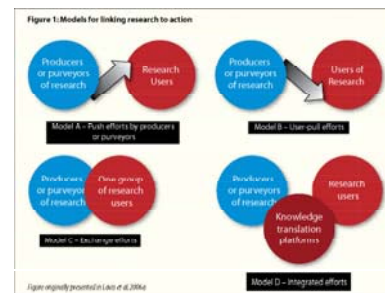
## Study #3

- **Objective:**
  1. Assess the views and experiences of Canadian CBOs with systematic reviews
  2. develop graded-entry format prototypes and relevance-assessment mechanisms
  3. Assess CBOs' views about products
- **Methods:**
  - One-on-one semi-structured interviews
  - "Friendly front end" and relevance assessment mechanism development (based on interviews)
  - Pilot test (one-on-one semi-structured telephone interviews)

## Study #4 – Evaluation of a KT platform

- **Objective:**
  - Develop a KT platform that combines "push" and "pull" models.
  - Assess the ability of a KT platform that disseminates relevance-assessed systematic reviews with "friendly front ends" to increase the intention of executive directors and/or managers of CBOs to use systematic reviews in their decision-making
- **Methods:**
  - Stratified (by sector) 2-arm RCT
    - Intervention: "full-serve" literature service
    - Control: "self-serve" literature service
    - Outcome: Intention to use research (theory of planned behaviour)
      - Attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and general behaviour intention.
    - Sample taken from sample frame developed in study #2

## Linking Research to Action – 4 Models



## Fit with KT-ICEBeRG

- Transdisciplinary approach to facilitate a sustainable strategy for evidence-based service provision in an understudied sector
- Transdisciplinary research that develops methods for optimally packaging and disseminating systematic reviews in order to facilitate uptake
- Transdisciplinary research that evaluates methods for optimally packaging and disseminating systematic reviews in order to facilitate uptake
- Directed towards a newly emerging and important group of stakeholders in healthcare service provision, programming, research users and research producers.