

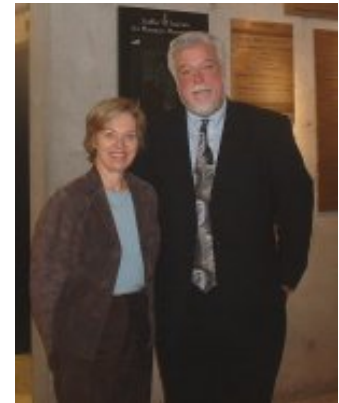
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH POLICY,
MANAGEMENT, AND EVALUATION
- NEWSBYTES -

March/April 2003

Office of the Chair

Robert Rich on Knowledge Transfer and Health Policy

In conjunction with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation hosted a presentation by visiting Professor Robert Rich on Tuesday February 18 at the Koffler Institute of Pharmacy Management. The event was attended by 55 faculty, staff and students from HPME, other University of Toronto departments, and affiliated research institutes, who also enjoyed a post-presentation reception.



The focus of Dr. Rich's presentation was on critical issues in knowledge utilization and health policy making. He addressed the "uneasy partnership" between science and the government, each of which has different perspectives on the use of scientific knowledge. He described different types of knowledge and common myths, for example, the notion that bridging the "gap" between the two cultures, often referred to in the literature on knowledge transfer, will solve the primary problem of translating research into action. In health care, understanding the use of scientific and technical knowledge continues to be a real challenge – governments often fail to implement programs or services which have demonstrated public benefit. Therefore use is not the same as dissemination or impact, and future research should address which types of information are preferred by policy-makers, how do they define their needs, and to what extent do they use research to make decisions.

[Robert Rich](#) is a Professor of Law at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Robert Rich has a joint-appointment with the Institute of Government and Public Affairs (IGPA), where he was Director from 1986-1997. He is also appointed in the College of Medicine and the Political Science Department. He is currently Director of the Office of Public Management of IGPA. His research focuses on health law and policy, federalism and the role of the states, environmental policy, and science policy.

His major recent publications include: Health Policy, Health Insurance, and the Social Contract (Journal of Comparative Labor Law and Public Policy); Social Science Information and Public Policy-Making, the second edition of a book originally published in 1981; and Rationality and Use of Information in Policy Decisions" (Science Communications).

[Dr. Rich's Presentation](#) (PowerPoint)

Invitation from the Chair - HPME Research Day 2003

Please mark your calendars for the Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation's annual [Research Day](#), taking place on Wednesday, May 7 from 2 p.m. - 7 p.m. in the Medical Sciences Building (Stone Lobby and Alumni Lounge). A student poster session will be followed by a key note address, awards ceremony, and catered reception.

For students this is an opportunity to present a poster based on either their thesis work or other interesting research in which they are involved. Posters will be objectively judged by faculty members and [Poster Awards](#) presented at the ceremony directly following the poster session. Those interested should see the [Students](#) section of this newsletter for further information.

Faculty and students will be interested in the key note address being delivered this year by Dr. Deborah A. Freund. Dr. Freund is Vice Chancellor for academic affairs and Provost of Syracuse University, Professor of public administration, and Senior Research Associate at the Center for Policy Research, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. Dr. Freund is an internationally known health economist, recognized particularly in the areas of Medicaid, health care outcomes and PharmacoEconomics, a field she is credited with beginning. With more than 100 articles and chapters plus two books to her name, she has been the principal investigator of grants and contracts totaling more than \$30 million; an editorial board member of nine journals; a visiting professor at Harvard, Stanford, London, Australian National and Keio universities; and consultant to two presidential administrations, Congress, 40 states and 10 multi-national pharmaceutical companies.

More information about Dr. Freund is available at www-cpr.maxwell.syr.edu/faculty/freund/.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Research

ICES Researchers Conduct Preliminary Study of MRI Usage in Ontario

[Andreas Laupacis](#), HPME Professor and CEO of the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES), along with Karey Iron and Raymond Przybysz, recently published *Access to MRI in Ontario: Addressing the Information Gap*, a technical report on access to magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners, and relevant utilization data. The report is available in full text on the [ICES](#) website.

The researchers conducted a literature review, administrative data analysis, and qualitative survey of MRI centres in Ontario. Their literature review revealed that Ontario (and Canada) has low rates of MRI scanners per population compared with other countries in the developed world, yet the potential indications for MRI, and waiting times for MRI appear to be increasing.

The analysis of administrative data for outpatient scans-only demonstrated that the frequency of MRI scans has increased more than 5-fold in the last decade and by more than 50% from 1999 to 2001; there are age- and gender-adjusted regional variations in MRI rates across the province; and approximately 14% of patients have repeat MRI scans within two years.

While administrative data can provide helpful information many important pieces of information are missing. The qualitative survey of Ontario MRI centres revealed that some, but not all of this missing data is routinely gathered and could be obtained through chart review.

Along with associated implications, the report offered the following strategic options:

- Create a committee or group with the responsibility for reporting on quality issues regarding MRI.
- Annually monitor MRI utilization.
- Establish a standard form for recording the indication and waiting time for MRI in Ontario. This should be collected electronically in a format that would allow linkage to administrative data, and include inpatient and outpatient cases, and public and private providers.

Therese Stukel: No difference in quality of health care between higher- and lower-spending regions

[Dr. Therese Stukel](#), HPME Professor and research director of the [Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences](#), participated in a major U.S. cohort study involving nearly one million Medicare recipients to determine whether regions with higher Medicare spending actually provide better care (1,2). The study, published in the February 2003 issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, found that residents of higher-spending regions received 60% more care but did not have better quality or outcomes of care.

Patients hospitalized between 1993 and 1995 for hip fracture, colorectal cancer or acute myocardial infarction (AMI), plus a sample of patients drawn from a previous study of Medicare Beneficiaries conducted between 1992 and 1995 were categorized into different levels of end-of-life spending in his or her referral region, an indicator of Medicare spending not linked to regional differences in illness.

Quality of care (for example, use of aspirin after AMI, influenza immunization) in higher spending regions was no better on most measures and was worse for several preventive care measures. Access to care (for example, having a usual source of care) in higher spending regions was no better compared with lower spending regions.

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1. Fisher ES, Wennberg DE, Stukel TA, Gottlieb DJ, Lucas FL, Pinder EL. The implications of regional variations in Medicare spending. Part 1: The content, quality, and accessibility of care. *Ann Intern Med* 2003; 138(4): 273-87.
 2. Fisher ES, Wennberg DE, Stukel TA, Gottlieb DJ, Lucas FL, Pinder EL. The implications of regional variations in Medicare spending. Part 2: Health outcomes and satisfaction with care. *Ann Intern Med* 2003;138(4):288-98.
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Update on Primary Care Performance Assessment

Phase 1 - Indicator Selection

Phase II - Data Quality/Feasibility

[Dr. Jan Barnsley](#), HPME Associate Professor and Departmental Director of the MSc/PhD program, is leading a research study that involves field-testing previously developed primary care performance measures to assess the feasibility of collecting indicator data. The Primary Care Performance Assessment Project involves Judith MacPhail, the project coordinator, other HPME faculty including Rhonda Cockerill, Whitney Berta and Eugene Vayda, as well as primary care physicians from Mount Sinai Hospital / Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto (Dr. Jeff Bloom, Dr. Yves Talbot) and from the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences / Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre / Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto (Dr. Liisa Jaakkimainen).

The purpose of the study is to work collaboratively with Ontario family physicians to develop and test a performance measurement system. This study directly involves primary care physicians in the development of evidence-based practice assessment tools and processes. The study's data collection tools include indicators in the areas of preventive care, screening and health promotion, management of acute and chronic conditions, and practice organization and management. The indicators were selected through consensus by a 12-member primary care panel of active clinicians including physicians and a nurse practitioner from various types of practice and with different reimbursement schemes, in both urban and rural settings. This work took place in 2001.

During 2002 indicator data were abstracted from medical records at ten practice sites. The purpose of this phase of the project was to examine the quality of data, and the usefulness and applicability of the indicators in practice. Indicators will be modified based on input from participating family physicians. Data collected from medical records will be considered in the context of additional information about the organizational structure and office systems gathered through a key informant interview and by direct observation.

Subsequent to each practice visit the investigators provided the family physicians and associated office staff with an onsite, interactive workshop on performance measurement, practice management, and quality indicators. Specific information on the quality of their data and data management practices is also provided. The purpose of the workshop is to explain the relationship of performance measurement to quality of care; familiarize the participants with the evidence for, and the applicability of 48 indicators of quality relevant to family medicine; encourage self-review and assessment of data management practices; and facilitate the identification of gaps in data collection and quality assurance practices.

The research team will continue their work on primary care performance measurement through ongoing communication with family practitioners and relevant professional associations, and by designing studies to develop, implement and evaluate primary care practice management strategies based upon indicators of quality care.

Research and Teaching Profiles

Faculty associated with the Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation (HPME) are involved in a broad range of research activities with a variety of organizations. Success of the HPME Knowledge Transfer initiative is dependent on presenting our stakeholders with a unified, clear image of the depth and breadth of Departmental expertise. To promote greater internal awareness of the knowledge developed through HPME, faculty research profiles will be included as a regular feature of this newsletter.

This issue of the HPME newsletter features a research profile for:

- [Whitney Berta](#), an Assistant Professor in HPME and the Department representative for the Collaborative Program in Aging and the Life Course. Her research focuses on organizational performance, organizational learning and knowledge transfer predominantly in the long term care sector.

+ + PROFILE OF THE MONTH + +

Whitney Berta, PhD

Dr. Berta is an Assistant Professor of Health Services Organization and Management in HPME. Her research interests are in organizational performance, organizational learning and knowledge transfer. Her research involves both longitudinal and multilevel analysis and focuses predominantly on long term care. She also functions as the Department representative for the [Collaborative Program in Aging and the Life Course](#).

Education and Work Background

Dr. Berta completed an MBA in Marketing and Strategy at McGill University. She gained work experience as a marketing director for a small industrial manufacturing firm in Montreal, then as a supervisor of energy management program development for Ontario Hydro in Toronto. She has worked on consulting projects for energy industry organizations including energy management and monitoring programs, and the development of strategic alliance initiatives. In 2000 she acquired a PhD in Organization Theory at the J.L. Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto.

Additional professional activities include membership in the Academy of Management and service on several committees including: member of the Leadership and Innovation Network for Long-Term Care in Ontario of the Institute on Health of the Elderly in Ottawa; member of the Certified Health Executive Program Sub-Task Force of the Canadian College of Health Service Executives; chair of the Faculty Development Survey Sub-Committee of the Gender Issues Committee, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto; member of the Research Committee for [M-THAC](#) (Medicare to Home and Community); member of the Peer Review Committee of The Canadian Initiative on Social Statistics (CISS) - a Strategic Joint Initiative of SSHRC and [Statistics Canada](#); and member of the Executive Committee for the Collaborative Program in Aging and the Life Course. She has served as an academic reviewer for the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada Conferences, the Academy of Management Meetings, and as an external reviewer for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Research Activities

Most recently Dr. Berta has worked with colleagues on studies of knowledge transfer in nursing home chain organizations operating in the U.S. A book chapter published last year (Mitchell, Baum, Banaszak-Holl, Berta, and Bowman 2002) describes a study of chain-to-component transfer learning and focuses on how the level and similarity of capabilities of chains and their components affects transfer learning across component units. The

findings show that chains and nursing home acquisitions and divestitures often lead to substantial component level changes that align the acquired unit with the capabilities of its new owner – a good thing when the acquiring chain is a high performer, but an undesirable situation when the acquiring chain is a poorer performer than the nursing home it acquires. Another recently published study (Banaszak-Holl, Berta, Bowman, Baum, and Mitchell 2001) focuses on the antecedents of nursing home acquisition and examines how acquisitions affect the operating strategies of the acquired facilities and the health outcomes of residents. These results are highly relevant in the nursing home sector, in which almost half of U.S. nursing homes are now part of chain organizations and hundreds of acquisitions occur each year.

A subsequent study, being prepared for publication (Banaszak-Holl et al 2002) further evaluates the impact of chain ownership of U.S. nursing homes by examining whether facilities demonstrate variation in services, staffing and health outcomes across three structural dimensions - chain ownership, chain and facility size and proprietary status. Another study, funded by the Michigan Blue Cross Blue Shield, focuses on how chains operating in Michigan use corporate policies and provide skills and routines to staff in their nursing home units, and what the impacts of these practices are on the quality of nursing home services (Kamimura, Banaszak-Holl, and Berta 2003).

Dr. Berta was recently awarded funding as a Co-Principal Investigator -- with Dr. Gary Teare, a Scientist with the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute and Assistant Professor with HPME -- through the CIHR's Knowledge Translation Strategies for Health Research Program for a 3-year project entitled "Learning Capacity in Ontario's Long-Term Care Facilities: A Study of Factors that Affect the Adoption, Transfer and Retention of Clinical Practice Guidelines". Co-Investigators include Dr. Lemieux-Charles, Dr. Ginsburg, Dr. Davis and Dr. Rappolt. Ms. Gilbert, a doctoral student with HPME, is supported through this grant. The research will focus on factors that influence knowledge transfer across and within long-term care (LTC) facilities in Ontario, including guideline-content, individuals within LTC facilities, characteristics of the facilities, and environment-level factors. The findings of this study will help policy makers and administrators of LTC institutions decide where, and how to invest in order to stimulate more uptake and retention of new knowledge and innovations that are intended to improve performance.

Dr. Berta is a co-investigator on a research project led by Dr. Jan Barnsley, HPME Associate Professor, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, which focuses on testing a set of evidence-based primary care performance indicators identified in a prior study by the project team in consultation with an Expert Panel of 12 clinicians practicing in Ontario. SEE [Update on Primary Care Performance Assessment](#).

Teaching and Supervisory Responsibilities

Dr. Berta has taught several courses for HPME, most recently the Health Services Organization and Management Comprehensive Examination Course (co-taught with faculty in the HSO&M research stream), Health Services Research Methods (co-taught with Dr. Barnsley), and Theory and Practice of Strategic Planning and Management in Health Services Organizations. She is currently serving on the thesis committees of two PhD students and is a practicum supervisor for the HPME MHS program.

Future Research

Dr. Berta and Dr. Laporte, also an Assistant Professor with HPME, were just awarded funding for three years by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to undertake a study of the determinants of operational efficiency estimates of long-term care facilities in Canada.

Education

New Doctoral Stream in eHealth

Students interested in completing a PhD in the Graduate Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation (HPME) have been able to specialize in one of four concentrations: Health Services Organization and Management, Health Policy, Health Services Outcomes and Evaluation, and Clinical Epidemiology.

The University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies has just approved the addition of a fifth concentration option in eHealth Innovation and Information Management, commencing with students enrolling for studies in 2003-2004. The Program's strength, and what distinguishes it from other health informatics programs, is a broader consideration of innovation and information rather than focusing on computer applications only.

The goal of the Doctoral Program in eHealth Innovation and Information Management is to nurture a new generation of graduate students to become proficient in healthcare information management issues, and technology capabilities and trends.

The Program will also serve as the focal point for interdisciplinary collaborative research that brings together the health, information, social and computer sciences to tackle major issues around the design, development, evaluation and use of ehealth tools, resources and technologies.

The Doctoral Program requires the completion of ten courses and a doctoral dissertation. In addition to the course and research requirements, students are expected to participate in a monthly Health Information Seminar series that will involve stakeholders from both within the University community and from private practice.

Courses specific to this stream will be offered by [Vivek Goel](#), [Alex Jadad](#), [Gunther Eysenbach](#), and the program director, [Kevin Leonard](#).

For more information please contact Kevin Leonard (k.leonard@utoronto.ca), HPME Associate Professor and Research Scientist at the Centre for Global eHealth Innovation, University Health Network .

Honours and Awards

HPME Researchers Involved in OHA Data Quality Conference

The OHA recently presented a conference on Data Quality: Understanding its Impact on the Health Care System at the Toronto Board of Trade. It was attended by 160 health records and data management personnel, system analysts and hospital CEOs.

The one-day symposium was chaired by [Adalsteinn Brown](#), HPME Assistant Professor and Principal Investigator of the [Hospital Report Project](#).

Other HPME participants included

- Nizar Ladak, an SGS faculty member of HPME and Director of Health Services Information at the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) who described variations in coding practices at CIHI.
- Paula Blackstien-Hirsch, Project Director of the Hospital Report Project, and [Therese Stukel](#), HPME Professor, who both participated in a panel discussing the impact of data quality on research and the reporting of provider performance.
- Sujit Choudhry, cross-appointed to HPME and an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto, who discussed the legal impact of data quality.

Whitney Berta and Audrey Laporte Awarded SSHRC Funding

[Dr. Whitney Berta](#); and [Dr. Audrey Laporte](#), both Assistant Professors in HPME, were recently awarded a three-year funding package by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to examine the determinants of operational efficiency of long-term care (LTC) facilities in Ontario. Dr. Vivian Valdmanis is a Co-Investigator on the grant. In particular, this project examines the extent to which various resident (e.g. acuity), facility (e.g. profit status), and environmental (e.g. degree of market competition) factors are associated with observed facility operational efficiency after taking account of differences in case-mix and service quality. The findings from this research can be used to inform decision-making and policy planning related to the provision of funds and allocation of resources to LTC facilities.

Students

Reminder: Poster Submissions for HPME Research Day

The Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation's annual Research Day will be held on Wednesday, May 7, 2003 this year. As in previous years, a central component of Research Day will be an opportunity for students to present their work in the form of posters. Posters can relate to course work, practicum placements and/or current employment.

The posters will be grouped by degree (MHSc, MSc, PhD) and two prizes for each category will be awarded. In addition, the Maureen Dixon award (\$1,000) will be decided on the basis of the posters. The Maureen Dixon award recognizes a student who is most likely to make an outstanding contribution to a community based agency. SEE [Poster Awards](#)

Please start to think about possible posters - information about [Submitting A Poster Presentation](#) and [Poster Guidelines](#) are available on the Department's website. All poster submissions should be directed to Rhonda Cockerill (rhonda.cockerill@utoronto.ca) by April 18, with primary author clearly identified.

Alumni

Education Day Event - May 9, 2003

Education Day has been a very successful event in recent years, and this one promises to be another interesting and informative session. The theme is once again a very topical issue: **Decoding Accountability: What It Is, What It Is Not & What It Could Be** In today's health care world accountability is a statement that is beginning to mean all things to all people. Accountability has taken on more complex and complicated definitions that have been applied to all aspects of a health care. Accountability has become integral to discussions of healthy public policy, the relationship between government and the general public, the administration of health care organizations, and the measurement of health care service outcomes. Is accountability becoming a distraction that threatens to dominate the health care sector and take us on a journey to nowhere?

Now is the time to consider what 'accountability' really means.

Join us to hear the perspective of renowned speakers from healthcare, government and private industry on the meaning of accountability and how to apply it or contain it within your organization.

The cost for this year's Education Day remains unchanged at \$149 for non-member and \$109 for members, \$99 for students.

Registration information is available at the [HPME website](http://www.utoronto.ca/hpme/alumni/alumni_4.htm) (www.utoronto.ca/hpme/alumni/alumni_4.htm), or call Rose Jones at 416-586-5082 or email (rjones@mtsinai.on.ca).

As always, Education Day concludes with a networking lunch. See you there!

Malcolm Moffat Named New President and CEO, St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital

Effective March 24, Malcolm Moffat, an alumnus of the HPME MHS program, was named as the new President and Chief Executive Officer of [St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital](#) in Toronto.

Prior to this appointment Mr. Moffat was Vice-President and Chief Planning Officer of St. Michael's Hospital. In the past several years, he has also played a lead role in the development of the GTA Rehab Network and the Metropolitan Toronto Acquired Brain Injury Network.

St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital provides inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services for adults recovering from multiple traumatic injuries, burns, organ transplants, amputations, cardiovascular surgery, strokes, neurological and complex musculoskeletal conditions. The Hospital offers a number of teaching programs in partnership with the University of Toronto and other post-secondary institutions.

Other Notables

Upcoming Canadian Evaluation Society Conference

Accountability for Value: Sharpening our Tools for Improved Results is the focus of the 2003 Canadian Evaluation Society Annual Conference.

The one-day event takes place at The Old Mill in Toronto on Monday, April 7. Target audiences include senior policy-makers, evaluators and planners, consultants, managers and directors.

Participants will learn how to apply the concepts of performance measurement, social accounting, and value-for-money auditing through panel discussions and concurrent workshops featuring case studies.

Speaker information, registration instructions, and directions are provided at the [Canadian Evaluation Society](http://www.evaluationontario.ca) website (www.evaluationontario.ca).