

Engaging Academic Researchers in HIV/AIDS Community-Based Research

A Key Role for Community-Based Research Facilitators (CBRFs) in Canada

Processes for Engagement of Academics

Community-Based Research Facilitators utilize a number of approaches to engage academic researchers with communities in HIV/AIDS research. We conduct meetings, assess the pool of academics in disciplines amenable to working in the field of HIV or on HIV related issues, facilitate partnerships between sectors, engage partners in dialogue on their knowledge and views of CBR, and facilitate discussion on the application of CBR principles within diverse contexts.

Challenges

There is an established and growing tradition of CBR in HIV/AIDS research. However, as CBR involves high participation, many challenges are faced in the process. As CBRFs we have addressed a number of issues that contribute to better research and practical outcomes of research. The CBRF's role is to ensure that the partnership produces research that is both scientifically rigorous and relevant to the community.

Opportunities for Engagement

Many opportunities are created under the facilitation of the CBRFs. The following are a few key examples of collaborative work between sectors & disciplines:

California State University CBR Conference

Transforming Scholarship, Transforming All Our Lives. In BC, the CBRF recently presented workshops at conferences in Los Angeles and Boston on engaging academics in CBR in addition to working in BC increasing the pool of researchers. The ability to partner community organizations with the appropriate researcher greatly increases the chances for the overall success of research projects.

The Alberta Community Council on HIV CBR Facilitator Project

The CBRF explores and facilitates the opportunities for community placements to encourage and assist graduate students in pursuing HIV/AIDS CBR projects in collaboration with ASOs in Alberta. A two-day capacity building workshop was conducted during the month of February 2010 to share ASO's CBR priorities to the relevant faculties of Alberta universities and colleges.

Health of Populations Evaluation (HOPE) Summer Institute

The Prairie-based CBRF is engaging academics in activities that are aimed at enhancing and sustaining relationships between university and community. In collaboration with local organizations and Universities Without Walls, this learning opportunity brings together faculty, students and community to increase the capacity to utilize empirical evidence for program planning and implementation and to enhance their program evaluation capabilities; and to establish a sustainable community-university network among practitioners and researchers for ongoing knowledge translation, knowledge exchange and utilization, and evidence-based practice.

Training new HIV/AIDS researchers in Ontario

The Ontario CBRF co-hosted a day-long workshop on preparing grant proposals. Features of this workshop included a discussion about engaging community in research and integrating the principles of community-based research; an overview of potential funding opportunities for researchers in Ontario and Canada; and opportunities for participants to share their proposals and receive feedback from their peers. The goals of the workshop were to enhance participants' capacity to prepare CBR proposals that meet and exceed CHR standards as well as to provide support for the next generation of community-based researchers in Ontario.

Sharing the Lay of the Land: Developing an APHA Leadership Intervention Initiative

CAAN seeks funds to generate preliminary knowledge about APHA leadership opportunities and community needs through consultation and a literature review. In addition, funds will facilitate team formation, as a first step towards the pursuit of more comprehensive funding opportunities in response to the overall research goal.

Engaging the 21st Century Moccasin Telegraph: Using Cyberspace to CAAN's Advantage

CAAN seeks funds to learn how to maximize the positive impact of current information communication technologies (ICT) to strengthen our membership and conduct our core business more efficiently and effectively.

L'expertise en recherche communautaire de la COCQ-SIDA

Constituée en 1990, la Coalition des organismes communautaires québécois de lutte contre le sida (COCQ-SIDA) est un regroupement provincial de 38 organisations oeuvrant dans la lutte contre le VIH/sida au Québec. La Coalition est un des plus grands regroupements provinciaux VIH au Canada. Elle est représentée dans presque toutes les 17 régions administratives du Québec. Le mandat de la COCQ-SIDA est de regrouper les organismes communautaires québécois impliqués dans la lutte contre le sida, afin de favoriser l'émergence et le soutien d'une action concertée, tout en respectant l'autonomie de chacun de ses groupes membres. Déjà en 1995, la COCQ établissait les bases de ce qui devait être le projet actuel de Facilitateur de la Recherche Communautaire (FRC). La COCQ a su regrouper l'action de chercheurs académiques et communautaires dans la réalisation de nombreuses recherches & d'activités de transfert d'expertise en recherche communautaire.

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