

O'Brien Institute for Public Health Mentorship and leadership portfolio  
March 31, 2020 – Zoom meeting

Creating a Community of Practice of Public Health Researchers During the COVID-19 Pandemic  
Networking Session # 1

Attendees: Jamie Day, Pablo Fernandez, Christine Friedenreich, Kerri Johannson, Meghan McDonough, Marie-Claude Proulx, Mariko Roe, Caley Shukalek, Ann Toohey, Marinka Twilt,  
Host: Aliya Kassam, lead for Mentorship and Leadership portfolio

**Notes**

Goal of the meeting: Needs assessment and brainstorming session on Creating a Community of Practice of Public Health Researchers during the COVID-19 Pandemic and understanding how we can bring our community of Researchers together, instead of working in silos.

“Community of practice” is defined as a group of people who share a concern, a set of problems or a passion about a topic and who deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis. The O'Brien Institute tries to facilitate such community of practices. One example is the “StreetCCRED” initiative, a group that brings together academics, clinicians & health care front line workers, community agencies, policy makers, etc to help vulnerable populations. One of the Institute goal is to magnify member's research and message

Communities of practice are developing and evolving and using different communications platforms like social medias which have helped to reach out to others outside of Alberta and Canada.

Regarding fostering a Community of practice around research on Co-Vid 19:

Because everything is happening so fast, there is a need to amplify and share the work that is being done in the Institute, understanding that the Institute focus is on research (to inform policy). The Institute mandate should stay separate from clinical matters (AHS' mandate), while working together with clinicians and decision maker to inform best practices and policies (i.e. the Institute has been mandated by the city and is working in collaboration with AHS and Alberta Health to provide evidences to help in making policy decision during the crisis.)

However, there should be an opportunity (since so many clinicians also have a research mandate) to build on clinical processes currently put in place to facilitate research (clinical trials)? Is there a coordinated effort (and/or capacity) at the

**Institute communications Platform:**

Email:

[iph@ucalgary.ca](mailto:iph@ucalgary.ca)

Web-site

<https://obrieniph.ucalgary.ca/>

Weekly Newsletter

O'Bulletin and O'Snap

Twitter

[https://twitter.com/OBrien\\_IPH](https://twitter.com/OBrien_IPH)

@Obrien\_IPH

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/obrieniph>

**Co-Vid 19 specific:**

Institute Co-vid page:

<https://obrieniph.ucalgary.ca/obrien-covid-response>

Centre for Health Informatics tracker:

<https://www.chi-csm.ca/>

UofC [“Co-vidcast”](#)

## University for patient enrolment into clinical trials for Co-vid 19?

This highlights a gap to fill within this Community of Practice: identifying research projects and resources available for members to access. There should be:

- Actions taken to create document compiling all the research projects ongoing in regard to Co-vid 19. The OADR might be compiling a list and would be a good place to start to request that information (environmental scan – local, provincial, national, international). Also need to liaise with other Institutes
- There is a need to understand what are the processes (and resources) available and in place in a crisis setting (by UofC different offices, departments, Institutes). Should the Institute play a lead role in filling this gap? Communications, leveraging connections and helping with transparency of overall processes creating a flowchart of key players / resources.
- How can we bounce ideas from each other's / how can we create a community of practice: communications platforms (blog?)
- Create a standing group that would be well positioned to act and respond when other crisis like this happen (taskforce?), and if there is already one, it should be made transparent to researchers.

Some of the resources available from the Institute are: communication platform, catalyst grants (5-20k), potential sessions of group mentorship (around specific topics)

More on the brainstorm was recorded on a white board (below)

Chain, intake, process, blog function on OIPH website	response team with all key stakeholders	Help with navigating systems
Role of OIPH as contact point for research, taskforce, lead as overseeing research, environmental scan, longterm consequences	Use this opportunity proactively, think about what it would look like to respond, standing group to respond in the future	clinical vs. public health delineate scope data
OIPH to coordinate research, office of associate dean of research, detailed research, funding, players in CSM, link across U of C	Coordinating and develop capacity for people with new ideas and create contact list for people to build bridges, OIPH - this is the list of potential topics	over-arching to avoid siloes AHS has several teams- what is the niche of U of C?
Reaction, build infrastructure for leadership to build team for future public health emergency, emergency response team	Streamlined communications	Data warehouse communication, web
strategic planning	Environmental scan within CSM, U of C share other institute activity	organization chart other institutes? across institutes?

There will be additional networking sessions on fostering a community of practice for researchers. Stay tuned!

# Creating a Community of Practice of Public Health Researchers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
O'Brien Institute for Public Health

# Today's Agenda

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1. Introductions
2. Definitions and Background
3. Brainstorming Session
4. Recap
5. Next steps

# Introductions

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Who are you?

Your area of public health research

Where are you based?

What would you like to get out of this session?

# Definitions

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A Community of Practice (CoP) is defined as “a group of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis.”

Wenger, Etienne, McDermott, Richard, Snyder, William M. Cultivating Communities of Practice. Harvard Business School Press. Boston, MA. 2002.

# Three distinct elements of a CoP:

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1. a ***community*** that enables interaction (such as discussions, collaborative activities, and relationship building);
2. a shared ***domain*** of interest (COVID-19);
3. a shared ***practice*** of experiences, stories, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems.

This approach enables public health professionals to **grow** and mature while **focusing on efforts to share knowledge and solve problems.**



# COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE



WHAT'S DEEPLY PERSONAL IS ALSO MOST UNIVERSAL



APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

LISTENING TO EACH OTHER



PRINCIPLED + FLEXIBLE

GROUNDING IN VALUES

BEING OPEN TO NEW IDEAS...

WE TAKE COLLECTIVE ACTION



WE BALANCE

PUSHING BOUNDARIES



ONE YEAR FROM NOW, THIS COMMUNITY...

IS VERY COMPELLING

WE INSPIRE EACH OTHER

WE GET + GIVE GREAT VALUE

AFFIRMATION



CARING HEALING



LOVE IS AT THE HEART OF OUR WORK

LISTENING is our SUPER POWER



WE WORK WITH ONE MIND & HEART

WE CONNECT WITH & LISTEN TO OUR COMMUNITY

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WE CAN BOUNCE IDEAS OFF EACH OTHER

INTENTIONAL MULTI-GENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

WE CREATE A SAFE SPACE THAT ALLOWS US TO BE AUTHENTIC

POWER OF ITERATION

WE GIVE & GET SUPPORT

I GIVE  
• SUPPORT  
• MY STRENGTHS  
• TIME + ENERGY

I GET  
• SUPPORT  
• COMMUNITY  
• HELP WITH MY WORK



IT'S ABOUT CONNECTION



ACT FROM THIS SPACE OF SERVICE TO COMMUNITY



Nancy Watkins  
@BROWBRIDGE



How can we create a  
community of practice for  
COVID-19 public health  
research?

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# Things to think about

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Research topics

Funding

Pooling resources

Group Mentorship

Methods

Leveraging connections

Teaching

Knowledge Dissemination

# Recap

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# Next Steps

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# Thank you!

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