

St. Michael's

Inspired Care.
Inspiring Science.

CRICH

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON INNER CITY HEALTH



Impact Report 2010/2011



Some of our partners on this year's projects:

Across Boundaries	Client Access to Integrated Services and Information (CAITI)	Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	St. Michael's Hospital
AIDS Committee of Toronto	Consolidated Municipal Service Managers, Ontario	Mt. Sinai Hospital	Statistics Canada
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation	COTA Health	Ontario Native Women's Association	Street Health
Black Creek Community Health Centre	Diabetes Education Community Network of East Toronto	Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres	Toronto Community Addictions Team
Calgary Homeless Foundation	Family Medicine Forum	Ontario HIV Treatment Network	Toronto Community Health Profiles Partnership
Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies	First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Infant Mortality Working Group	Ontario Municipal Social Services Association	Toronto Community Housing Corporation
Canadian Partnership Against Cancer	Health Canada	Ottawa Inner City Health, Inc.	Toronto District School Board
Canadian Perinatal Surveillance System	Healthmap.org	Pathways to Housing	Toronto Public Health
Cancer Care Ontario	Hospital Collaborative on Marginalized Populations	Peel Public Health	Toronto Health Economics and Technology Collaborative
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	Hospital for Sick Children	Peel Region Housing	Toronto North Support Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Housing Connections	Public Health Agency of Canada	Toronto Refugee Health Network
Chile Ministry of Health	Housing Registry Ottawa	Punjabi Community Health Services	Tuberculosis Surveillance Linkage Network
China-Canada Colloquium on Modeling	Immigrant & Youth Health Initiative, Hospital for Sick Children/ United Way/St. Michael's Hospital	Regent Park Community Health Centre	Tungasuvvingat Inuit
Citizenship & Immigration Canada	Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences	Regional Municipality of Halton	United Way of Greater Toronto
City of Toronto (Shelter Support & Housing Administration Division)	Inuit Tapirisat Kanatami	Seaton House	Wellesley Institute
City of Toronto (Social Development, Finance and Administration Division)	Métis Nation of Ontario	Service Manager Housing Network	WoodGreen Community Services
	Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs	Seventh Generation Midwives of Toronto	World Health Organization Kobe Centre on Health Development



CRICH

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON INNER CITY HEALTH

CRICH is dedicated to reducing health inequities through innovative research that supports social change.

We conduct research to better understand the linkages between poverty, social exclusion and poor health. And we work in partnership with community agencies and decision-makers to evaluate population health interventions to improve health outcomes for inner city populations.

CRICH research programs:



Homelessness, Housing and Health:

Drawing connections between homelessness and serious health problems like traumatic brain injury and mental illness.



Neighbourhoods and Health: Studying the links between our physical and mental health and features of the local environment.



Maternal and Child Health: Looking at how pregnancy outcomes, maternal well-being and children's health and development are affected by socioeconomic inequalities.



Mental Health and Substance Use:

Investigating the best ways to provide services to people with mental health and substance use issues.



Health Care Interventions: Measuring whether health care is delivered equitably or not, and evaluating how well health care services work for inner city populations.



Urban Aboriginal Peoples and Health:

Contributing to the health and well-being of urban Aboriginal individuals, families, communities and Nations.

CRICH at a glance 2010/2011:

18 research scientists

7 PhD and post-doctoral fellows
(Canadian Institutes of Health
Research Strategic Training
Initiative in Health Research)

115 research staff

104 publications

16,033 visits to **crich.ca**

2,983 downloads of CRICH
research reports, newsletters and
fact sheets

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- CRICH Research Flash archives
- Plain-language fact sheets on the issues we study
- Updates on current projects
- More stories about CRICH research in action



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DR. PATRICIA O'CAMPO

Director
Centre for Research on Inner City Health



I'm delighted to welcome you to the Centre for Research on Inner City Health (CRICH) Impact Report, 2010/2011. On the following pages, we've highlighted some of CRICH's recent work testing solutions, raising awareness and developing tools to support social innovations for equity in health.

"Social innovation" is about changing the way people do things, to create greater social value and to meet more social needs. It means looking at problems - and solutions - from a new perspective. **At CRICH, our mission is to to reduce health inequities through innovative research that supports social change.** We focus on social innovations that help ensure that everyone has the same chance to be healthy and make healthy choices, regardless of how much we earn, where we live or where we've come from.

Interested in learning more? We're excited to announce the launch of our **"Social Innovation, Equity and Health"** video series at crich.ca.

We're also very proud of this year's launch and quick expansion of the CRICH Survey Research Unit. It's a fantastic resource for the social determinants of health research community. Our team collects data in more than 15 languages, and specializes in working with marginalized populations and sensitive subjects. Visit crich.ca/sru to learn more.

Looking forward to 2011/2012!

Sincerely,

Pat

Testing Solutions



“Housing First”

“Housing First” is an innovative idea that’s based on simple, common sense: it’s much easier to manage a mental health problem when you have a stable place to live. The “Housing First” approach provides safe, quality housing to people who are homeless and live with mental health issues, to help clients

better focus on recovery. To demonstrate how and how well “Housing First” works in Canada, the Mental Health Commission of Canada launched the “At Home/Chez Soi” national demonstration project.

CRICH is the research lead on the Toronto arm of the 5-city study. We meet with participants every three months to hear how they’re doing with their health and housing. We’re also looking at whether “Housing First” helps to reduce the amount of time clients spend in hospitals and jails. Project partners Across Boundaries, City of Toronto, COTA Health and Toronto North Support Services provide specialized supports and help clients manage day to day.

Funding for this project runs out in 2013. Our biggest challenge now is to make sure that the health, housing and social benefits of “At Home/Chez Soi” can be sustained after the research funding ends. For more information, visit mentalhealthcommission.ca.



Changing HIV testing

Does it make sense to test everyone for HIV as part of their regular health care, or should testing focus only on people who think they are at risk?

A CRICH study asked that question and calculated that universal HIV testing would

increase the life expectancy of HIV-infected patients. Universal testing is also cost-effective compared to current practice (i.e. testing based on risk). This is mostly due to the serious risks - and costs - linked to untreated HIV. The study team included scientists from Stanford University and Duke University.

Based on research including our study, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) wrote new HIV testing guidelines for health care providers to test all adult patients for HIV. These guidelines have been adopted in the states of New York and California. This year, an HIV testing program in Vancouver, B.C. adopted a similar approach. Read the revised guidelines at cdc.gov/hiv/topics/testing.

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HIGHLIGHTS 2010/2011 *Testing Solutions*



Helping health care workers ask questions about abuse

Sometimes it takes a direct question, asked in a safe place, to encourage a victim of abuse to come forward and seek help. Health care workers have the opportunity to ask all patients if they're being abused by a partner, and can connect victims with needed services.

Until now, however, policy-makers felt that there wasn't enough evidence to start regularly asking all female patients if they're facing abuse.

CRICH teamed up with health care providers and woman abuse service agencies to re-evaluate the evidence on universal, health care-based intimate partner violence (IPV) screening programs. Our findings represent a major reversal in thinking: universal IPV screening can be very effective in health care settings, but only when the right supports are in place for staff. Supports such as ongoing training and quick access to referrals can make a big difference in how many victims are identified and referred to services.

We shared what we learned with woman abuse networks and health care workers across Ontario. St. Michael's Hospital is using our findings, along with Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario protocols, to inform their own IPV screening program. Read the study at ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21330026.



Coordinated access to care for homeless Torontonians

Could you recover from an illness without bed rest, a place to store medications and nutritious foods, and regular follow-up care? If you're homeless, these needs can be almost impossible to meet.

In partnership with Toronto Community Care Access Centres, Toronto North Support Services and Inner City Health Associates, CRICH developed and launched the "Coordinated Access to Care for People Who are Homeless" program ("CATCH"). The program connects homeless people with the supports they need to get better.

In our first year, CATCH linked almost 200 people who were homeless and recovering from illness to services like family medicine, psychiatry, case management, transitional housing and peer support. CATCH is the first program of its kind in Canada. For more information, call **1-877-482-4595**.

THE **ACHIEVE** RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

“Action for Health Equity Interventions”

What does a researcher need in order to be a good community partner? Superb science and methodological expertise, for starters. It's also important to be a good listener, to have policy “savvy” and good problem-solving skills, and to communicate well in cross-professional, cross-cultural teams. Yet, as important as these skills are, they're not often developed through health sciences graduate programs.

To fill this gap, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research has awarded CRICH multi-year funding to train new scientists to be more effective inner city health research partners.

Our new fellowship program is called the ACHIEVE Research Partnership (“Action for Health Equity Interventions”). Over 24 months, ACHIEVE Fellows work on a range of partnered research projects and on special training modules.

In 2010/2011, ACHIEVE modules included:

- **Social Change, Health Equity Research and Knowledge Translation**
- **Making Conscious Life and Research Choices: Becoming Creative Agents for Change**
- **Concept Mapping with Community**
- **Promoting Successful Partnerships**

The City of Toronto's Policy Analysis and Research Division was our partner on this year's team project. Fellows used concept mapping techniques to consult with Toronto residents and provider agencies about the Community Service System. Our report will be posted at crich.ca in summer 2011.

ACHIEVE is building a vibrant community of practice for health equity across Canada and beyond. In our first year, ACHIEVE fellows secured new research positions at **Mount Allison University, Ryerson University, L'Université du Québec à Montréal, Canadian Institute for Health Information and University of Washington.**

Learn more about ACHIEVE at crich.ca/education.php.

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Raising Awareness

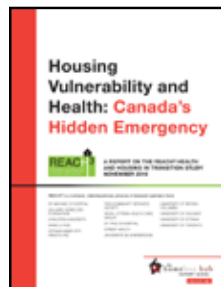


Fairer access to cancer care

Breast, colorectal and cervical cancer can all be successfully treated - if they're found at early stages. When fully developed, these cancers can be deadly. Cancer "screening" programs aim to test everyone in certain age groups for cancer or pre-cancerous conditions, to make sure that necessary treatment can start as early

as possible. Although cancer screening saves thousands of Canadians' lives every year, these programs aren't reaching everyone. For example, South Asian women in Ontario are much less likely than the average female Canadian to get screened for cervical and breast cancer.

CRICH is working with Cancer Care Ontario, Peel Public Health, Punjabi Community Health Services and a wide range of community members to explain what's sustaining this inequity and how to resolve it. The project's unique mix of partners means we're prepared to respond at the provincial as well as local level. To learn more about our work in Peel, contact LobbR@smh.ca.



Sounding the alarm: Canada's hidden housing emergency

People with unstable housing situations face the same severe health problems and danger of assault as people who are homeless. A new report by the CRICH-based Research Alliance for Canadian Homelessness, Housing and Health (REACH3) has revealed a hidden emergency: people who don't have

a healthy place to live - regardless of whether they're vulnerably housed or homeless - are at high risk of serious physical and mental health problems and major problems accessing the health care they need.

Advocacy groups across Canada are using our evidence to push for a national affordable housing strategy, including the Canadian Nurses Association, RedTents, Ottawa Alliance to End Homelessness and Women's Legal Education and Action Fund. Download the report at stmichaelshospital.com/crich/housing-vulnerability-and-health.php.

Developing Tools



BioDiaspora.com

Infectious diseases are spreading across the globe faster today than at any other time in history. Bio.Diaspora is a web application that analyzes airline routes in real time to predict the international spread of infectious diseases. Governments around the world can use this knowledge to develop targeted, strategic

countermeasures to better prepare citizens and protect their health. We've used Bio.Diaspora to help countries anticipate and react to the spread of disease at mass gatherings such as the Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup, the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia and the upcoming Olympic Games in London, England.

This year, an exciting new collaboration with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Harvard University will integrate Bio.Diaspora with **healthmap.org**, a technology that monitors public websites and global online media for news of emerging diseases. Bio.Diaspora was developed by CRICH in collaboration with Ryerson University, the University of Manitoba and the world's largest commercial airport and air transport organizations. Learn more at **biodiaspora.com**.



Health beyond health care: a resource for policy-makers

In Canada and around the world, governments are looking for ways to improve health and well-being while lightening the burden of health care. "Health in All Policies" is an increasingly important strategy that makes health a priority in a range of different

policy sectors. It also involves measuring the impacts of social, environmental, economic and other policies on health and health inequities. "Health in All Policies" is an attractive idea, but it's not easy to put into practice. To help policy-makers learn from one another, CRICH is producing an online database of research on "Health in All Policies," in collaboration with the World Health Organization.

We launched this project at the request of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), to see how "Health in All Policies" could work for Ontario. Download the report to MOHLTC at the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute Products Database at **crich.ca**.

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HIGHLIGHTS 2010/2011 *Developing Tools*



Healthier neighbourhoods in the Region of Peel

Peel is one of Ontario's fastest-growing regions, with massive suburban development underway. CRICH, Peel Public Health and the Region of Peel have come together to make sure that these changes in the urban landscape will help support residents' health. The result? A "healthy development" tool that city planners and developers can use to design and build healthier neighbourhoods.

Given that diseases related to inactivity, such as diabetes and hypertension, are becoming major problems in Peel, the tool promotes neighbourhood features that encourage physical activity. For example, the presence and quality of sidewalks and the location of shops and services can affect residents' decisions about whether to walk or drive.

The region's Planning Department now uses our tool to check the potential health impacts of every new development application. It's also been used to guide changes to Peel's land-use policies and engineering standards. Read a case study of the tool's implementation, published by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, at bit.ly/ezu4Ww.



TorontoHealthProfiles.ca

Some Toronto neighbourhoods are healthier than others. How healthy is your neighbourhood? Since 2005, the Toronto Community Health Profiles Partnership has been making detailed, area-level health data available to everyone. The website features neighbourhood health profiles and maps that make it easy to see differences in health outcomes across communities in Toronto and Ontario. Communities and health planners can use this information to make sure that the programs they develop will meet local residents' specific health needs. The right policies and programs could help give all communities the same opportunities for good health.

Torontohealthprofiles.ca is the result of a data-sharing partnership between CRICH, Toronto Public Health, Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services, Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network, Wellesley Institute and South East Toronto Organization (SETo). It's continually refreshed with the newest available health-related information from the Census, OHIP, hospital and emergency department data, Vital Statistics, Toronto Public Health and other sources. In 2011, we're teaming up with Wellbeing Toronto, a new web application that allows users to map and explore the social, economic and cultural attributes of Toronto neighbourhoods. Watch torontohealthprofiles.ca for more details.

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