

EVALUATION NEWS

ISSUE 1 JUNE 2011

EVALUATING THE SASKATCHEWAN TOBACCO REDUCTION STRATEGY

News and Notes for Tobacco Reduction Partners



THE EVALUATION PLAN

Where are We Now and Where are We Going?

Welcome to the first newsletter in our four part series exploring the evaluation of the Saskatchewan Tobacco Reduction Strategy (the Strategy).

Your Evaluation Team

The Ontario Tobacco Research Unit (OTRU) has been contracted by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health to evaluate the Strategy. OTRU has played a key role in the surveillance of the tobacco use in Ontario and elsewhere since 1993, and has developed a comprehensive program of monitoring and evaluation. The OTRU evaluation team will work with the partners in the provincial tobacco reduction initiative to ensure that the evaluation plan meets Saskatchewan's needs.

First Steps

From January to March, members of the OTRU team were getting the lay-of-the-land here in Saskatchewan. We spoke with some of the key tobacco control stakeholders in the province and used the information and documents that they provided to guide the development of a draft Performance Measurement and Evaluation Plan (the Plan). In total, we conducted 27 key informant interviews and reviewed over 25 documents.

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Working with the Evaluating Effectiveness Team (EET)

On March 23, 2011, representatives from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, Regional Health Authorities and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency met in-person and via teleconference to review the Performance Measurement and Evaluation Plan. A decision was made to formalize the group and terms of reference were drafted. Through a collaborative process, OTRU and the EET will continue to expand upon the Plan and develop a living work plan for the next year. Throughout the coming months, the EET will provide critical input and feedback on the direction and implementation of the Plan.

Current members of the EFT are:

- Flo Woods Ministry of Health (EET co-chair)
- Anna Engel Regina Qu'Appelle Regional Health Authority (EET co-chair)
- Zaman Kamruzzaman Ministry of Health
- Val Mann Ministry of Health
- Cara Zukewich Tobacco Reduction Coordinator
- Mandiangu Nsungu Medical Health Officer, Sunrise Regional Health Authority
- Riaz Alvi Saskatchewan Cancer Agency





THE PLAN

From information that we gathered through the development of the Plan, we are taking a four-pronged approach to evaluation and monitoring of the Strategy:

1. Macro-level Monitoring

- Development of a Tobacco Informatics Monitoring System (TIMS), an online system for tracking population level changes in tobacco related indictors for Saskatchewan).
- An analysis of the gaps in information from existing surveys.

2. Micro-level Performance Measurement

Development of a tracking system.

3. Intervention Evaluation

- Evaluation support and quality assurance to help organizations refine already existing evaluation plans
- Intervention Evaluation
 - Evaluations will be done of two specific programs.

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4. Comprehensive Strategy Evaluation

Information from each of the three components (microlevel, macro-level and program evaluation) are used to learn about:

- What worked best
- Why it worked
- How it worked

The comprehensive strategy evaluation will assess the relative contribution of particular tobacco control activities and focus areas towards achieving desired:

- initial
- intermediate
- and long-term outcomes of the Strategy

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Macro-Level Monitoring

Macro-level monitoring includes two components: a Tobacco Informatics Monitoring System developed

Figure 1: Tobacco Informatics Monitoring System, Saskatchewan (TIMS-SK)



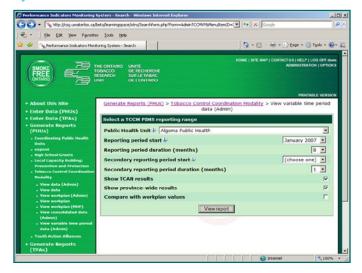
specifically for Saskatchewan (TIMS-SK) and a gaps analysis of existing tobacco control surveys.

TIMS-SK is a web-based program that will allow users to monitor key population and subpopulation tobacco control outcomes. For example, you can find out which Regional Health Authority (RHA) has the highest smoking prevalence rate in just a matter of seconds.

TIMS-SK is now online! Visit us at http://timssk.otru.org/

The gaps analysis of existing tobacco control surveys will let us know what information is available about tobacco control in Saskatchewan and what information is missing. Work on this part of the project will begin in May.

Figure 2: Example of an Electronic Record Keeping System



Micro-Level Performance Measurement

As Saskatchewan develops and implements more tobacco control initiatives, it will be important to gather information about the successes and challenges that are encountered by various programs under the Strategy. A performance measurement framework, similar to one developed for Ontario (see above) will help us to track what organizations are doing, how they are doing it and who they are reaching.

On behalf of the Saskatchewan Stakeholders, the EET and the Ministry of Health will be working together to determine the best system for Saskatchewan.

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Intervention Evaluations

This component of the Plan consists of evaluation support and quality assurance, as well as two specific program evaluations. Discussion is currently taking place to select the programs for in-depth evaluation.

In the next two months, OTRU will develop evaluation plans for these interventions. It is anticipated that the Intervention Evaluation will start during the summer.

Also, OTRU will be offering its evaluation support to interventions that have not been chosen for an in-depth evaluation.

Comprehensive Strategy Evaluation

We will produce a comprehensive report that takes information from each of the three components (macro-level monitoring, micro-level performance measurement and program evaluation) to learn about the contributions of actions, interventions, focus areas and how these contributions interact to help achieve the Strategy goals. This part of the evaluation will be on-going and will not be completed until March 2012.

What's up next?

May

- Contact key informants to develop specific indicators for the Micro-level performance measurement system
- Start development of the performance measurement system
- Begin the gaps analysis of existing surveys
 Start the work plans for the intervention evaluations

June

Start the mid-term strategy report

July

- Finish the formative and/or outcome plans for the intervention evaluations
- Finish the mid-term strategy report

Stay tuned for more Evaluation News over the next few months. Our next edition will be released in early summer.



EVALUATION RESEARCH TEAM

- Emily Di Sante, Evaluation Project Manager
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The Ontario Tobacco Research Unit (OTRU) is an Ontario-based research network that is recognized as a Canadian leader in tobacco control research, monitoring and evaluation, teaching and training and as a respected source of science based information on tobacco control.

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