



## INTRODUCTION

The National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health (NCCDH) is one of six National Collaborating Centres (NCCs) for Public Health created in 2004 to promote and improve the use of scientific research and experiential knowledge to strengthen public health practices and policies in Canada. The centre is located at St. Francis Xavier University (StFX), Antigonish, Nova Scotia. The NCCDH's mandate is to help public health address the determinants of health.

The NCCDH will focus its efforts on helping Public Health better understand and use evidence about how to influence interrelated determinants and reduce health inequities. The NCCDH will focus less on specific determinants such as health literacy or early childhood development, and more on evidence-based KSTE to further health equity. Local and regional public health organizations will be targeted as the primary units of adoption. Inter-sectoral as well as interdisciplinary partnerships will be foundational to addressing the determinants of health and promoting health equity in Canada.

## MOVING FORWARD

### THE NCCDH HAS TWO COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR 2011-2015:

**First Objective:** *To provide public health practitioners with the opportunity to learn about existing and emerging determinants knowledge, evidence and promising practices and subsequently **acquire** the appropriate skills to address health inequities.*

#### The NCCDH has a two-fold strategy for achieving this objective:

- 1. Emphasize uptake of existing knowledge:** Generate brief 'so what' introductions to major reports/research to be posted on NCCDH's new, more portal-like website and through social media. A Canadian version of the Pan American Health Organization's online course about social determinants of health will be developed.
- 2. Deepen public health's knowledge around what works:** Generate fact/review sheets and audio/video conversations with experts about evidence-informed policies and strategies that can be effectively implemented by regional/local health departments.

**Second Objective:** *To help public health organizations and practitioners more effectively **apply** promising practices at frontline, leadership, organizational and system levels.*

#### The NCCDH has a three-fold strategy for achieving this objective:

- 1. Increase exchange:** Build mechanisms between developers and users of knowledge and among public health practitioners, that support and leverage early adopter organizations and existing identified promising practices. This will include a web-enabled learning community and increased use of video/audio products, webinars and social media.
- 2. Invest in applied learning:** Undertake applied learning projects and create knowledge products/exchange events along the way. There will be at least two projects each year designed to modify traditional public health practices and better illuminate equity – starting with population health status reporting.
- 3. Deepen our understanding of leadership:** Scan the literature and elicit expert opinions to better understand leadership enablers and barriers. Disseminate extant intervention options supporting public health leaders to escalate health equity gains.

Achieving these two objectives will give public health improved knowledge and skills to fulfill **four roles identified as essential to taking action on health determinants to reduce health inequities**. Those roles are:

- 1. Assess and report** on the health of populations describing the existence and impact of health inequalities and inequities and, effective strategies to address those inequalities/inequities.
- 2. Modify/orient** public health interventions to reduce inequities including the consideration of the unique needs and capacities of priority populations.
- 3. Engage** in community and multi-sectoral collaboration in addressing the health needs of populations through services and programs.
- 4. Lead/participate and support** other stakeholders in policy analysis, development and advocacy for improvements in health determinants/inequities.

## PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are key to NCCDH successfully achieving its objectives. In addition to collaborations with its five sister National Collaborating Centres (NCCs), the NCCDH is negotiating partnerships with public health organizations and associations (local/regional, provincial and pan-Canadian), academics and research centres, and strategic networks.

## SUMMARY

With its new Scientific Director, soon-to-be-enhanced team and funding for the next four years, the NCCDH anticipates being well placed to: **support** public health departments in their efforts to find and consider *how* to apply best available and emerging knowledge about determinants and health equity; **offer** existing resources about effective public health practices to advance equity; and **engage** public health professionals in collaborative learning projects and NCCDH's learning network. The NCCDH aspires to become the go-to site for evidence-based resources enabling public health to address the determinants of health and reduce health inequities – and in the process, improve the health and well-being of all Canadians.

Please download *Integrating Social Determinants of Health and Health Equity into Canadian Public Health Practice: Environmental Scan 2010* at [www.nccdh.ca](http://www.nccdh.ca)