

## Zone PCN Provincial Evaluation Support

### Provincial Evaluation Background

The Primary Health Care Opioid Response Initiative (PHC ORI) grant proposal has secured a provincial evaluation budget. The Applied Research and Evaluation Unit (ARES), Provincial PHC program, AHS, will be accountable for high quality and informative evaluation reporting for the PHC ORI. Providing analytic supports to the zones, if otherwise unavailable, and creating opportunities to build evaluation capacity is part of the contract that ARES holds with the Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP), the grant holder.

The key deliverables for the evaluation require provincial level reporting as established in the PHC ORI grant agreement and project charter.

Based on the short timeline and a multi-layered approach to the grant, the opportunity to run a multi-layered robust evaluation at a variety of levels (macro or systems level, meso or zone/PCN level & micro or clinic level) is not possible.

ARES will strive for an evaluation approach that ensures useful and informative evaluation reporting to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders.

### Evaluation Principles

Principles that are guiding the development of a provincial evaluation include:

- 1) We want to learn from others, including other evaluations that have been funded through the Minister's Opioid Emergency Response Commission (MOERC).
- 2) We want to align this evaluation to other provincial (including MOERC as well as across Canada) work when possible.
- 3) A collaborative evaluation approach (Cousins et al, 2015) is guiding this evaluation, a "made in Canada" approach. A provincial Evaluation Advisory Committee has been struck in July 2018. Zone/PCN representatives have been invited to participate in the provincial Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) and/or working groups (as required moving forward).
- 4) Provincial data sources, sampling methodology, and embedded "data capture" in training activities will be relied upon whenever possible. For example, the benefit of having the informative data reports being produced by Alberta Health (AH) allows us to establish baselines and creates a standardized way to report on the key indicators moving forward. This will reduce data capture burden at the clinic, PCN and zone service areas as well as bring rigor to the results.
- 5) There is a recognition that measurement/survey fatigue exists in the primary care. A thoughtful and "slim" methods approach will guide the evaluation work.
- 6) There will be no "surprises" regarding the findings. Updates will be provided on a regular basis through the grant's collaboration forum.
- 7) This is really IMPORTANT work for primary health care. What we learn along the way will be of interest to both our funder as well as other provinces.

### Evaluation Competencies

The practice of evaluation requires skills that are multi-faceted in nature and range from methodological and contextual expertise, relationship building and project planning/management. In providing supports to the zones, ARES will draw upon these competencies from across their staff who contribute to this

work. These competencies are further detailed by both the Canadian Evaluation Society<sup>1</sup> and the American Evaluation Association<sup>2</sup>.

## **Strategies for PHC ORI Evaluation Zone PCN Support**

As per the PHC ORI project charter the assumption is that Zone PCN Committee will contribute to the provincial evaluation and not have their own independent evaluations. Following this assumption, the following strategies have been put in place to ensure zone PCN perspectives inform provincial work.

- An “open door” approach is in place and the ARES evaluation team encourages questions about evaluation when they arise in the zones. Sandy Berzins, Ph.D. is the Senior Evaluation Lead for this work.
- A provincial evaluation advisory committee (EAC) was struck early in the grant cycle (July 2018) and zones have been asked to nominate representatives if there is interest to serve on the EAC.
- An evaluation representative (or liaison) has been requested from each zone by the provincial Senior Evaluation Lead and this individual will serve as the first point of contact by the Lead.
- Diverse viewpoints are anticipated to ensure a robust evaluation and reporting approach.
- The PHC ORI monthly collaboration forums will include information on evaluation progress, including updates on deliverables.
- Requests for analytic support required by the zones can be made through Sandy Berzins. A form has been produced to track these requests. Provincial resources can be used to support such requests, with proper lead time.
  - This may include assistance with survey development, analysis of data (quantitative or qualitative), data interpretation, and/or simply to act as a support to “bounce ideas off of” as work is advancing in the zones.
- The evaluation team will be reaching out to the zones to build zone level logic models that graphically portray their activities and anticipated outcomes. This work would start December 2018.
- If zone representatives would like one of the co-chairs from the Evaluation Advisory Committee to present to their opioid working group as the evaluation is advancing, please follow up and a presentation can be arranged.
- Findings from the interim and final reports will be available in written form. In addition, presentations can also be arranged at a zone’s request.

The goal is to produce an evaluation that captures what has been accomplished through PHC ORI funding.

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Evaluation Society competencies - [https://evaluationcanada.ca/txt/2\\_competencies\\_cdn\\_evaluation\\_practice.pdf](https://evaluationcanada.ca/txt/2_competencies_cdn_evaluation_practice.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> American Evaluation Association Guiding Principles for Evaluators - <https://www.eval.org/page/competencies>

For more information on the provincial evaluation approach and/or the Evaluation Advisory Committee, please contact one of the co-chairs:

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