Improving Aboriginal Heart Health in WA: bringing everyone on the journey

Emma Haynes, Western Australian Centre for Rural Health (WACRH)
Judy Katzenellenbogen, WACRH
Sandra Thompson, WACRH
Dawn Bessarab, Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health
Today

• A knowledge translation (KT) journey – closing the gap

• What we learnt along the way
  – Complex
  – Iterative
  – Strategic relationships

• Evaluating effective KT
INCIDENCE OF MYOCARDIAL INFARCTION: AGE SPECIFIC RATES, BY SEX AND ABORIGINALITY: WA 2000-04

Knowledge Translation (KT)

“the exchange, synthesis and ethically sound application of knowledge – within a complex system of interactions among researchers and users – to accelerate the capture of benefits of research”

Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Knowledge to practice

Poor Aboriginal heart health reflects a knowledge – to – practice gap

Developing, evaluating and sharing knowledge translation strategies that benefit disadvantaged populations is essential to address health inequity.
Evolution of the Bettering Aboriginal Heart Health WA (BAHHWA) project

- **WA Health grant** (2007)
  Evaluating AHW role in a cardiac ward
- **NHMRC grant** (2008-2011)
  Disparities in management of *Ischaemic Heart Dx*
- NHMRC grant  (2012-14) BAHHWA
  Extend work to *Heart Failure & Dysrhythmias*
Focus of BAHHWA

RESEARCH
1. Epidemiology and clinical manifestations of heart disease and major co-morbid conditions
2. Access of Aboriginal people to acute and continuing medical care for heart diseases
3. Describe health care service utilisation and direct costs

RESEARCH TRANSLATION
4. To disseminate findings, encourage action in the sector and study system barriers to change
Mixed Methods Data collection

WA Data linkage system

Routine hospital data

Death records

Review of ACS hospital records (WA-wide)

Qualitative Methods

Clinical data (2002-04)
- Investigations
- Biochemistry
- Medications
- Revascularisation
- Medical history
- Complications
- Co-morbidities

Evaluation of translation
- Interviews, focus groups
- Participants: providers, policy-makers, planners, community
- Outputs and data provision
Trap: Deficit model in Indigenous health

- Paints all people with the same brush, oversimplify
- Overlooks strengths
- Can overwhelm with negativity
- Disempowering health messages
- Caution: Disparity research can reinforce deficit

“You’re always hearing about the stats … death happens so often”

BAHHWA intent & principles

• Strengths based

• Integrate social determinants in understanding heart health

• Emphasize health system issues (rather than individual behaviour change)

• Focus on solutions

• Engage with stakeholders to encourage ownership and translation
Pyramid of Aboriginal heart disease

- Ischaemic heart disease
- Atrial fibrillation
- Heart failure
- Other heart diseases
- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Atherosclerosis
- High BP & Cholesterol
- Stress
- Smoking/Drug/Alc
- Obesity
- Diet
- Inactivity
- Intra-uterine stress
- Poverty
- Unhealthy environment
- Education disadvantage
- Poor health access
- Colonisation
Building blocks of solutions

Pyramid of Aboriginal Heart Disease

Evidence-based treatment for heart disease:
- Access to specialists
- Cardiac rehabilitation
- Connect hospital to community care
- Continuity of care in community

Early diagnosis and treatment:
- Good access to culturally appropriate primary care
- Screening at young age
- Family involvement

Healthy lifestyle:
- Community initiatives and support
- Opportunities for healthy choices
- Access to affordable lifestyle programs
- Pregnancy & parenting programs

Social, policy & system change:
- Healthy environments - incl intra-uterine
- Social and economic opportunities
- Culturally appropriate systems
- Aboriginal workforce capacity
- Community building

Building Blocks of Solutions
Consultation for solutions

• ‘Information for Action’ workshops
  – Representatives from diverse sectors, including research, policy, and health service provision, Aboriginal health organisations and the Aboriginal community
  – Discussed ideas, shared knowledge and experience

→ Stakeholder reference group
Part II - Strategies to improve Aboriginal heart health

Actions for change at three levels (integrated and aligned)

1. Individual-family-community
2. Organisational
3. Government/policy

- Case studies - AHLO’s; audits
- Resources to help translate recommendations to practice
Stakeholder Report

Information for Action:
Improving the Heart Health Story for Aboriginal People in WA

The report

The Integrated Knowledge Translation Research Cycle

1. Shape the research questions
2. Decide on a methodology
3. Help with data collection and tools development
4. Interpret the study findings
5. Move research results into practice
6. Widespread dissemination and application
The Integrated Knowledge Translation Research Cycle

1. Shape the research questions
2. Decide on a methodology
3. Help with data collection and tools development
4. Interpret the study findings
5. Move research results into practice
6. Widespread dissemination and application

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, [http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/42211.html](http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/42211.html)
The Journey

First draft of report

Multiple research studies
Journal papers
Presentations
Rural training workshop

Workshop with stakeholders
Report reference group

Report

Partnerships for interventions
Media exposure
Wide Dissemination
What next?

- Building on partnerships
- Health systems focus (discharge to rural and remote) →
- Expanding beyond Aboriginal health and beyond heart health

“if you improve systems for Aboriginal people, you improve systems for everyone”

(AHLO from WA teaching hospital)
Partnerships

• Heart Foundation
• CVD Health Networks
• Aboriginal Health Improvement Unit
• Rural Health West
• Aboriginal Division, WA Health
• Epidemiology Branch, WA Health
• WA Primary Health Alliance (PHNs)
• Clinicians
• GP hospital liaison and GP networks
• Patient Assistance Transport Scheme, manager
• WA Consumer Council (Aboriginal manager)
• Aboriginal community organisations
Funding applications - initiatives to improve discharge to rural/remote primary care:

1. WA Health Department - developing a web-based Aboriginal Health Information tool

2. Heart Foundation Partnerships Engagement Grant - REMOTE-HEART - service access facilitator

Proposed - NHMRC research translation workshop
The journey now

Interventions

Part I

First draft of report

Part II

Final Report

Media exposure

Partnerships for interventions

Report reference group

Workshop with stakeholders

Rural training workshop

Presentations

Multiple research studies

Journal papers

SHRAC

Heart Foundation Partnership engagement

NHMRC Knowledge Translation workshop

Pilbara Heart Health Forum

Wide Dissemination

Partnerships

Interventions

Part I

AND II

Part II

AND II
Evaluating knowledge translation

1) Improved communication channels and processes;

2) Working relationships among stakeholders;

3) Ongoing forum for sharing among stakeholders;

4) Opportunities for collaboration;

5) Creation of a shared vocabulary among stakeholders

Davison et al. (2009)
• Rigorous evidence
• Credibility – part of a consensus building collaboration
• Relationships – strategic
• Messages actionable, customised to stakeholder
• Communicated often, using different means/voices
• Serendipity
• Persistence
Conclusions

• Developing, evaluating and sharing KT strategies that benefit disadvantaged populations is an essential component of health equity

Learnings

• Steps aren’t always in the order you think

• Need to be open and flexible - build on unexpected opportunities

• Needs resources and time
Health equity focused KT

Strategic relationships

• It is important to form “collaborative knowledge relationships” committed to “critical inquiry and reflexive practice” that can inform actions at the political level (Masuda et al, 2014)

• System change - draw on range of capacities, at different times and settings

Facilitators

• Role in fostering change and innovation - “relations-oriented” facilitation (Aarons et al, 2015)

• Academics - neutral outsider?
The journey is worth it

Thank you!
References


• More About Knowledge Translation at CIHR [http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/39033.html]

