

## Funders



Canadian Health Services Research Foundation  
Fondation canadienne de la recherche sur les services de santé



## Participating Universities



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- EXTRA Program
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### The OTC: Five years later

## CHSRF Renews OTC Funding to 2012 Unconditionally



Opening presentation  
(Review Panel, 2006-10-18)

The Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF) has completed the midterm evaluation of its regional training centres and we are delighted that the OTC has been favourably reviewed and its funding renewed until 2012 without conditions.

The evaluation process included the completion of a Review Report, an Online Survey of individuals associated with the OTC in various capacities (students, decision-making partners, faculty and principals), and a Site Visit (with onsite and online interviews of current students, graduates, principals, affiliated faculty, decision-makers, regional co-sponsors, advisory board members, and senior university administrators).

Members of the CHSRF's Review Panel included Drs. Ken Davey (Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus, York University), Jack Altman (Health Care Executive and former Vice President of Vancouver Community Health Services), and Doreen Neville (Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University of Newfoundland).

### CHSRF's Official Review Report was extremely positive:

*"The training centre has achieved significant success in its first four years. A consortium of six universities, it has managed to mount a common interdisciplinary program... Given the differing requirements and customs at individual universities, this is a remarkable achievement and speaks to both the commitment of the institutions to the program, and the enthusiasm of the Principals and large number of associated faculty with the leadership of Dr. DiCenso and the sure administrative hand of Miguel A. Pérez.*

*The OTC has exceeded its objectives in terms of the number of students in the program. These students are of high quality and have been attracted from a wide range of disciplines. In the program, they are given a first rate experience, devising a tailored learning plan that ensures their competency in five areas common to all students and encourages specific diverse interests. They have the benefit of a placement with a decision maker organization, and a summer institute with the active participation of decision makers. The involvement of decision maker organizations is substantive. The students are enthusiastic about their experience and have career goals both in the academy and in decision maker organizations. It is a program in which the Centre, and particularly the participating institutions, can take some pride."*

The OTC formally thanks its multitude of decision-making partners (involved in local planning and development, Summer Institutes, Advisory Board, and policy practica), the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), partnering branches and agencies of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Mental Health and Rehabilitation Policy Unit, Health Human Resources Policy Branch, Research Unit of the Knowledge Management and Reporting Branch, Nursing Secretariat, Ontario Women's Health Council, and Local Health Integration Network Liaison Branch), the CIHR Institute for Health Services and Policy Research (IHSRP), the Ontario Mental Health Foundation (OMHF), Health Canada's Health Human Resources Strategies Branch, the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), the Ontario Rehabilitation Research Advisory Network, its over 150 participating faculty across the consortium, its 43 affiliated graduate programs, senior university administrators from its six participating universities, its 123 students and graduates, and its 20 principal investigators.

*Funded by the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the OTC is a consortium of six Ontario universities that offers graduate training leading to a Diploma in Health Services and Policy Research at Lakehead, Laurentian, McMaster, Ottawa, and York Universities and to an equivalent qualification through the Collaborative Graduate Program in Health Services and Policy Research at the University of Toronto.*

**Lakehead University**

Bruce Minore\*  
Bill Montelpare  
Pam Wakewich

**Laurentian University**

Ellen Rukholm\*  
Raymond Pong

**McMaster University**

Kevin Brazil\*  
Alba DiCenso  
Wendy Sword  
Susan Watt

**University of Ottawa**

Doug Angus\*  
Barb Davies  
Nancy Edwards  
Brenda Wilson

**University of Toronto**

Rhonda Cockerill\*  
Peter Coyte  
Diane Doran  
Paula Goering  
Linda O'Brien-Pallas

**York University**

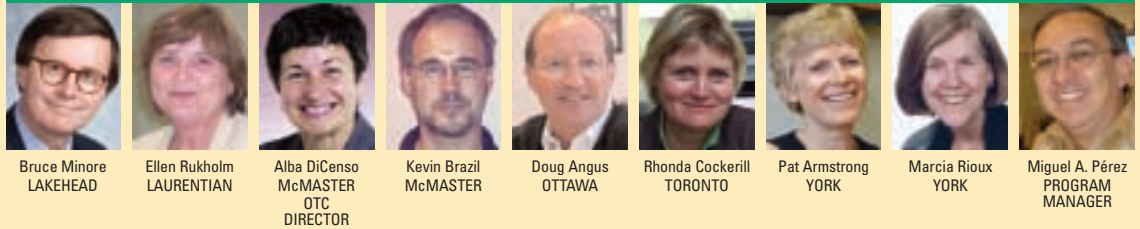
Pat Armstrong\*\*  
Marcia Rioux\*\*

\* Site Directors  
\*\* Site Co-Directors

Special thanks go to **Louise Bouchard** (University of Ottawa), Acting OTC Site Director during D. Angus' sabbatical, to Rose Vonau (OTC Administrative Assistant), and to the supporting personnel across the universities of the consortium: Fran Guilbeault (Laurentian University), Robin Hurst (University of Toronto), Roseline Savage (University of Ottawa), Wendy Winters (York University), and Karen Woychyshyn (Lakehead University).

The OTC congratulates **Dr. Nancy Edwards** for the recognition by the City of Ottawa for her contribution to community health (the City of Ottawa proclaimed May 10, 2006 as *Nancy Edwards' Day* during National Nursing Week) and for being the recipient of the University of Ottawa's 2007 Award for Excellence in Research.

OTC Director, Site Directors, and Program Manager



## OTC Achievements

Since its launching in July 2002, highlights to date include:

- approval by the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS) in 2003 to offer a Diploma in Health Services and Policy Research at Lakehead, Laurentian, McMaster, Ottawa, and York Universities and the incorporation of a Collaborative Program in Health Services and Policy Research at the University of Toronto and a follow up OCGS evaluation in 2005 that recommended the continuation of the programs across the six universities;
- development of 12 targeted distance education courses to address the OTC competencies in health services and policy research (11 developed and/or converted into distance education format in 2004 and one under development);
- recruitment of 123 graduate students from the six participating universities during the 2003 (23), 2004 (28), 2005 (19), 2006 (24), and 2007 (29) rounds of admission (with approximately 47% -58 students- at the Master's level and 53% -65 students- at the Ph.D. level);
- allocation of over \$1.5 million (from all its funding sources) to student stipends across the six sites for the above five student cohorts. Additional student financial support includes travel and accommodation expenses to attend the Meet-and-Greet Orientation (along with a major conference in health services research) for new students and the required Summer Institute;
- graduation of 26 students up to the end of 2006 plus another 12 expected to graduate by the end of 2007;
- offering of four Summer Institutes focusing on: *“Research and Policy Implications of Delivering Mental Health Services in Rural and Northern Parts of Ontario”* (June 2004, Lakehead University); *“Health Human Resources Research and Policy: A Focus on Rural and Northern Issues”* (June 2005, Laurentian University); *“Women’s Health in Research, Policy, and Services: Challenges for the Future”* (May 2006, York University); and *“Regionalization of Health Services in Terms of Planning, Funding, and Delivery”* (June 2007, McMaster University);
- continuation of the partnership with CHSRF (started in 2004) to provide organizational and mentoring support to the Ontario component of the **EX**ecutive **T**raining for **R**esearch **A**pplication (EXTRA) program, whose primary goal is to give senior health system managers across Canada the skills to better use research in their day-to-day work, as a way to increase evidence-informed decision-making in the health system. Twenty seven senior health services executives in Ontario have participated (or are participating) as EXTRA Fellows to date (out of a total of some 100 EXTRA Fellows across Canada).

Although the original OTC proposal had an initial target of 102 new health services and policy researchers trained by the end of year 10, -based on current levels of activity- the OTC will have trained about 246 health services and policy researchers by the end of year 10 (241% of the original target).



## 2007 Summer Institute: Regionalization of Health Services

With the theme “*Regionalization of Health Services in Terms of Planning, Funding, and Delivery*,” the OTC) successfully held its fourth Summer Institute at McMaster University during the week of June 18-22, 2007. In addition to its OTC base budget, the institute was co-sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Local Health Integration Network Liaison Branch and Research Unit of the Knowledge Management and Reporting Branch), McMaster University’s *Collaborations for Health*, the CIHR Institute for Health Services and Policy Research (IHSPR), and the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI).

### Topics included:

- *Regionalization in Canada* (defining regionalization in healthcare; why regionalization; the Ontario experience);
- *International, national, and provincial perspectives* (international perspectives - lessons learned; the Canadian experience; roles and responsibilities of the provincial government in Ontario, the LHINs Boards, and health service providers);
- *Implementing regionalization* (the role of public participation in the management of regionalization; funding allocation: methods for fair and equitable resource allocation; accountability considerations within a regional health system; change management);
- *The impact of regionalization on service delivery* (reinventing academia – lessons and challenges from regionalization; renewing governance – role of ideas, institutions, and interests; mental health and addiction services in regionalized governance structures – a review); and
- *Translating and exchanging knowledge* (knowledge transfer and exchange in a regionalized environment... life just got more complicated).

Review of student feedback indicates a very positive response to the theme, presenters, fellow students, and learning assignment:

*“This was a fantastic experience. I am re-thinking my dissertation proposal and career plan in new and very exciting ways... I really enjoyed meeting other students with similar (but different!) interests. The opportunity to connect with experts (academics and decision-makers) was great... Intense, focused, exhausting, enlightening... The work on the Letter of Intent was more demanding than I would have liked, but the experience was useful... An exceptional learning opportunity and experience... I can’t imagine having had an opportunity to experience this much through any other forum. Speakers were highly relevant and dynamic.”*

The OTC welcomes co-sponsorship for future Summer Institutes and for additional student support (student stipends and conference travel bursaries). For further information, contact Miguel A. Pérez, Ph.D., Program Manager, at 905-525-9140 Ext. 26203 or [mperez@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mperez@mcmaster.ca)

**Pat Conrad**  
CADRE Senior  
Program Officer,  
Canadian Health  
Services Research  
Foundation (CHSRF).

**Sheree Davis**  
Executive Lead,  
Health System Strategy  
Branch, Ontario  
Ministry of Health and  
Long-Term Care.

**Alba DiCenso**  
Director, OTC

**Faith Donald**  
OTC Graduate,  
McMaster University.

**Judith Horrigan**  
OTC Student,  
Laurentian University.

**Vickie Kaminski**  
President and CEO of  
the Sudbury Regional  
Hospital.

**Ron Pearlman  
(Chair)**  
Interim Dean, Faculty  
of Graduate Studies,  
York University.

**Miguel A. Pérez**  
Program Manager,  
OTC

Special thanks go to **Dr. Fred Hall** (former Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, McMaster University) for his participation as senior university member on the Board from 2004 to 2007, to **Dr. Rosana Pellizzari** (former Medical Officer of Health, Perth District Health Unit, Stratford) for her participation as a health services decision maker on the Board during 2006, and to **Ann Marie Strapp** for representing Sheree Davis on the OTC Board.

## OTC Student News

- **Catherine Boudreau** (OTC student, *Nursing*, **Laurentian University**), whose thesis focuses on *role perceptions of public health nurses in Northern Ontario* and who currently is a nursing faculty member at Canadore College in North Bay, participated as member of the Advisory Committee for the CHSRF's Research Use Week (Northeastern Ontario) that took place May 14-16, 2007 in Sudbury.

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- **Rachel Cull** (OTC student, *Nursing*, **Laurentian University**), whose thesis focuses on *nursing autonomy and leadership in acute care settings* and who currently is the Manager of the Ontario Telemedicine Network in Timmins, also participated as member of the Advisory Committee for the CHSRF's Research Use Week (Northeastern Ontario) and presented on "Developing research together- building productive partnerships."

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- **Beth Dewitt** (OTC graduate, *Social Anthropology*, **York University**) is now working for Anzen, a Canadian consulting firm specializing in health information privacy. As a Privacy Specialist, she conducts privacy impact assessments, provides advice to mitigate risks to patient privacy, and develops corporate privacy programs for health care organizations.

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- **Faith Donald** (OTC graduate, *Nursing*, **McMaster University**) was granted one of the CHSRF's 2006 Post-doctoral Awards. Faith is also an Associate Professor with the School of Nursing at Ryerson University. Her post-doctoral work focuses on *building strategies to enhance the full integration of nurse practitioners into new models of long-term care*. Her supervisors are Kevin Brazil and Jenny Ploeg (both from McMaster University) and her decision-maker partners include Tim Burns and Rosanne Jabbour (both from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care). Faith presented results from her thesis at the Sigma Theta Tau 18th International Research Congress in July 2007 in Vienna, Austria.

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- Jillian Clare Cohen (Assistant Professor, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Toronto) and **Laura Esmail** (OTC student, *Pharmaceutical Sciences*, **University of Toronto**) had an opinion editorial on the status of *Canada's Access to Medicines Regime* published in the national electronic edition of The Globe and Mail (January 30, 2007).

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- **Olga Gajic-Veljanoski** (OTC graduate, *Health Policy, Management and Evaluation*, **University of Toronto**) is currently working as a Research Associate with the Osteoporosis Program at the University Health Network (UHN) in Toronto. She completed her OTC Policy Practicum with Donna Stewart at the Women's Health Program (UHN) focused on human trafficking in Canada. Their research resulted in various oral presentations and publications (UN Commission and Status of Women, CMAJ, and Transcultural Psychiatry –in print-). She has been offered a 2007-2008 Ontario Graduate Scholarship and will be starting her PhD studies in Health Administration, specializing in Clinical Epidemiology, at the University of Toronto in September 2007.

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- **Rebecca Gewurtz** (OTC student, *Rehabilitation Science*, **University of Toronto**) presented a poster titled "*Making qualitative research useful for decision-makers: a meta-synthesis approach*" at the 2007 Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) in Toronto (June 12-14), which also won the third prize in the CIHR-IHSPR sponsored student poster competition during the conference. Rebecca completed her OTC Policy Practicum at the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Ontario focusing on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) and the opportunities for CMHA Ontario involvement.

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- **Christine Kurtz Landy** (OTC graduate, *Nursing*, **McMaster University**) has been granted one of the CHSRF's 2007 Post-doctoral Awards. Christine, who is an Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing at McMaster University will focus her program on the *development and testing of community-based interventions to prevent intimate partner violence*. Her supervisors are Harriet MacMillan (McMaster University) and Nancy Edwards (University of Ottawa) and her decision-maker partners include Debbie Sheehan (Public Health Services, City of Hamilton) and Vasanthi Srinivasan (Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care).

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- **Wendy McGuire** (OTC student, *Public Health*, **University of Toronto**) completed her OTC policy placement at Innovations at the University of Toronto where she also coordinated an international symposium, "*Today's research, tomorrow's prosperity: the commercialization of university research*". The symposium took place May 24, 2007 and brought together practitioners from universities, industry and government to share international best practices in the commercialization and transfer of university research, including health and biotechnology-related research. Wendy is completing her dissertation on "*Science policy and academic practice:*

*how health scientists pursue scientific legitimacy in the current research funding context.* She will present preliminary findings from her study at the Society for the Social Studies of Science (4S) 2007 Annual Meeting, October 11-13, Montreal, Canada.

- **Enette Pauzé** (OTC student, *Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, University of Toronto*) participated during March 2007 in a project of the Inter-Professional Network of British Columbia (In-BC). In-BC projects involve students and health professionals representing a wide range of disciplines, link with key health care priorities, and are led by the respective health authorities in partnership with post-secondary institutions.
- **Martha Paynter** (OTC student, *Health Research Methodology, McMaster University*) received the Sackett Award for Best Presentation during the 2006 Research Day of the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics at McMaster University. Her presentation was titled *"Applying a determinants of health perspective to determine cause of death: reviewing domestic violence deaths in New Brunswick."* She is also providing support to Dr. Carol Amaratunga (Institute of Population Health and Department of Epidemiology and Community Medicine, University of Ottawa, and Ontario Women's Health Council Chair) in the development of the OTC course *"Women's health research, policy, and services."*
- **Karen Rebeiro-Gruhl** (OTC student, *Rural and Northern Health, Laurentian University*) presented, at the 2007 national conference of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists in July, a poster on research conducted with occupational therapy students (*"And then I lost that life: occupational reconstruction in schizophrenia"*). Two current publications (in press) include *"Strengths and challenges to practice: the recovery path"* (a chapter for the book *Advancing Occupational Therapy in Mental Health Practice*) and a paper (along with R. Laporte) titled *"I'm still swimming": a return-to-work journey for an individual with bipolar affective disorder"* for the *Journal of Work*. Co-authoring with S. Strong, Karen is also preparing an invited chapter titled *"Person-environment-occupation"* for the book *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health: A Vision for Participation*.
- **Adnan Qureshi** (OTC student, *Health Research Methodology, McMaster University*) completed his OTC Policy Practicum with the Quality Management Collaborative, an Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care initiative to inform policy development through a formative evaluation of Family Health Teams across Ontario. Adnan has recently submitted a paper for publication in a peer-reviewed journal titled *"Pragmatic approach to informed consent for research participants with Alzheimer's Disease."*
- **Kristin Shields** (OTC graduate, *Public Health, Lakehead University*) is currently working as Senior Consultant, Planning and Community Engagement, with the North West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) Thunder Bay.
- **Dawn Smith** (OTC graduate, *Population Health, University of Ottawa*) and Barb Davies (Professor, School of Nursing, University of Ottawa, and OTC Principal) published the article *"Creating a new dynamic in aboriginal health: community health nurses' views of knowledge exchange"* in *The Canadian Nurse*, 102(4), 36-39, 2006. In addition to other publications, she is the principal author of *"Bringing safety and responsiveness into the foreground of care for pregnant and parenting Aboriginal people."* *Advances in Nursing Science*, 29(2), 2006. Dawn received the 2006 Canadian Public Health Association's Population and Public Health Doctoral Research Award and is an Assistant Professor with the School of Nursing at the University of Ottawa.
- **Diem Tran** (OTC student, *Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Toronto*) won a second place during the Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) and CIHR Institute of Health Services and Policy Research (IHSPR) Forum 2006 in Vancouver (September 17-19) with her poster titled *"Rehabilitation health human resources: recruitment, retention, and education strategies."*
- **Rishma Walji** (OTC student, *Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Toronto*) presented a paper titled *"Pharmacists and herbal product related adverse events: Whose responsibility is it?"* at the 2007 Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR) in Toronto (June 12-14). He has also submitted a review of black cohosh for cancer patients and is about to submit a primer for pharmacists on supplements in diabetes. He completed his OTC Policy Practicum last summer at Health Canada in the Marketed Health Products Directorate (working on *natural health product adverse event reporting guidelines for practitioners and manufacturers*).



## About EXTRA

As one of CHSRF's flagship programs, the **EX**ecutive Training for **R**esearch **A**pplication (**EXTRA**) program develops capacity and leadership to optimize the use of research evidence in managing Canadian healthcare organizations.

EXTRA gives health system managers across Canada the skills to better use research in their daily work, as a way to increase evidence-informed decision-making in the health system.

The EXTRA program targets health service professionals in senior management positions - nurse executives, physician executives, and other health administration executives.

Since 2004 and until 2014, up to 24 fellows are accepted annually in the two-year EXTRA training program. Spread over four away-from-home residency sessions which incorporate six curriculum modules, the fellowship experience offers:

1. knowledge of research evidence (its existence, location, and relevance/application);
2. the capacity to draw on "system thinking;"
3. development of collaborative professional relationships; and
4. the ability to introduce and manage evidence-informed change.

The EXTRA call for Fellowship applications is launched in October and the competition closes on March 1 every year. Notification of Fellowship Awards is provided on May 1 every year.

**For further information:**  
[www.chsrf.ca/extra](http://www.chsrf.ca/extra)



## EXTRA Program

The OTC continues to provide administrative and mentoring support to the Ontario component of the **EX**ecutive Training for Research Application (**EXTRA**) program.

Ontario EXTRA Fellows (9) who completed the program between 2004 and 2006, and who graduated in August 2006, include: *Pierre Jean Allard* (Chief, Division of Palliative Care, SCO Health Services, Ottawa), *Maureen Cava* (Manager, Professional Practice, Toronto Public Health), *Sonja Glass* (Corporate Manager, Risk Management and Quality Improvement, Grey Bruce Health Services, Owen Sound), *David H. Goldstein* (Medical Director, Acute Pain Management Services, Kingston General Hospital), *Heather Hoxby* (Director of Nursing Practice, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton), *Kirsten Krull-Naraj* (Vice-President, Patient Programs and Chief Nursing Officer, Royal Victoria Hospital, Barrie), *Nancy Lefebvre* (Vice President, Knowledge and Practice, Saint Elizabeth Health Care, Markham), *Heather McPherson* (Chief of Health Disciplines, Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre, Toronto), and *James Worthington* (Vice President, Medical Affairs, Quality, Patient Safety, The Ottawa Hospital).

Ontario EXTRA Fellows (6) who have completed the program between 2005 and 2007, and who graduated this year, include: *Carolyn Baker* (President and CEO, St. Joseph's Health Centre, Toronto), *Wendy Fucile* (Lecturer, Trent/Fleming School of Nursing, Trent University), *Kevin Mercer* (Director of Member Outreach Services, Ontario Medical Association), *Susan Richardson* (Vice-President Patient Services and Allied Health, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, Ottawa), *John Ruetz* (Executive Lead, Community Programs, Bridgepoint Health, Hamilton), and *Gaetan Tardif* (Vice-President Patient Care and Chief Medical Officer, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute).

Ontario EXTRA Fellows (7) who started their program in 2006, and who recently completed their second Intervention Project Progress Report, include: *Raj Bhatla* (Associate Chief, Psychiatry, Royal Ottawa Health Care Group), *Faith Boutcher* (Director, Professional Practice, Research and Education, North York General Hospital), *Inta Bregzis* (Senior Director, Performance Management and Accountability, Waterloo Wellington Community Care Access Centre), *Patrick Gaskin* (Executive Vice-President, Grand River Hospital, and Vice-President, Regional Cancer Services, Cancer Care Ontario), *Sue McCutcheon* (Vice-President Clinical Services, Grey Bruce Health Services, Wiarton), *Louise Patrick* (Chief of Allied Health, SCO Health Service, Ottawa), and *Jodi Younger* (Operational Service Manager, Mental Health and Addictions, St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton).

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## Post-OTC Fellowship



Kimberley Sears

Thanks to joint funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Nursing Secretariat) and the OTC, a post-OTC Fellowship aimed at providing an advanced experience in collaborative health services and policy research was recently created for OTC nursing graduates.

The OTC is pleased to announce that the Fellowship has been awarded to Kimberley Sears, a student in the Ph.D. program in Nursing and the OTC Collaborative Program in Health Services and Policy Research at the University of Toronto. Her Ph.D. supervisor is Linda O'Brien-Pallas, CHSRF/CIHR Chair in Nursing/Health Human Resources.

Kim's career goals include an active program of research in nursing health services with a focus on improving patient safety and nurses' work environments in Canada and internationally. She is currently a Professor of Nursing at Durham College/University of Ontario Institute of Technology.

During her fellowship, Kim will: a) establish an inventory of available data sets pertaining to nursing workforce planning in Ontario; b) engage in consultation with relevant stakeholders; c) identify nursing workforce planning issues foreseeable for the next 10 years; d) conduct a gap analysis between available and required nursing workforce planning data sets; and e) formulate the parameters for the new data sets.

Alba DiCenso, OTC Director and CHSRF/CIHR Chair in Advanced Practice Nursing, will oversee the Post-OTC Fellowship experience.

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Ontario EXTRA Fellows (5) who have recently started their program (2007-2009 cohort) include: *Sandi Cox* (Chief Nurse Executive and Senior Director, Rehabilitation and Complex Continuing Care, Bloorview Kids Rehab, Toronto), *Kathleen Ann Heslin* (Chief Nurse Executive and Chief Practice Officer, York Central Hospital), *Kim Lenahan* (Executive Director, Patient Care, Geriatric, MSK and Neuro Rehab Programs, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute), *Mary Puntillo* (Operational Services Manager, Schizophrenia Service, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton), and *Sylvanus Thompson* (Healthy Environments Quality Assurance Manager, Toronto Public Health).

The Ontario group is part of some 100 EXTRA Fellows who have been admitted into the program across Canada in the last four years. The Ontario Regional Mentoring Centre Program Coordinator for EXTRA is *Rhonda Cockerill* (University of Toronto) with assistance from *Miguel A. Pérez* (OTC Program Manager).

## OTC Collaborations: CHSRF'S Research Use Week

As part of its network and collaborations to build capacity in health services and policy research in Ontario, the OTC was actively involved in the planning of the CHSRF's Research Use Week - Northeastern Ontario- ("Tools, strategies, and stories of using evidence in rural and remote health services delivery and policy development") that took place May 14-16, 2007 in Sudbury.

OTC participation included financial co-sponsorship of the event plus the involvement of some principals, students, decision-makers, and staff, as members of the Research Use Week Advisory Committee and panelists and speakers.

The CHSRF's Research Use Week program puts together an assortment of research use tools and approaches, and brings them directly to health system managers and policy makers in their own communities. The goal is to encourage and improve regional evidence-informed decision-making in health system policy and management.

For further information:  
[www.chsrf.ca/ruweeks\\_e.php](http://www.chsrf.ca/ruweeks_e.php)

## OTC Health Services and Policy Research Competencies

1. Understanding of the Canadian health care system and how it has evolved over time; the implications of policy legacies, values and interests and institutional structures for further system modification and policy development; a critical appreciation of health services governance, organization, financing and delivery options and of the effect of geography on these options.
2. Ability to effectively carry out health services research (i.e., formulation of research questions, review of literature, selection of conceptual frameworks and research methods, selection and development of measures and indicators, application of analytical approaches, awareness of ethical issues).
3. Understanding of theories about how the health of populations is produced, maintained and enhanced at the individual, group, community, provincial and national level.
4. Understanding of theories of health and health services knowledge production; the social, economic, political and ethical factors that influence knowledge production; and, the diverse assumptions embedded in knowledge production.
5. Ability to effectively exchange knowledge and develop research partnerships with stakeholders in the health field (e.g., citizens, health care providers, decision-makers at all levels).

## Field Placements in Policy Settings

For their Policy Practicum, students spend at least 200 hours in a policy-making environment working and interacting with stakeholders in the health care system. The goals are to understand the policy-making environment (and the factors that shape it) and to gain experience and skills in working with policy makers.

During the experience students have an opportunity to contribute to an aspect of the policy process by analyzing, synthesizing and/or transferring information relevant to a particular policy option under consideration.

### Policy practicum opportunities provide mutual benefits to OTC students and hosting agencies.



**Vicki Mowat-Leger, Ph.D.**  
Manager,  
Research and Outcome  
Measurement Branch,  
Ontario Ministry of Children  
and Youth Services

*“Dawn worked on developing recommendations around system integration for the Best Start initiative across the ministry. She reviewed and summarized the research on system integration in the early childhood development sector, identified the measures and tools that are currently in use, and proposed recommendations on which would be the most appropriate for the Best Start model... Her level of professionalism and expertise throughout this practicum was also well appreciated by all who worked with her. She really laid the foundation for our experience with the OTC program and its students. Since then, we have offered contracts to other OTC students for similar type of support in some of our program evaluation initiatives.”*

**Vicki Mowat-Leger commenting on OTC student Dawn Kingston's Policy Practicum**

### Policy field placements have been extremely positive experiences as reflected by the following students' comments:



**Faith Donald**

*“I gained experience in modeling of the current health care system and planning the restructuring of Ontario's health care system for decision making at the community level within an integrated health care system. I also obtained an increased understanding of transfer funds from the federal to the provincial government and from the provincial government to the local level, as well as future planning for community based service versus centralized funding.”*



**Rebecca Gewurtz**

*“I made connections with policy analysts and learned about policy making, policy concepts, and was able to apply them to my areas of interest. I am now pursuing a policy perspective to my dissertation research.”*



**Shelley Darling**

*“The entire placement experience has far exceeded my expectations. I now appreciate not only the importance of management skills but also the importance of understanding and applying evidence at the organizational and policy level... I feel that I have a grounded understanding of the complex factors that drive organizations delivering health services and the health policy environment.”*



**Amanda Hammill**

*“Over a period of 4 months I was exposed to a variety of policy challenges, policy decision makers, and policy stakeholders in the area of primary care... I was able to learn a great deal about primary care models and the inter-professional relationships involved in these models, as well as the economic, social, and political considerations necessarily involved in any kind of health system change.”*