

Manitoba's experience building a system of surveillance leading to action

C. Leggett, MPH (1); N. McPherson, MSc (2); K. McGarry, MSc, MPA (1); E. Harland, MA (1); J. Allan, BScN (3); T. Erickson, BComm (4); B. Kinasevych, MSc (5); Adult Risk Factor Surveillance Working Group (6)

Author references

1. CancerCare Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
2. Brandon Regional Health Authority, Brandon, Manitoba, Canada
3. Assiniboine Regional Health Authority, Manitoba, Canada
4. Interlake Regional Health Authority, Manitoba, Canada
5. Health in Common, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
6. Partners in Planning for Healthy Living Adult Risk Factor Surveillance Working Group, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Correspondence: Carly Leggett; Email: carly.leggett@cancercare.mb.ca

Background: Recognizing the need for local level data and a province-wide approach, a group of stakeholders collaborated to create a primary prevention system for Manitoba. This group is known as Partners in Planning for Healthy Living (PPHL).

Purpose: The system's goal is to ensure stakeholder access to community-specific risk factor surveillance information, local program evaluation and practice-based evidence for chronic disease prevention. In turn, all data is integrated within a systematic, evidence-based program planning framework.

Study/Intervention Design: PPHL's role is to provide leadership and support the use of evidence in planning interventions promoting healthy living in communities across Manitoba. PPHL members share a common mandate for the prevention of chronic diseases.

Methods: To date, PPHL has focused on two main activities: local area risk factor surveillance and knowledge exchange.

Results: PPHL membership has expanded rapidly, and as a result of this collaboration, many regions have built capacity in risk factor surveillance. While several members have implemented community adult health surveys, all regions in Manitoba participated in a youth health survey in partnership with the education and health systems. Most recently, PPHL hosted a successful provincial risk factor surveillance conference.

Conclusion: PPHL works and learns together, building capacity and using evidence to develop an integrated knowledge system within the Manitoba context. This dynamic nature allows for multilevel leadership while maintaining local level control over data. Regions have evidence meeting their specific needs while contributing to the provincial system. PPHL truly embodies "thinking like a system and learning as we go."

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