

# Research and Knowledge Translation Newsletter

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## WELCOME WORDS BY JULIA BICKFORD

It is with great excitement that we kick off the first Northern Health Research and Knowledge Translation Newsletter. Our aim is to highlight interesting research and KT activities happening across the Northern Health region. We feel that everyone in Northern Health has a role to play in research. Whether you are a care aide in a long-term care facility, a physician, a client accessing care, or a manager overseeing a team of providers – we all have valuable insights into research questions that are important to the North and

opportunities to share what works in practice across our vast and diverse geographic and cultural contexts.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that excellent care is bolstered by a research culture in which the health care system is actively involved in spreading and sharing lessons learned. We hope this newsletter will provide a space where you can share the research you're involved in, learn about opportunities and upcoming events, and spark ideas and conversations about research that matters to the North.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF EMBEDDED EVALUATION: HOW YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS WORKING

By Bernie Paille and Tiegan Daniels

Imagine owning a restaurant serving high-end cuisine. Your chef creates a menu including appetizers, entrees and desserts, selecting all the ingredients with care, combining their flavours and textures to create dishes to appeal to your “foodie” customer base. Your kitchen team works diligently to prepare the meals. Your front of house team carefully takes orders and serves customers. There is also a lounge to create ambiance. Each of these activities aims to achieve a shared objective: generate profit from the sales of food and ambiance. —But, how would you know you were successful in reaching your goal?

Daily receipts would indicate progress towards sales goals. That is ultimately and potentially, the main measure of success.

Would you want to wait for that one measure though? How many days of sales is enough to determine the pattern of success? What about other ways to measure progress toward this goal?

It's crucial to evaluate progress as well as outcomes. If we only measure outcomes, we cannot course adjust to address challenges as they come up. When we measure progress, in a systematic manner, we create opportunities to fix problems when they come up, or better yet, stop them before they happen. In its simplest form, when we measure progress, we call that formative evaluation. When we measure outcomes, we call that summative evaluation. There are many other evaluation approaches too.

“ The sooner we incorporate evaluation into our program planning, the more likely we are to set ourselves up for success. ”

When the cook tastes the food as it is being prepared, that is a type of formative evaluation. When the guests taste the food, that is a type of summative evaluation. The same principles can be applied to healthcare. The number of interventions, including patient satisfaction with those interventions, can be used in a formative evaluation of a program. These can be helpful in identifying program delivery issues before they create problems that take more effort to address. —Clinical outcomes such as patient or client health status (e.g., decrease in disease rates) can be used in a summative evaluation of a new program.

Evaluations can take different forms, using different methods, depending on the nature of the program being evaluated. →

Central to the success of an evaluation though, is the involvement of people working in and impacted by the program. Organizations design programs to serve different populations, to achieve specific outcomes. Therefore, it is important to ensure that program staff have an opportunity to provide information about how well it is working. Similarly, program participants need to contribute their stories about how the program meets their needs.

When we strive to improve gradually and continually, we learn from our successes and miss-steps. Understanding that the ultimate goal is to ensure high quality health care services helps keep evaluations focused on positive change. After all, the food may be plated in an appealing manner, and served well, but if it's not cooked properly, it won't meet the guest's expectations. For true success, all processes or aspects of a program must work to their full planned potential for the program to meet its objective, however that is defined.

In future articles, we will provide tips and information about other forms of evaluation, as well as how evaluation can be integrated with research as well as quality improvement initiatives.

Please contact the NH Evaluation team if you have any questions. You can reach us at [Evaluation@northernhealth.ca](mailto:Evaluation@northernhealth.ca).

## NEW PILOT PROJECT BRINGING ACCESS TO CANCER CLINICAL TRIAL CARE TO PATIENTS IN NORTHWEST BC

By Marcelo Bravo and Daniel Ramcharran

Cancer patients in Northwest BC undergoing a high-precision radiation treatment (known as Stereotactic Ablative Radiotherapy - SABR), as part of a Prince George-based clinical trial, may have the opportunity to participate in a new pilot project that would bring access to cancer treatment closer to home.

The project is part of an international clinical trial led by [Dr. Robert Olson](#), Principal Investigator and Department Head at BC Cancer- Prince George that will allow residents living in Northern communities, such as Terrace, to receive SABR treatment with follow up care and assessment at hospitals in their communities.

SABR is a form of high-precision cancer therapy that delivers substantially higher doses of radiation to the tumour site in just one or a few treatment sessions.

Dr. Olson, a radiation oncologist, is currently heading a phase III clinical trial known as SABR-COMET-3, which builds on top of previous cancer research and intends to improve survival, updated cancer outcomes, and



Dr. Rob Olson,  
Principal Investigator  
and Department Head at BC  
Cancer- Prince George.

better quality of life in patients, while being able to receive treatment and care in their home community.

“My hope is that this pilot project changes the future of clinical trials in BC and elsewhere allowing patients to participate in trials they would have previously declined because of the cost and inconvenience of travel,” says Dr. Olson.

“I strongly believe that all patients across BC should have equal access to clinical trials as a component of their care.” →





General practitioners in oncology at Terrace (Mills Memorial Hospital), for example, will be trained to perform trail-specific physical exams under the standardized research protocols. This includes teams documenting how patients are responding to the SABR treatment while BC Cancer oncologists will remotely consult over the phone or video.

Patients are currently being gathered for the SABR-COMET-3 clinical trial from across BC and the international sites. Dr. Olson and the Terrace team are in the planning phases of this northwest pilot project, which includes signing up to

the trial study team and partnering with Northern Health to develop the necessary protocols and documentation.

Dr. Julia Bickford, Regional Director of Research Evaluation and Analytics at Northern Health, will be helping to build clinical trial infrastructure including the set-up of training for Northern Health members of the team.

This project represents a stepping-stone in advancing a new frontier of cancer treatment and research in conjunction with health and research institutions in Ontario, Scotland, Ireland, and Australia.

The SABR-COMET-3 trial, and the Northwest pilot project, is supported through funding from the [Canadian Institutes of Health Research](#), [Varian Medical Systems](#), the [BC Cancer Foundation](#), [Rio Tinto](#) in conjunction with the [Prince George Community Foundation](#) and the [Canadian Cancer Clinical Trials Network's Canadian Remote Access Framework for Clinical Trials \(CRAFT\) initiative](#), part of a larger clinical research infrastructure and capacity building works at NH, with a clear goal of making investigational therapeutics more accessible to patients in the north.



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– Dr. Olson.

# GRANT DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS AT UNBC – AUGUST 16-19, 2021

The UNBC Office of Research and Innovation is offering a series of Grant Development Workshops. This workshop series will address the ‘start-to-finish’ steps for developing a competitive funding proposal. It is designed to be useful for researchers at any career stage, from any discipline, and to be

relevant to any funding agency. **The workshops are free, but registration is required. Please register via the links provided below.** Please note that the registration links are unique to each session.

The workshops will be delivered online, and so is configured as four (4) segments, as follows:

## August 16 (1 pm to 4 pm) Proposal Development

[https://unbc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_TNcLjzv4QhmZJIB70ojZnQ](https://unbc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TNcLjzv4QhmZJIB70ojZnQ)

## August 18 (1 pm to 4 pm) Refining and Finalizing

[https://unbc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_uOcAPQLiSyqlksRtd8\\_MuA](https://unbc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uOcAPQLiSyqlksRtd8_MuA)

## August 17 (9 am to noon) Planning and Mapping

[https://unbc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_WVLeYrLiSRqslD5DJAjwQQ](https://unbc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WVLeYrLiSRqslD5DJAjwQQ)

## August 19 (9 am to noon) Resubmitting

[https://unbc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_b2rsicDYSSi1gXRayFvKPg](https://unbc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_b2rsicDYSSi1gXRayFvKPg)

### ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dr. Dawn McArthur is a scientist who has held senior research development positions since 1999, first at SFU and since 2003 at the Children’s & Women’s Health Centre of BC, where there are two UBC research institutes BC Children’s Hospital Research Institute and Women’s Health Research Institute. Dr. McArthur was recruited to the Children’s & Women’s campus to establish and lead the Research & Technology Development Office (RTDO), where she has a system-wide mandate to enhance research excellence, capacity, and competitiveness of the campus’s multi-disciplinary research community. The RTDO is a small unit of highly trained specialists and has an exceptional record for success, helping to bring in nearly \$500 million in external funding. Dr. McArthur works with researchers from all fields, from arts/design to zoology. She gives workshops and webinars in Canada and abroad on various topics related to grants and research development.

### SESSIONS AT A GLANCE:

#### Proposal Development (Find, Frame, Finesse)

This 3hr session will cover the complete cycle of proposal development (Making the plan and crafting the proposal).

#### Focus Session #1 – Planning & Mapping

This 3hr session will address strategies for making a feasible plan (Aligning with funder; research project, team, budget). Feasibility is a key review factor for most funding.

#### Focus Session #2 – Refining & Finalizing

This 3hr session will address strategies for crafting an excellent proposal that is clear and readable, and addresses the funder’s instructions and review criteria.

#### Focus Session #3 – Resubmitting

This 3hr session will address strategies for revising and resubmitting an unsuccessful application.

Upcoming information available at:

[Grant Development Workshops | University of Northern British Columbia \(unbc.ca\)](https://unbc.ca/grant-development-workshops)



# KT EVENT: KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: USING THEORY TO BUILD PRACTICE DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS WITH DR. EMILY REMPEL



The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) KT Connects Series will present: Knowledge translation and public engagement: Using theory to build practice during the COVID-19 crisis. On this event, Dr. Rempel will explore and share lessons from the COVID-19 infodemic to create a more effective knowledge translation response in times of crisis.

*Dr. Emily Rempel is a Red River Métis and White critical social researcher and a Knowledge Translation Lead at the BC Centre for Disease Control. Her work focuses on equity, public engagement and knowledge exchange in the fields of public health, critical data studies and biostatistics.*

## What will be discussed?

The COVID-19 "infodemic" has demonstrated the shared value of scientific research and evidence for both policy and public. It has also shown the risks when knowledge is poorly understood, contextualized and applied. In this session, Dr. Emily Rempel will share her experiences working in knowledge translation, public engagement and misinformation for COVID-19 at the BC Centre for Disease Control. She will contrast theories, definitions and practices of knowledge translation and public engagement in public health.

## After this webinar, the audience will be able to:

- Explore the spectrum of activities involved in knowledge translation in the public health context.
- Define and contrast knowledge translation and public engagement from a theoretical basis.
- Examine and evaluate applied examples of knowledge translation and public engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## Date and Registration:

Friday, July 23, 2021 at 12 pm (PST) 45 minute webinar.

Register here:

[https://msfhr-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_AcjDcFBVScKPT9myfwzRg](https://msfhr-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_AcjDcFBVScKPT9myfwzRg)

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