

Research and Knowledge Translation Newsletter

EDUCATION AND TRAINING DAY 2024: A REFLECTION OF A DAY OF LEARNING

By: Angela Kehler, NH Communication Advisor and Marcelo Bravo, Lead Patient-Oriented Research and Knowledge Translation



The keynote, [André Picard](#), an experienced health reporter and columnist writing for the *Globe and Mail* since 1987, spoke about the challenges of the Canadian health care with a focus on solutions to longstanding crisis. He expressed, “in Canada we have a lack of implementation problem rather than a lack of solutions. We need to get back to the basics to ensure that Canadians receive health care equitably”. According to André’s work, five consistent recommendations from health care reports from the last 60 years are:

1. Primary care is the most important area of health care: we need to move away from the acute care model.
2. Importance of community and continuum of care: our system is too hospital centric; we need to invest in a highly coordinated continuum

On November 7, Northern Health (NH) and the University of Northern BC (UNBC) partnered to organize a day of upskilling, networking, and capacity development as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between both institutions.

The MOU was first signed by the two institutions in 2010 and was renewed in 2022, reinforcing the strong relationship between research and the health system in Northern BC.

The event was opened by Elder Darlene McIntosh, a Lheidli T’enneh elder and Chancellor of UNBC, with a traditional welcome. She was followed by Ciro Panessa, President and CEO of Northern Health, and Dr. Geoff Payne, President and Vice Chancellor of UNBC; both shared welcome words encouraging participants to make connections and to continue learning throughout the day.



of care based on highly functioning interdisciplinary care teams.

3. Medicine: we need universal coverage of the basics.
4. Social determinants of health: we need more investment in prevention; ensuring Canadians have a decent income, housing, and a healthy environment.
5. Human resources: staffing is the #1 challenge in health care, we need to fix the workplace so we can retain our health care staff, as well as recruit new staff.

“We need to create a system where workers can take pride in their work”, he added.

André Picard also emphasized the importance of keeping up with new technology, collecting and using good data, and changing the way we educate health care workers equipping them with listening and empathy skills in addition to their professional expertise.

All these recommendations require collaboration between research/education institutions and health care organizations to design and provide the best experience and care for patients.

The morning learning opportunities were followed by interactive workshops where participants had the opportunity to choose between:

Building Meaningful Partnerships for Research, facilitated by Dr. Laura Middleton. Middleton is the Schlegel Research Chair in Dementia and Active Aging at the

University of Waterloo and the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA). Middleton’s research aims to identify strategies to promote well-being and independence to those living with, or at risk, of dementia. She involves people living with dementia, care partners, health professionals, and community partners as co-researchers.

A second option was: Selecting Effective Strategies to Address the Barriers and Facilitators to Change, facilitated by Dr. Julia E. Moore. Moore is the Executive Director for The Center for Implementation. She is an implementation specialist by training and is actively researching and teaching the best ways to implement evidence-based programs. She has worked on over 100 implementation

initiatives, and has worked closely with provincial, national, and international organizations to develop their knowledge translation and implementation plans.

During lunch, participants had the opportunity to choose from a Networking Lunch and a Lunch & Learn activity. The Networking was facilitated by Julia E Moore, and it paired NH’s Service Networks and operational areas leaders with UNBC researchers and collaborators. The Lunch & Learn activity had the theme: Engaging in Diverse Ways: Providing Support through Participatory Research by Laura Middleton. Both lunch sessions were a unique opportunity to discuss evidence needs, research approaches, meaningful engagement, and the opportunity to know participants from



the UNBC and NH communities.

The afternoon plenary presentation was led by Dr. Virginia Braun. Professor Braun is a global leader in qualitative studies with an applied feminist and critical studies approach, she is actively working in the health psychology field. Dr. Braun's plenary was about explaining how qualitative 'story completion' can be used as a potential tool for health research.

The end of the day was organized also in workshops and participants had two options to choose from:

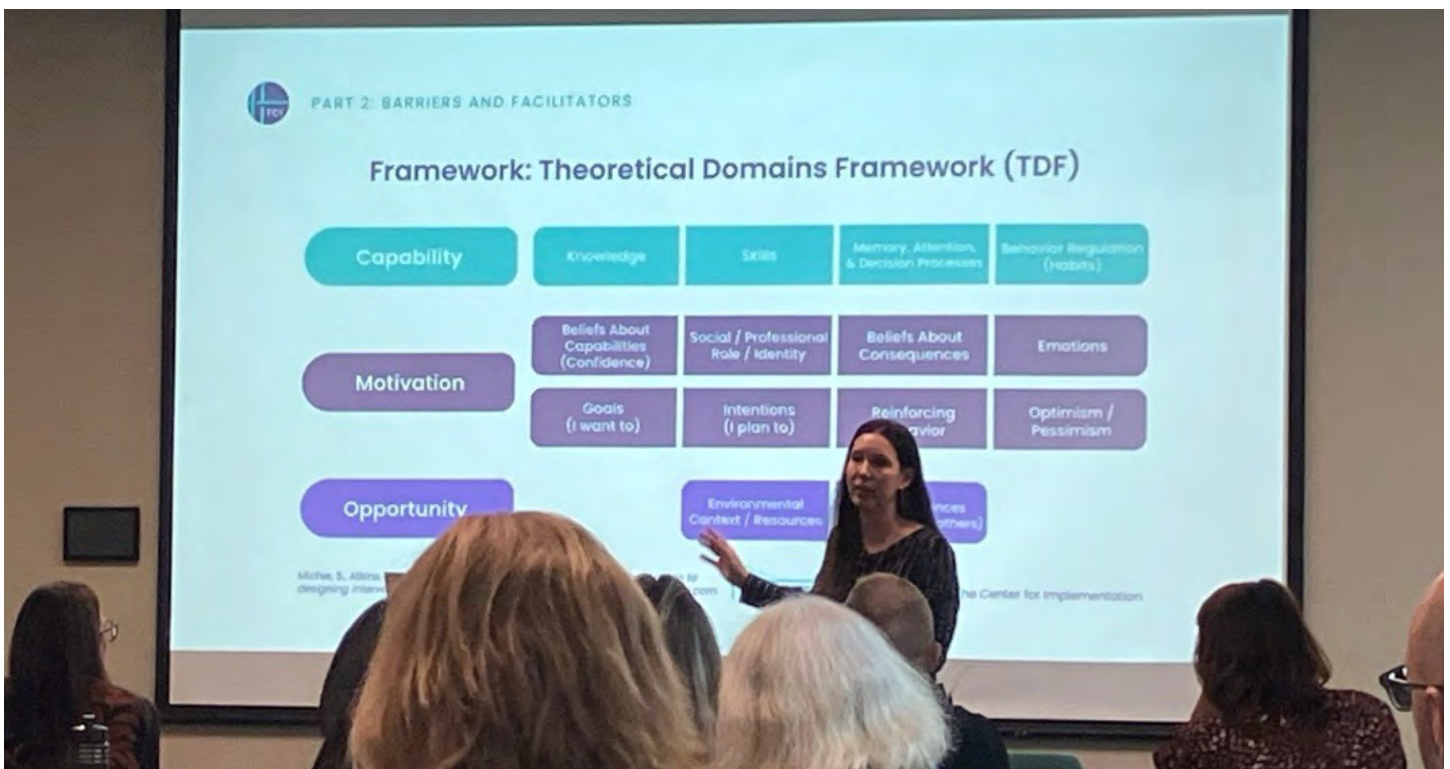
A first option was the: Engaging Patients and the Public in Health care and Research: Opportunities, Tensions and Best Practices facilitated by Dr. Davina Banner-Lukaris. Professor Banner-Lukaris is a

Cardiovascular and Rural Health Researcher and Interim Associate VP-Research Operations at UNBC. In this session, Davina challenged participants to meaningfully and respectfully engage with patient partners and members of the public in research activities, and to benefit from their ideas, vision, and energy they bring into the research world.

A second and final afternoon workshop was led again by Julia E. Moore titled: Trust, Power, and Relationship Building in Implementation contexts. In this participative workshop, Julia unpacked the components of trust and explored the role it has in implementation efforts. She invited participants to authentically engage and examine 'what they are bringing' into the relationship.

Moore believes that honest and clear communication about roles and expectations are crucial in implementation initiatives.

Overall, the first edition of the Education and Training Day was a unique opportunity to make connections, upskilling, and learning together. Speakers and facilitators opened the door to thinking differently to improve health care through relevant research, and the workshops allowed participants to discuss complex problems, begin the process of finding solutions, better engage, and seek out opportunities for collaborations.



UNLOCKING THE POWER OF DATA: GENOME BC'S HEALTH METADATA COMMONS



By: Annaïck Carles, Research and Innovation Manager, Data Science and Dr. Zsuzsanna Hollander, Director Data Science Genome BC

In today's rapidly advancing world of omics (genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics, etc.), the potential to transform health care and improve lives is greater than ever. The insights gained from omics research have already led to innovative treatments and a deeper understanding of diseases. However, despite these exciting advancements, much of the valuable data generated remains trapped in silos, limiting collaboration and hindering the progress needed to fully realize the benefits of these breakthroughs.

For nearly 25 years, [Genome BC](#) has been at the forefront of genomics research and innovation in British

Columbia. This non-profit organization has funded more than 550 research projects aimed at improving health care and addressing environmental challenges that are enhancing the quality of life for people across the province.

Genome BC is dedicated to responsible research practices and promoting public understanding of the life sciences, ensuring that the benefits of omics are shared widely. The organization has worked tirelessly to break down barriers to the responsible adoption of omics and, in recent years, has focused on making data more accessible and useful for researchers and the broader community.

As omics research advances, the importance of effective data management and sharing becomes increasingly clear. Much of the data generated from Genome BC-funded projects holds significant value beyond its initial purpose. Unlocking this potential requires collaboration among researchers, funders, and data providers. This is where Genome BC's initiatives come into play.

To facilitate better data sharing, Genome BC has launched the [Health Metadata Commons](#), a centralized platform designed to connect researchers with valuable omics data and biobank resources. This platform allows users to easily access and contribute to a rich repository of metadata related to various research projects.



Image of the Health Metadata Commons



The Health Metadata Commons not only enhances the discoverability of data but also promotes its reuse, accelerating scientific discoveries and innovations. By creating a space where researchers can share information about their research studies, Genome BC is fostering a collaborative environment that benefits everyone.

Metadata is essentially data about data. In the context of health omics research, it provides critical information about the study, patient enrollment criteria, the way samples were collected, and how omics data was generated. By organizing and detailing the characteristics of datasets, metadata makes it easier for researchers to find and use the information they need.

For example, imagine a researcher looking for specific omics data or biobank related

to a particular disease. Finding relevant studies can be like searching for a needle in a haystack without an inventory of research studies detailing the diseases studied, samples collected, and omics data generated. The Health Metadata Commons aims to solve this problem by providing a catalog of studies conducted in the larger health research ecosystem.

To ensure the Health Metadata Commons is beneficial for the research community, Genome BC actively engages with researchers, trainees, and new investigators through presentations and networking sessions. By connecting with health research institutions across the province, they are building a robust community that values data sharing.

The platform has been showcased at international

conferences, emphasizing its importance in the global research landscape. By sharing our experiences and success stories, Genome BC aims to inspire more researchers to participate in this initiative.

The Health Metadata Commons offers numerous advantages, including enhanced collaboration, where researchers can easily connect with data custodians and collaborate across disciplines, leading to innovative solutions for complex problems. The platform provides an inventory of omics datasets and human biological samples, enabling more effective research. By nurturing a collaborative, knowledge-sharing community, the platform helps researchers discover new datasets and validate existing findings more quickly and efficiently.

As Genome BC continues to champion data sharing and collaboration, you are invited to be part of this exciting movement. Whether you're a researcher, a student, or someone interested in the impact of genomics on our lives, there are many ways to get involved. If you have questions or want to learn more about the [Health Metadata Commons](#), please reach out to Genome BC at metadatacommons@genomebc.ca.

Together, we can unlock the potential of omics data and drive innovation that benefits everyone in our community.



PUTTING PATIENTS FIRST CONFERENCE GALVANIZES A MOVEMENT FOR PATIENT-ORIENTED RESEARCH IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



By: Editorial team

Putting Patients First conference, [BC SUPPORT Unit's](#) annual signature event, brought together over 500 people from BC and beyond to learn about Learning Health Systems for health improvement.

Putting Patients First 2024 on November 14 was the seventh annual conference focused on Patient-Oriented Research (POR) in BC where Patient Partners from across the province play a strategic role in the organization and the event. Attendance was a huge success with 420 people registered for the event; 333 people joined in-person and 174 people joined online.

This year's theme was "Building Learning Communities" which was identified as an essential component of a highly functioning Learning Health System leading to health care

“ Learning Health Systems is about partnerships. It's about partnerships between care systems and researchers. It's about bringing patients – their experiences, their aspirations – into the centre. ”

– Dr. Robert Reid, during his keynote on actioning Learning Health Systems

improvements and an engaging learning ecosystem.

Putting Patients First Conference included a keynote address by [Dr. Robert Reid](#) from the Institute for Better Health in Ontario, who addressed the urgency of adopting Learning Health Systems in BC and across Canada. [Dr. Kerry Kuluski](#) from the University of Toronto shared how she has helped hospital and clinical teams use a Learning Health Systems approach.

Three interactive rooms offered space for collaboration and sharing ideas. In the Solutions Room, attendees played interactive games that allowed participants to solve challenges in patient-oriented research. The Ideas and Innovation Room used arts to integrate lived experience into learning communities of Learning Health Systems. A third room, Learning Health Systems in Action, featured current Learning Health Systems projects from across BC and participants had the opportunity to engage in lively discussion with LHS practitioners.

Additionally, an outstanding 90 abstracts were submitted to Putting Patients First. Of these, 55 were selected to display posters at the conference, and three of those teams were invited to provide oral presentations. One team received the POR Champion award, presented in honour of Pat Atherton who was a champion for patient-oriented



research in BC. This team was “Project IMPACT: Patient Centered Care in Paediatric Type 1 Diabetes Using Texting-Spreading in Interior Health.”

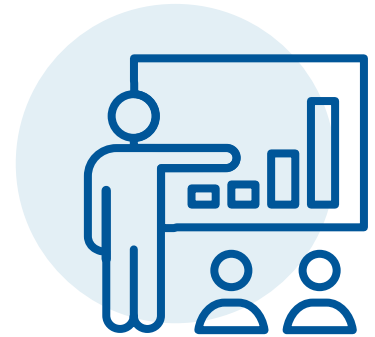
Selected livestream recordings are available below:

- Interactive session: [Learning Health Systems in action](#)
- Panel presentation: [Perspectives on the patient-oriented research experience](#)
- Afternoon sessions: [Selected poster presentations, Pat Atherton \(POR Champion\) Award and closing](#)

Note: After December 12, 2024, the recordings will be moved and hosted on the BC SUPPORT Unit’s Youtube Channel.

The BC SUPPORT Unit, part of Michael Smith Health Research BC, is the organizer of the annual Putting Patients First conference. Save the date for the next edition of Putting Patient First Conference in November 2025.

Read more about BC SUPPORT Unit, Putting Patient First Conference on the [website](#).



RESEARCH STUDIES APPROVED AT NH



NH continues to expand its research supports that contribute to relevant research and scientific discoveries strengthening Northern and provincial research capacity that informs health care policy and practice.

The following list includes the latest authorized research studies from September to November 2024.

#	Principal Investigator	Institution	NH Affiliated Team Member	Study Title	HDSA/ Area	Facility
1	Rachel Carter	University of British Columbia	N/A	Implementing the Serious Illness Conversation Program (SICP): Understanding Facilitators and Barriers	Northern Interior	Prince George Regional Palliative Care team.
2	Kristin Campbell	BCCDC	N/A	Safer Inhalation Supplies Evaluation	Northern Interior and Northwest	AIDS Prevention Prince George, MHSU Outreach Terrace, CSUN (Coalition of Substance Users of the North).
3	Anita Ho	University of British Columbia	N/A	Clinical Providers' Perspectives on the Ethical Implications of Utilizing Mortality Prediction Algorithms in End-of-Life Care	All	All
4	Taru Manyanga	UNBC	Gloria Fox, Erica Koopmans, Rebecca Sketchley	Sport Participation for Physical Literacy, Mental Health, and Sense of Belonging Among Equity-seeking and Newcomer Children and Youth: A Partnered Approach	Northern Interior	Only team member affiliations
5	Esther Alonso Prieto	Northern Health	Esther Alonso Prieto, Viva Swanson, Vanessa Mueller-Prevost	Addressing Moral Distress for Lasting Workforce Sustainability: A Comprehensive Intervention Strategy in the Sector of Long-Term and Assisted Living in Northern BC	All	3 Long Term Care-Assisted living facilities, one per HSDA



6	Karen Dahri	University of British Columbia	Robert Pammett	Developing Quality of Care Indicators for Community-Based Pharmacist Prescribing of Minor Ailments and Contraception in BC	N/A	Only team member affiliations
7	Denise Thomson	University of Alberta	N/A	Climate-Change Resilience in Canadian Health Systems	N/A	None – Zoom interviews only
8	Michael Kobor	University of British Columbia	N/A	Prenatal Exposure to Wildfire Disasters and Their Association With Early Childhood Health, Development, and Epigenetics (BC Wildfire Study)	All	All – Poster display only
9	Elyse Caron-Beaudoin	University of Toronto	N/A	Associations Between Density and Proximity of Hydraulic Fracturing Wells and Birth Outcomes in Northeastern BC	Northeast	Fort St. John Hospital
10	Emily Belita	McMaster University/ Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (HiREB)	N/A	Addressing Urgent Calls for Public Health Workforce Planning: Establishing and Implementing National Indicators to Profile and Monitor the Public Health Workforce	N/A	None – Zoom interviews only





In January 2025, the research platform EBSCOhost will unveil a new user interface. EBSCOhost provides access to the library's largest research databases, including [APA PsycArticles](#), [CINAHL Complete](#), and [MEDLINE with Full Text](#). In addition to a refreshed look, the new EBSCO interface will feature personalized dashboards, upgraded citation capabilities, and enhanced search functionalities.

Check out [EBSCO Academy](#) for numerous tutorials on database-specific searching, creating journal alerts, exporting results, and more.

To book a tailored training session with NH library staff for yourself or your team, reach out to us at library@northernhealth.ca.

EVENTS, GRANTS AND MORE

Clinical research ethics symposium 2024

The symposium is an opportunity for research ethics professionals and broader research community interested in clinical research ethics and clinical trials to discuss ethical topics of interest in British Columbia and beyond.

Date: December 3 and 4, 2024

Time: Morning and afternoon sessions

Format: Virtual

Register [here](#)

NH Research Seminar January Session

The NH Research Seminar Series is an opportunity to share and learn about research and projects that can inform NH's priorities. The series promotes

research and projects conducted in the North or the province. Join daily 'Lunch and Learn' webinars, an immersive experience to un-learn the myths of colonial history in Canada. Expert matter speakers will present for 40 – 50 minutes followed by a Q&A between the moderator and guests.

Date: January 30, 2025

Time: 12.30 p.m.– 2.00 p.m.

Format: Virtual via Zoom

More information [here](#)

Digital Health Canada BC Conference

This conference brings together professionals, organizations, and ideas from across the British Columbia digital health landscape.

Date: February 6, 2025

Time: 8.00 a.m. – 4.30 p.m. PST

Format: In person (Vancouver)

More information [here](#)



Quality Forum 2025

The Quality Forum is our annual conference that brings together British Columbia's health care community to share and discuss how to improve quality across the continuum of care.

Date: March 11 – 13, 2025

Time: All day

Format: In person

(Vancouver Convention Centre)

More information [here](#)

Five Days in May 2025

BC's health research month (May) is designed to educate, inform, inspire, stimulate and transform. FDIM brings together researchers and students, patients and health care providers, decision-makers and members of the public to learn, share ideas and spark innovation. Events are open to everyone. The 2025 edition will host virtual and in-person events, stay tuned!

BC Rural Health Conference 2025

Join BC Rural Health Conference (RHC) from June 6 – 8, 2025, in Prince George. RHC is more than just continuing medical education—organizers are excited to bring the RHC back to Prince George for another unforgettable gathering. Save the date and come together to learn, grow, and strengthen rural health care in British Columbia. More information [here](#).



WOULD YOU LIKE TO WRITE AND PUBLISH A SHORT HEALTH RESEARCH ARTICLE?



The Research & Knowledge Translation Newsletter is accepting articles for future editions. We are open to all areas of health research and knowledge translation as well as evaluation, data analytics, quality improvement or innovation projects.

If interested to include an article or to share information about an upcoming event, email: research@northernhealth.ca

