

Research & Performance Support News

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What's New in Research?

Beginning in September, RPS is hosting a series of **Research Workshops**. The workshops are available free of charge to all RQHR staff and will be held in the Wascana Rehab Centre Auditorium. See **Page 2** for a brief description of each workshop.

Registration is required. Contact Linda Picot by email (linda.picot@rqhealth.ca) or phone (766-5451) to reserve a spot.

Research Workshop Schedule WRC Auditorium 1:30—3:30 pm

Sept. 23	Intro to Survey Design
Sept. 30	Survey Says...!
Oct. 7	Preparing Data for Statistical Analysis

Inside this issue:

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Research News Contributions

If you would like to receive this newsletter, or more copies for your organization, please let us know.

We welcome your letters, contributions, and story ideas.

New Approach to the Earlier Diagnosis of Prostate Cancer

An exciting new study is underway in the RQHR that aims to reduce the length of time required for patients to receive a conclusive diagnosis of prostate cancer, while avoiding or deferring biopsy in men at low risk of clinically significant prostate cancer. An earlier diagnosis can ensure that when appropriate treatment is given, it has the best chance of succeeding. Principal investigators include Dr. Ashok Verma (Radiology), Elan Paluck (Research & Performance Support) and Jim Slater (Laboratory & Diagnostic Imaging).

A minimum of 20 family physicians in Regina will be enrolled in the study and randomly assigned to control or experimental groups. In the experimental group, patients will receive a letter informing

them of their PSA test result (abnormal/normal) and those with an elevated PSA will be asked to proceed directly to Radiology for further screening. In the control group, patients will continue to be referred by their family doctor to a urologist prior to being referred to Radiology.

The primary outcome of interest in this study is the 'time required to make a conclusive diagnosis' after an abnormal PSA test. Clinical outcomes (e.g. biopsy results) and economic outcomes (e.g. direct program costs) will also be assessed. Final results of the study are anticipated to be available by December 2006.

Research Spotlight

A summary of RQHR research projects approved by the Research Ethics Board between June 1 and Aug 31, 2005.

Multi-center, open-label, randomized, parallel-group study of the effects of Eletriptan 40 mg on mild vs moderate to severe pain intensity of migraine in early intervention. Investigators: Drs. S. Arndt & G. Achyuthan (Allied Health Centre).

Accuracy of patient weights used for the dosing of weight-based pharmacologic agents in acute coronary syndrome. Investigators: Dr. W. Semchuk, A. Marcil, N. Bidwell, A. Slopek, O. Siwic, A. Reaune (Pharmacy).

AMADEUS: A multi-center, randomized, open-label, assessor-blind, non-inferiority study comparing the efficacy and safety of once-weekly subcutaneous idraparinux with adjusted-dose oral vitamin-K antagonists in the prevention of thromboembolic events in patients with atrial fibrillation. Investigators: Drs. R. Zimmermann & G. Garbe (Cardiology).

12-week, double-blind, placebo-controlled, parallel group study to assess the efficacy and safety of Ropinirole XR in patients with restless legs syndrome. Investigator: Dr. G. Sridhar (Sleep Disorders Clinic).

International evaluation of the burden of illness of subfoveal, exudative, age-related macular degeneration. Investigator: Dr. R. Garcia (Ophthalmology).

Innovations in nurse retention and patient centered care. Investigators: Drs. D. Bourne & M. Ferguson-Pare (University Health Network), Ms. D. Larrivee (RQHR).

Open-label extension study examining the safety and tolerability of Memantine in patients with moderate to severe dementia of the Alzheimer's type having completed Study no. 10158. Investigators: Drs. F. Veloso, G. Asmundson, D. Larsen (Office-based).

Developing and piloting cross-cultural curriculum for delivery and utilization of end of life health care services. Investigators: Drs. M. Hampton & A. Baydala, (Dept. of Psychology, Univ. of Regina), R. Boekelder (Native Health Services).

A new approach to the earlier diagnosis of prostate cancer: A pilot study. Investigators: Dr E. Paluck, Dr. A. Verma, J. Slater (Diagnostics & Imaging / Research & Performance Support).

We're on the Web!
www.medi-fax.com/rhd/crdp

*“The whole of
science is
nothing more
than a
refinement of
everyday
thinking.”*

- Albert Einstein

REMINDER - New Research Ethics Application forms and accompanying documents are available on our website. Old application forms will no longer be accepted. Users should check the RPS website frequently for any updates.

Introduction to the Skills & Resources Required to Conduct a Survey

September 23

Presenter: Elan C. Paluck, Ph.D.

The act of 'measurement' has become a critical part of providing health care. Whether measuring the impact on health or health care of a new drug, medical procedure, or staffing configuration, many will look to surveys as a method to assist them with answering these questions. Well-conducted surveys can provide a wealth of useful information. But more often than not, the deceptively simplistic nature of surveys yields the researcher with nothing more than a collection of ambiguous results from a disappointingly small number of respondents.

This workshop will provide an overview of the skills and resources needed to conduct a well-designed survey, with an emphasis on providing participants with practical tips, rules, and guide-

lines for projects involving questionnaires.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of the workshop, participants should be able to:

- Differentiate between the four major types of surveys and describe their usefulness in different situations;
- Differentiate between reliability and validity;
- Identify the basic principles involved in designing survey questions; and,
- List the activities that are part of a well-designed survey.

Survey Says...?

September 30

Presenter: Derrick K. Larsen, Ph.D.

In an era of evidence-based decision making in health care, surveys are becoming increasingly popular. What do the results from a survey say? The purpose of this research workshop/educational session is to provide a basic understanding of the logic behind surveys.

The key goals of this workshop/educational session are to improve your ability to critically evaluate and interpret survey results, as well as, provide you with the fundamental tools to enable you to decide if a proper sample size and sampling method was used.

Learning Objectives

After this workshop/educational session you should know:

- The difference between a parameter and a statistic
- What confidence intervals, confidence levels, and inferential statistics are
- How to critically interpret survey results
- How to calculate sample size for a simple survey
- Different sampling techniques (probability and nonprobability)

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Filing Cabinet: Preparing Data for Statistical Analysis

October 7

Presenter: Ali Bell, MSc

The purpose of this workshop is to provide a beginner's guide as to how best to turn those questionnaires, survey forms, or patient records that are stacking up in your filing cabinet into a useful and usable data file for statistical analysis.

The key goal of this workshop is to increase the ease with which statistical analysis can be performed on your data. Avoiding some of the most common data formatting errors in the beginning can greatly reduce the time and effort involved at the end when trying to analyse and interpret your data.

Learning Objectives

After this workshop you should know how to:

- Choose a suitable program for entering your data
- Format your data file to handle different types of information (e.g., survey responses, patient medical information, demographics)
- Use simple conventions about how to order your data and label variables
- Run simple data accuracy checks for entry errors
- Perform transformations on your data such as coding for missing data
- Exclude cases from an analysis