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ARCC Funded Research

ARCC's research agenda consists of five program areas:

- Health Technology Assessment
- Societal Values and Public Engagement
- Health Systems, Services and Policy
- Patients and Families
- Knowledge Translation and Exchange

For July 2011 – June 2012, ARCC has funded seven new, exciting projects. In the near future, details about the projects will be posted to our website www.cc-arcc.ca

An Elicitation of Preferences for the Allocation of Healthcare Resources in Cancer

Investigators: Chris Skedgel (P.I.), Ron Akehurst, Tallal Younis

This research team involving members from Nova Scotia and Sheffield in the United Kingdom will be studying how people value quality adjusted life years (QALYs). In particular, the research will focus on whether the public feels it better to produce the most QALYs possible or whether fewer QALYs are acceptable if they are generated for particular patient populations (e.g., cancer patients). The researchers will be using choice-based stated preference methods that force respondents to consider trade-offs and opportunity costs.

Advancing Quality in Cancer Control and Cancer System Performance in the Face of Uncertainty

Investigators: Melissa Brouwers (P.I.), Jeffrey Hoch, Michelle Driedger, Mita Giacomini, Jeff Sisler, Donna Turner
Health care decisions in cancer control are often made in an environment of complex uncertainty.

However, sources of uncertainty, strategies to navigate it, and tools to measure it are poorly studied. This research team aims to understand uncertainty, document existing tools for navigating it and develop a new tool to measure uncertainty that can be used by decision-makers. Mixed methods including literature review and interviews will be used to conduct this study.

Understanding the Discrepancies between the Expectations of Health Economists and Health Policy-Makers in Nova Scotia: The Case of Funding Decisions for Cancer Drugs

Investigators: Dominika Wranik (P.I.), Adrian Levy, Ana Johnson

Health economists (the producers of evaluations) appear to have a different understanding of how economic evaluations should be used in decision-making than do decision-makers (the users of evaluations). This discrepancy may compromise the usefulness of economic evaluations in decision-making. The research team would like to identify health economists' and decision-makers' intents pertaining to the use and interpretation of economic evaluations of new cancer therapies in Nova Scotia and highlight the gap between the intended and actual use and interpretation of these evaluations.

Testing the Feasibility of the Analytical Hierarchy Process to Incorporate Individuals' Preferences into their Treatment Decision-Making Process

Investigators: Stirling Bryan (P.I.), Nick Bansback, Stuart Peacock

Oncology patients are often faced with difficult trade-offs between outcomes from competing treatment options. The objective of this project is to test the feasibility of a decision support tool known as the analytical hierarchy process (AHP) to help women who are making decisions, based on their own preferences, on the use of prophylaxis treatment for the potential development of breast cancer. This research will be conducted with a sample of women who will complete an online survey and to determine if the AHP was understood and useful.

Social media discourse about cancer drug funding in Ontario and British Columbia: a pilot study

Investigators: Jennifer Gibson (P.I.), Stuart Peacock, Jeffrey Hoch, Scott Berry

In 2011, an Ontario woman with breast cancer 'tweeted' about her difficulty accessing Herceptin for a small breast cancer tumour. A few days later, her story was headline news in Canadian print and television media and quickly the Ontario Ministry of Health & Long Term Care expanded access to Herceptin. This case raises new questions about the potential influence of social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) on health policy. The researchers will review the relevant literature on social media use and influence in health policy decisions, particularly related to cancer control, and examine social media discourse regarding cancer drug funding in two Canadian provinces.

Comparisons in costs of end-of-life care in lung cancer patients in Ontario and the United States

Investigators: Murray Krahn (P.I.), Lisa Barbera, Jeffrey Hoch, Joan Warren, Robin Yabroff

This project will compare costs for end-of-life care in Ontario and the United States (US). A comprehensive hospice programme is available in the US. In Ontario, palliative care is fragmented. The research team will develop standards for costing healthcare in Ontario using administrative databases. In the US, Medicare claims files include costs; however, different components are included compared to Ontario data. The goal is to accurately estimate costs in both systems while including the same resources. This study's results will inform decision-makers of the costs of end-of-life care.

The Ontario Cancer Study Feasibility Project

Investigators: Craig Earle (P.I.), Geoff Anderson, Geoffrey Liu, Michelle Cotterchio, John McLaughlin, Kelly McDonald

The Ontario Cancer Study (OCS) will be created by enrolling cancer patients into the Ontario Health Study. This will efficiently create a large cancer patient cohort for research. The goal of this research is to test the feasibility of two different enrolment strategies: 1) 'point of care' enrolment in cancer clinics, and 2) 'centralized' recruitment through mailings based on the Ontario Cancer Registry.

For more information about ARCC's research programs please visit: www.cc-arcc.ca/research

Recent Events

The Analysis of Cancer Costs: Yesterday's Challenges, Today's Solutions and Tomorrow's Frontiers

July 10th, 2011

ARCC hosted a pre-congress session at the International Health Economics Association 8th World Congress. The presenters included world-leaders in cancer costing methods: Anirban Basu (University of Washington), Martin Brown (National Cancer Institute), John Mullahy (University of Wisconsin) and Claire de Oliveira (Toronto Health Economics and Technology Assessment (THETA) Collaborative). The event was well received and the slides are posted on the ARCC website.

Opportunities

Canadian Cancer Research Conference

The Canadian Cancer Research Conference that will be held November 27th- 30th in Toronto. The deadline for registration is October 14th. <http://www.oicr.on.ca/events/ccrc/>

ARCC Mentorship Program

Are you a graduate student looking for guidance from a senior researcher? ARCC is connecting students with mentors who have similar research interests and can provide insight from their experience. Email arcc@cancercare.on.ca if you are interested in pursuing this opportunity or if you would like more information on the program.

Announcements

ARCC Fellow

Dr. Christopher Longo will be spending his sabbatical year as an ARCC Fellow at the Pharmacoeconomics Research Unit at Cancer Care Ontario. Dr. Longo is an Associate Professor in the DeGroot School of Business, Strategic Market Leadership & Health Services Management, McMaster University. He is also a member of the Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis at McMaster University. ARCC is currently funding research projects in the Patients and Families area involving Dr. Longo. For more details, see www.cc-arcc.ca/research

Did you know?

ARCC presented 8 abstracts at the International Health Economics Association 8th World Congress. Please visit <http://www.cc-arcc.ca/network/presentations/> for more information.

ARCC is accepting applications for Network Members. For more information please visit www.cc-arcc.ca/network or email arcc@cancercare.on.ca.

ARCC will be having a national conference in 2012 devoted to applied research in cancer control. Stay tuned for more details about how you can be involved!



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