

New Collaboration Supports Research in Complementary and Alternative Medicine

The Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis, the Institute of Infection and Immunity and the Institute of Health Services and Policy Research are pleased to announce an exciting new collaboration with Health Canada's Natural Health Products Directorate that will support research in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) in Canada. This collaboration is part of an innovative CIHR program, the Interdisciplinary Capacity Enhancement Teams Grants Program (ICE), which brings together teams of investigators who are poised to conduct research, answer questions and translate knowledge in strategically important areas - like complementary and alternative medicine.



Today, approximately half of all Canadians use some form of CAM or take natural health products (NHPs). In fact, many use NHPs and CAM therapies at the same time they are using products and therapies recommended by conventional health care providers. This trend has prompted consumers, health care practitioners (both CAM and conventional) and policy makers to evaluate CAM, examine utilization patterns and to demand evidence to support how, why and if CAM should be integrated into the Canadian health care system.



The CAM ICE team, led by Dr. Heather Boon from the University of Toronto and Dr. Marja Verhoef from the University of Calgary, aims to create a self-sustaining, well-connected, highly trained CAM research community in Canada that is internationally recognized for both its excellence in research and its contribution towards a strong evidence base for CAM. The team will involve co-Investigators and collaborators from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds (including pharmacy, medical sociology, pharmacology, epidemiology, medicine, chiropractic, naturopathic medicine and ethics) and different provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland). Through an extended network of members, including students and members of the Canadian CAM community, this ICE team will receive up to \$1M over five years to:

1. Build a sustainable network that facilitates and supports researchers studying CAM from a health services and policy perspective;
2. Develop CAM research priorities and a research agenda;
3. Build CAM research capacity;
4. Promote knowledge transfer among researchers, health care practitioners, policy makers, research funders, and the public about CAM;
5. Link with other relevant networks, organizations, educational institutions to develop partnerships that further our objectives.

**For further information on ICE,
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