Partners in Success: Exploring research-stakeholder partnerships as a critical mechanism for knowledge translation and evidence-based practice

P. Athanasopoulos¹, A.E. Latimer-Cheung², H. Gainforth², S. Corkum³, K. Arbour-Nicitopoulos⁴, K.A. Martin Ginis⁵

¹Canadian Paraplegic Association of Ontario, ²Queen’s University, ³Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation, ⁴University of Toronto, ⁵McMaster University

Introduction

- Exercise (2-3 sessions/week) has been shown to significantly improve health in people with spinal cord injuries (SCI) (Hicks et al., 2011; Martin Ginis et al., 2011)

- This poster describes the approach taken by a multi-disciplinary team of researchers and community-service organizations to develop and disseminate physical activity resources and interventions for Canadians with SCI

The Opportunity

- 5-year, $1 million SSHRC CURA grant in 2007
- Supplementation of $1.5 million in cash and in-kind contributions from universities and community partners

SCI Action Canada

- 16 community partners and 15 researchers from 8 universities

Community Partners

Researchers

Dr. K. Arbour-Nicketopoulos¹,²
Dr. L. Brawley²
Dr. S. Bray³
Dr. D. Ditor³
Dr. G. Faulkner⁴
Dr. S. Hanna⁴
Dr. K. Hayes⁵
Dr. A. Hicks⁵
Dr. J. Horrocks⁶
Dr. A. Latimer-Cheung⁷
Dr. L. Letts⁷
Dr. K. Martin Ginis¹
Dr. H. Prapavessis⁵
Dr. B. Smith⁶
Dr. D. Wolfe⁶

¹McMaster University, ²University of Saskatchewan, ³York University, ⁴University of Western Ontario, ⁵University of Guelph, ⁶Queen’s University, ⁷McMaster University

Methodological Approach

Activities

The SCI Get Fit Toolkit

- A resource to help adults with SCI meet physical activity guidelines

- Dissemination of toolkit through the Outspoken magazine & e-Spoken

Active Homes

- Strength training resource manuals for paraplegics & tetraplegics including supplementary videos

Spinal Cord Connections – SCI University

- SCI-U is an online destination for e-learning about healthy living with SCI

- Supported the creation of the toolkit and participated in the dissemination via their websites

LTPAQ-SCI

- Reliability and validation study of the LTPAQ-SCI, a measurement tool used for ongoing evaluation of our programs

Objectives

- Develop theory and evidence-based interventions that inform, teach, and enable people with SCI to initiate and maintain a physically active lifestyle

- Mobilize these interventions in the SCI community

- Evaluate the impact of these interventions in the SCI community

Activities

The SCI Get Fit Toolkit

- A resource to help adults with SCI meet physical activity guidelines

- Dissemination of toolkit through the Outspoken magazine & e-Spoken

Active Homes

- Strength training resource manuals for paraplegics & tetraplegics including supplementary videos

Spinal Cord Connections – SCI University

- SCI-U is an online destination for e-learning about healthy living with SCI

- Supported the creation of the toolkit and participated in the dissemination via their websites

LTPAQ-SCI

- Reliability and validation study of the LTPAQ-SCI, a measurement tool used for ongoing evaluation of our programs

Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons

1. Find and engage team champions: Be open & committed to collaboration

2. Be open to everyone’s needs: Address individuals & organizations specific objectives & needs

3. Learn together: Recognize and appreciate the strengths each member possesses

4. Be patient: Good partnerships take time to develop

5. Strive to seek common language: Ensuring terms were understood was a challenge

6. Recognize the spin-offs: Capture all the outcomes from a multi-disciplinary collaboration

Conclusion

- A multi-disciplinary, research-community partnership has extended the reach of knowledge mobilization activities beyond what could be achieved by researchers working in isolation