

National Child and Youth Health Coalition



NCYHC CIHR RFA to Develop and Validate Child and Youth Health Indicators

Why Child and Youth Health Indicators

Our knowledge of the status of the health of our children and youth and the health care they receive is seriously hampered by the lack of nationally validated indicators. There is currently no consistent methodological basis for national comparative analyses to achieve an optimal level of health and health service delivery for Canadian children and youth. Moreover, policy-makers and the public have a false sense of security about child and youth health and healthcare.

We need research to develop and validate health and healthcare indicators so that our decisions and actions are evidence-based and reflect the unique needs of our children and youth. Evidence-based indicators are essential for identifying health priorities, planning services, allocating resources and evaluating the impact of policies and programs.

The National Child and Youth Health Coalition (NCYHC) Indicator Program

The National Child and Youth Health Coalition (NCYHC) is comprised of four founding members:

- Canadian Association of Paediatric Health Centres (CAPHC)
- Canadian Child Health Clinician Scientist Program (CCHCSP)
- Council of Canadian Child Health Research (CCCHR)
- Paediatric Chairs of Canada (PCC)

and is generously supported by an infrastructure grant from SickKids Foundation, National Grants Program. As of April 1, 2006 the Coalition will welcome the Paediatric Surgical Chiefs of Canada (PSCC) as its fifth full member. While each organization holds distinct mandates, the Coalition shares many common goals and objectives. Recognizing the important opportunities for national collaboration, the Coalition identified child and youth indicators as its first national priority.

To this end, the NCYHC has been working toward developing a national child and youth health indicators strategy through its Indicators Program. The NCYHC Indicators Steering Committee, in collaboration with six expert panels and over 150 members of the child and youth health and health research community from across the country have been working to develop a strategy for

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indicator development, validation and uptake to support empirically-based policy and decision-making. The primary goals of the NCYHC Indicators Program are:

1. To nationally validate existing indicators and develop new indicators that will be used to monitor and evaluate the health and health services provided to infants, children, youth and their families
2. Facilitate the dissemination and uptake of empirically-based national child and youth health indicators.

Request for Applications to Develop and Validate Child and Youth Health Indicators

As part of this strategy, NCYHC and CIHR's Institute of Human Development Child and Youth Health (IHDCYH) are leading a national Request for Applications (RFA) to develop and validate new indicators that will address areas of high priority in infant, child and youth health and health care delivery. We expect this RFA to be launched in December 2006 with an estimated budget of \$10 Million over a 5-year period.

Partnerships are Key to the Success of the RFA

As part of the RFA initiative, NCYHC and IHDCYH are seeking partners with similar goals to assist in the identification of priority areas as well as the development and support of the RFA. Partnership development has been key to the success of the Indicator Program thus far. The benefits of joining the partnership are numerous:

- It allows national groups to work together to identify specific and common needs around child and youth health indicators
- It provides an opportunity to collectively create a set of indicators that reflect the broad range of health, healthcare and outcome indicators that address "health and well-being" in children, youth and their families.
- It helps to reduce duplication of efforts.
- CIHR's participation ensures excellence in the research and administration of grants.
- It increases the overall funding for child and youth indicator research.

To date, the NCYHC and IHDCYH have secured partnerships with Transport Canada, Social Development Canada, Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA), Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), the Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada, the Ontario Provincial Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental at CHEO and are in the process of confirming commitments from other key organizations including Statistics Canada,

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the Canadian Lung Association and the Canadian Diabetes Association.

What it means to be an RFA Partner

Partnerships take a number of forms:

- Partners who provide research funds for the research community
- Partners who provide significant in-kind contribution that will be made available to investigators
- Partners who provide funds and contribute to the RFA Partner Workshop

The RFA Partner Workshop

There will be an RFA partner workshop May 31 – June 1, 2006 in Ottawa at the Delta Hotel. The objectives of this workshop are:

- To learn about each RFA partner's interests and needs.
- To determine where there are common goals and interests to develop "clusters" within the RFA.
- To create the framework of the RFA with respect to themes and mechanisms of support e.g. operational grants, team grants, grants for systematic reviews.

On the basis of discussions with partners to date, we anticipate that there will be a number of indicator themes and content clusters that emerge. These will provide an opportunity for partners to leverage their financial contributions. The success of the RFA will depend significantly on the research funding community's contributions in this respect.

Some partners will provide "non-targeted" funds to support an open call whereas others may elect to target their contributions to selected themes. In this case, partners will be involved in selecting for support applications that meet both merit and relevance criteria. If no relevant applications are received in the partner's area of interest, the partner may choose to withdraw their funding.

Partners will also determine what form of support they will provide. For example, one group may choose to put out a call for a systematic literature review, whereas another may seek applications to develop national indicators/standards in their area of interest.

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The RFA Time Line

Once the clusters and forms of support are identified by the Partner Workshop participants, a small writing group will be created to write the RFA. All partners will have input into the final draft.

It is anticipated that the RFA will be finalized by the end of September 2006 and will be launched by December 2006.

If partners decide to request Letters of Intent (LOIs), it is anticipated that the LOI deadline would be in the spring of 2007 with full proposals required by the end of the summer, 2007. Grants would be awarded in the fall 2007. Thus partner funds would only be required late 2007-2008 fiscal year. It is expected that many of the grants will be for three years.

What about Uptake

Many partners have underscored the importance of ensuring that the right indicators are developed and that they serve the needs of the community - locally, regionally, provincially and nationally. There has been enthusiastic support for considering requirements for applicants to develop multi-stakeholder applicant teams and/or to include viable uptake strategies as part of their applications. It is the strong wish of everyone to ensure that this initiative makes a difference.

For further information contact:

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