

SYMPOSIUM REPORT

**From Research to Practice in Career and
Employment Programs and Services**

A Working Symposium

March 13 – March 14, 2013

Victoria Park Suites Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario





Human Resources and
Skills Development Canada

Ressources humaines et
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The Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) is an internationally renowned centre of expertise and innovation in the field of career development. As a non-profit charitable organization, CCDF is committed to strengthening career services for Canadians of all ages.

CCDF actively supports the career development profession through research, training, resource development and distribution and leadership initiatives that enrich and enhance practice and inform policy. CCDF has worked extensively with partners in conducting research to build the evidence-base for career and employment services, gathering and analyzing stakeholder input, coordinating regional, national and international symposia, creating new and innovative approaches to training, recruitment/retention and building and implementing strong dissemination plans to address diverse stakeholder needs. Through their research and training development/delivery, CCDF has developed a profound understanding of front-line service delivery realities, staff competencies, service protocols and the range of client needs underpinning these services.

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FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE IN CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

A Working Symposium

INTRODUCTION

“From Research to Practice in Career and Employment Programs and Services – A Working Symposium” was held from March 13-14th, 2013 at the Best Western - Victoria Park Suites in Ottawa, Ontario. The Symposium brought together provincial, territorial and federal career and employment policy, service and practice leaders, distinguished Canadian researchers and research groups and an international expert. The two day Symposium was designed as a working forum to create dialogue between research and practice; to consider the practical applications of research tools and results to improving career and employment services; to highlight innovations in services at the provincial/territorial levels; to formulate a future research agenda; and to develop follow-up action strategies. The two day event began with an evening pre-Symposium event that encouraged networking. The two day Symposium presented a combination of thought-provoking speakers setting context, research panels reporting results, provincial and territorial panels presenting innovations and working groups focused on action. It provided an opportunity for participants to learn about research that could impact their various settings, to share provincial, territorial and federal successes and challenges, to network and build working inter-provincial and national relationships and to actively contribute to developing a national research agenda.

A total of 55 participants attended the event. A comprehensive 100 page programme was developed for the Symposium. The programme served as a learning resource, providing summaries of each research project and each provincial/territorial innovation; an information resource providing brief biographies of all

presenters; and as a working group and action planning guide.

The Symposium had 5 objectives:

1. make accessible and practical what has been/is being developed and learned through research projects which have been completed or are currently underway;
2. consider implications for program and service delivery generally as well as specifically for youth and adults who are low-skilled or weakly attached to the labour market;
3. provide a forum for exchange of provincial/territorial service delivery innovations and promising practices;
4. collaborate on a dissemination strategy to ensure the maximum impact and usefulness of both the tools developed as part of the research and the actual results; and
5. inform the development of future research agendas focused on what is not known and most important to learn.

BACKGROUND

The evidence base for effective labour market information (LMI), employment and career services is a priority issue in Canada and internationally. Over the past several years, significant progress has been made, especially in Canada, in developing this evidence base. The Symposium presented an opportunity to explore and understand the results and practical implications of 11 research projects, funded mainly by HRSDC with the exception of a longitudinal study funded by the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, Career Trek, a not-for-profit organization funded by various partners and a North Carolina (USA) project that

is being championed and brought to Canada by Career Cruising. An essential phase in each research project undertaken is to ensure that research advancements are accessible to policy makers, managers and front line practitioners who are in positions to use the results to improve LMI, career and employment programs and services with direct impact on Canadians. The Symposium focus was on the practical applications of the research to direct services and in particular on their applications to youth and Canadian adults with low skill and/or weak labour market attachment. The Symposium was supported by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), and was organized by Lynne Bezanson and Annika Laale, Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) in collaboration with the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC).

SYMPOSIUM

The Symposium was facilitated by Lynne Bezanson and Céline Renald, Canadian Career Development Foundation.

François Weldon, Director General, HRSDC opened the Symposium noting that this Symposium is a milestone event as it is rare to have the opportunity for shared dialogue among researchers, policy makers, front line managers and practitioners. He highlighted challenges that have been the catalysts behind funding of research projects over the last five years, these being the work integration of youth and of adults with low skill and weak labour market attachment and the reality that we do not have sufficient understanding of what actually works for these clients. These priorities have driven the research agenda as will be clear in the research projects to be presented. Having all groups represented at this event is an excellent opportunity for knowledge exchange and also a forum to help identify what else needs to be done to build on what has been learned and to identify key issues that demand further research investigation.

DAY 1 – MORNING KEYNOTE

Tom Zizys – The Labour Market Context: The Demand Side to the Equation

Tom Zizys is a Labour Market Analyst and Employment Program Consultant and Innovation Fellow of the Metcalf Foundation. His presentation focused on providing an insightful perspective into how the demand side of the labour market has evolved over the past 30 years, the directions currently being taken and what might be done to address imbalances which are affecting particularly youth and lower skilled workers.

Key points presented included:

◆ **Factors building up to a Labour Market Perfect Storm:**

- “Stagflation” began in the early 70s when Canada entered a period of slow economic growth (stagnation), high unemployment and price increases (inflation);
- Over time, major shifts in thinking occurred about how the market operates (unpredictable and needs to be managed vs. self-correcting); role of government (raise demand side and use social programs as stabilizers vs. cut regulations, lower taxes, less government intervention); and definition of the social good (full employment vs. low inflation);
- Globalization resulted in much greater competition and huge increases in workforce numbers;
- Companies felt they had to reduce costs—therefore wages and entry level jobs became more precarious and could be outsourced; the traditional entry level points for youth and unskilled workers gradually disappeared;
- Integrated firms were broken up—previous internal functions that

promoted work stability and movement within firms were outsourced (i.e. cafeterias, security, transportation, finance); focus shifted to saving money and avoiding unionization; biggest impact on entry level wages, shift from full to part-time work; less opportunity for advancement;

- ⊙ “Financialization”- major shift to company success being defined by how well its stocks are doing rather than how well its workforce is doing;
- ⊙ Hourglass shaped labour market is a consequence. In such a labour market, the structure of employment broadly fits into three categories:
 - Knowledge Work: access through university degrees and/or highly specialized training;
 - Middle Jobs: access through college and/or accumulation of workplace experience and skill;
 - Entry-Level Jobs: access through secondary school graduation and accumulation of workplace experience and skill;
- ⊙ and the distribution of work data sources confirm the following pattern:
 - Knowledge Work: Growth and expansion
 - Middle Jobs: Greatly reduced
 - Entry Level: Dead end

◆ **Canada's Performance:**

- ⊙ Compared with OECD countries, Canada has responded well with respect to the numbers of university and college graduates. However, almost a quarter of graduates are earning below half the median income. For example, overall 28% of university graduates are in the retail sector (generally unstable and low pay) and 45% of retail workers in Toronto have university degrees.

◆ **What can be done?**

- ⊙ Invest in creating enabling employer environments:
 - The case for investing in workforce development is irrefutable but the mechanisms to support employers are disappearing (i.e., workforce development boards; sector councils; sources of data and analysis). Training needs to shift from talent management (training workers at the top levels) to developing inside talent throughout organizations. Investment is needed in training managers and supervisors and HR departments to invest overall in workforce development.
- ⊙ Create a deliberate paradigm shift:
 - Focus on inequality. The degree of income inequality is the largest indicator of a country's economic development, not wages. Distribution of wealth is not discussed in Canada and needs to be. Inflation was the focal point in the 1970's; inequality is the focus of this decade.
 - Stop apologizing for the role of government in society.
 - Restrain the focus on shareholder value. Reaffirm that corporations have obligations to employees, community and stakeholders. Incentives in financial sector are currently driving companies and need to be slowed down.
- ⊙ Privilege good workforce development practices:
 - Create mechanisms to recognize and reward good employers. Reward those who hire youth; provide apprenticeships; provide more than a living wage. Recognize that these practices benefit the economy overall; they

are not ideological; rather they work.

- Use government procurement as a lever: Base awarding of contracts on good employer standards.
- Raise the bar on international labour agreements; stand for more than the race to the bottom.
- Initiate a different conversation about what we expect from employers.

Tom Zizys' opening keynote was strongly appreciated by the audience. It gave a value added demand side perspective on the labour market context issues facing Canadians.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR YOUTH PANEL

There is an increasing concern for the unemployment and underemployment of Canadian youth and young adults, including as referenced by Tom Zizys, those with post-secondary qualifications. Neil Sandell and Donnalee Bell were the following plenary speakers and together, they set the context for the first research panel on Youth.

Neil Sandell

Neil Sandell, a senior radio producer at the CBC and also the 2011 Atkinson Fellow in Public Policy studied youth unemployment and underemployment nationally and internationally during his fellowship. His study culminated in a series titled "Good Work Hunting: In Search of Answers for the Young and Jobless". Neil shared his insights including the voices of youth through a number of audio clips of his discussions outlining their experience with being un- or underemployed. Highlights of youth voices included:

"I was naïve; why was I not told that an English degree would lead nowhere; I am overqualified for entry jobs and any job that matches my qualifications asks for 3-6 years of management experience; I am a credentialed

teacher and now on social assistance; I don't know what I am doing wrong; I am always waiting for my real life to begin; I am always getting compromises; when can I stop compromising".

Neil pointed to the levels of frustration being experienced by youth and young adults. He pointed to two innovative examples that were highlights of success:

- ◆ Countries where education and training are delivered according to employer needs: Germany is a prime example. The employer is the gateway to employment through a system of demand driven credentials and paid internships; it is a complex system but one with much to teach us;
- ◆ Year Up (a non-profit organization based in Boston, Massachusetts): A one year program for multi-barriered youth that trains them to be exceptional employees in entry and middle level jobs that college graduates do not want and will leave as soon as a better opportunity presents itself. The program includes 6 months of life skills and job training; and 6 months of internship; results demonstrate that 83% of participants are on a career path at the end of the year; and over 90% of employers report satisfaction with new hires from the program. The program is creating entry level jobs for those who want them and want to keep them as well as building high quality entry level candidates.

Neil cited two strong recommendations:

- ◆ Experiential learning is critical for youth. Many more opportunities are needed for youth;
- ◆ Colleges and universities need to be much better connected to labour market realities and base admissions on potential employment prospects. Neil noted that this will not be a popular recommendation but in his view, it is essential.

Donnalee Bell

Donnalee Bell, Senior Consultant with the Canadian Career Development Foundation, and a national expert on Poorly Integrated New Entrants (PINEs) elaborated on Neil's series with a comprehensive literature review, entitled "Transitioning Graduates to Work" looking at the PINEs phenomenon internationally and nationally, offering a preliminary inventory of effective and innovative programs and policies that target those who are or who are at risk of becoming PINEs and outlining policy and program recommendations.

Her presentation focus was on preventative programs. PINEs as defined by the OECD are youth who have qualifications but frequently go back and forth in terms of temporary work, unemployment or inactivity even in times of economic growth. Currently 5.5% of Canadian youth are PINEs and alarmingly close to 75% of these youth remain PINEs five years on, indicating that a poor initial transition leads to sustained disconnection from the labour market. To make the youth situation even more alarming, in 2012, youth had the highest summer unemployment rate since data has been collected (1977). While work experience is in strong demand by employers, opportunities to acquire this experience are shrinking.

The report identified four program approaches that showed promise:

- ◆ Early intervention strategies: evidence supports that the earlier career development and work experience begin, the smoother the transition to work;
- ◆ Post-graduation strategies: several graduation guarantee programs are providing access to training and/or more education if employment is not imminent; other programs provide graduate access to income support while job searching; a distinct feature of successful programs are programs that intervene quickly upon graduation;

- ◆ Demand side programs: these are subsidy programs to accommodate apprenticeships; they need careful monitoring for employer abuse (i.e. unpaid internships) but they are overall effective;
- ◆ Diversity strategies: equity groups are over-represented in the PINEs population. Programs are needed that specifically target these groups.

The full report has 8 recommendations and one was especially highlighted, that is the need for a strong and coordinated National School to Work Transition Strategy.

Neil and Donnalee set the context very well for a focus on research pertaining to the youth and young adult populations.

RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTATION PANELS

Research project reports were presented thematically and in three distinct panels spread out over the Symposium. Panel 1 presented research focused on youth populations as well as two demonstration youth programs; Panel 2 presented research focused on low skilled adults and/or individuals with low labour market attachment; Panel 3 presented research focused on career and employment services serving all clients.

All researchers submitted a synthesis document to provide an at-a-glance overview of their research project, context, findings, value, and contact information. These formed part of the Symposium Participant Workbook. This report includes only an overall description of the research, research questions and the key findings. Readers are encouraged to refer to www.ccdf.ca under '**Current Projects**' for a more comprehensive description and information on accessing the full research reports.

Research Panel on Youth included the following:

CareerMotion

CareerMotion, a research project testing whether the provision of LMI through a Web-based career guidance intervention can improve labour market outcomes for underemployed youth and whether this approach is a means to help them reach their full potential on the labour market and improve their career development prospects. This was presented by Jean-Pierre Voyer, President and CEO of the Social Research Demonstration Corporation (SRDC).

◆ Research Questions:

- a. Can the provision of labour market information through web-based technologies improve participants' level of confidence and competency with regards to career and employment decision-making?
- b. Can the provision of labour market information through web-based technologies increase participants' job search and improve labour market outcomes?

◆ Research Results:

- Results of the experiment show that the career development tools offered through the CareerMotion portal significantly helped participants improve their confidence and their ability to make informed career decisions and their job search skills.
- The effectiveness of CareerMotion tools compares favourably with that of career development services that are delivered in person and for a much longer time-period.
- The important effects that CareerMotion had, after five weeks, on career decision-making self-efficacy, job search self-efficacy and job search

clarity were sustained one year after the program came to an end.

- There were no statistical significant differences in the overall employment situation between participants in CareerMotion (the program group) and non-participants (the control group) one year after the intervention. However, program group members reported improvements in their employment situation (better match, better satisfaction, better job tenure) in larger number than control group members.

Career Trek

Career Trek, a Winnipeg based program in place for the last 17 years, targets young Manitobans between the ages of 10-21 who "have post-secondary potential (virtually every child) but who have impediments to realizing this potential". Career Trek's Founder and CEO, Darrell Cole presented this program.

◆ Key Program Features:

- Program Interventions start early, age 10;
- Program is targeted at helping young people understand the relevance of school subjects to their lives by giving them direct experience in applying learning in work settings and also exposure to post-secondary settings. Focus is on school completion and overall citizenship development. Each student has four distinct work experiences in an academic year;
- Program has multiple tentacles; involves full family; focuses on First Nations youth; teaches mentorship and responsibility.

◆ Program Results:

- Formal research study has not been conducted. There is however strong evidence of positive impacts with large numbers of Manitoba youth on

secondary school completion, post-secondary enrollment and employment.

Future to Discover

Future to Discover is a 7 year longitudinal demonstration project that tested early high school enhanced career education and an early guarantee of a financial aid grant as alternate and combined strategies to increase post-secondary participation among youth from lower-income families. Reuben Ford, Research Director for SRDC presented his findings.

◆ Research Questions:

- Research shows that students from lower-income families and those whose parents have little or no education after high school are under-represented in post-secondary education (PSE) in Canada. Programs to tackle barriers to PSE must target these students, but the question remains of how best to support them. Will students be more influenced to pursue PSE by an early guarantee of financial support, or through enhanced career education to help them (as well as their parents) understand more about their academic and career options? Would the promise of financial help be more effective if combined with such enhanced career education? Which option is more cost effective? The Future to Discover project answers these questions by testing the effectiveness of two interventions via a large-scale and rigorous policy experiment.

◆ Research Findings:

- Both the enhanced career education and the guarantee of student financial aid increased demand for post-secondary education. Depending on the sub-group and provincial/population setting, the programs increased high-school graduation or post-secondary enrolment or both. These results were

seen for many sub-groups with lower access rates, such as boys and those from lower-income and first-generation families, making the programs of interest to policy-makers seeking increased access for these groups.

- The programs had impacts on post-secondary applications that did not always result in impacts on enrolment due to insufficient supply of places in some programs. A clear policy implication for increasing access is to enable greater flexibility in the availability of popular programs so that increased demand can translate into increased enrolment.
- At the same time, many of those offered enhanced career education missed out by not attending workshops. Nearly all attended at least one of the 2-hour workshops but on average students attended fewer than 10 of the 20 workshops to which they were invited. Less than three in ten visited the program website. Nearly one in ten offered the guarantee of aid did not sign up and many more forgot that they had an account, despite reminders. Future programming may be more effective if participation relied less on volunteering and more on automation. Career workshops could form part of the compulsory curriculum, and eligibility for aid might be initiated for all participants (and automatically similar to Canada's Child Tax Benefit) much earlier in high school than student aid applications are currently made available.
- Future to Discover has demonstrated that raising post-secondary enrolment, especially among key groups who normally have lower rates of enrolment, is quite feasible. This is despite (a) attendance and awareness of programming during a pilot rarely being as high as it can be when

programs enter the mainstream, and (b) supply constraints in the New Brunswick Anglophone college sector may have constrained some of the benefits of the programs.

- ◉ With more focused targeting, increased efforts to raise student engagement, and attention to bottlenecks in the higher education system, the positive impact of such interventions and their economic viability could be reinforced.

Futures for Kids

Futures for Kids [ccSpringboard](#) and [cclnspire](#) (F4K in North Carolina) enable students from grade 6 to grade 12 to explore career and learning possibilities, develop and continuously update a Personal Pathways Plan ([ePortfolio](#)), identify potential future employers in career paths of interest, interact with volunteer career coaches and mentors, and engage in work-based learning opportunities for middle school onwards. [cclnspire](#) also enables employers to identify and meet potential future employees, well in advance of graduation, so both can “test the fit.”

◆ Research Question:

- ◉ Does exposure to [ccSpringboard](#) and [cclnspire](#) impact students’ academic achievement (test scores)?

◆ Research Findings:

Students using [ccSpringboard](#) and [cclnspire](#) benefit in several interrelated academic areas:

- ◉ They made more progress than their peers, based on higher End-of-Course (EOC) and End-of-Grade (EOG) test scores.
- ◉ Results were especially strong in key STEM areas such as mathematics.

The positive impact on EOC and EOG scores increases the longer a student participates in [ccSpringboard](#) and [cclnspire](#) and the greater the student’s usage.

WORKING GROUP #1

The symposium participants were then organized into working groups consisting of researchers, Provincial/Territorial representatives, Federal representatives and national and international experts. This format was used throughout the two days. The groups reflected on and discussed questions in the workbook and then each group reported back key points to the plenary.

The following are key comments presented by working groups to the plenary session:

◆ *From what you have heard so far, what stands out to you regarding the role of employers?*

- ◉ Employees were traditionally seen as a key asset to employers; now employers feel they are doing workers a “favour” by hiring them – it’s a perception that we need to shake or “get over” in order to make progress
- ◉ Sector based approaches are important and strategic and need to be supported
- ◉ Employers can be involved in the whole continuum of career and employment services and are not currently employers have a role in career education that they are not filling now
- ◉ “Social license” needs to be part of the employer conversation so that community and environmental issues are both considered and demanded; this can be a point of leverage
- ◉ Get the voices of “successful employers” involved in talking to other employers and “making the case” for investing in youth
- ◉ Invest in recognition of good employers
- ◉ Values and norms are part of societal values and need to be reinforced overall including within the employer community.

◆ **From what you have heard so far, what stands out to you regarding the employability of youth and young adults?**

- A “Stay in school” message must be connected to potential employment
- There is a lack of capacity among educators to prepare students for the workforce
- Small and light interventions can make a difference; research has shown this; we need to build on and expand access to these interventions
- There is a national need for a coordinated career education strategy for youth in the education system
- We need to tell the truth; youth need to get an education AND we cannot guarantee them a good job AND we need to support and help them to manoeuvre the labour market
- There are insufficient checks and balances from the labour market to stem PSE offerings; one idea would be to tie base PSE funding to labour market demand
- Educational institutions including universities need incentives to support experiential learning and work experience

◆ **From what you have heard so far and from your particular perspective, what stands out to you as important to follow up on/do something about with respect to front-line practice; policy; research; other?**

- Employers need an attitudinal shift toward “investing” in new hires
- Starting early with youth is critical and it is not sufficiently done
- Use the adult career and employment services to offer specific services to PSE graduates before they get “stuck”
- Our approach across Canada is hugely fragmented – we need to help ‘connect the dots’ with existing systems and

strategies for youth. For example, building an intervention using Career Motion, Career Cruising and Career Trek and implementing it widely would be a huge step forward; we have the resources and we know what is needed; we are simply not acting

- We need coordinating bodies that support strategic partnerships across jurisdictions and provinces/territories. These bodies (e.g. CLFDB; FLMM Career Services Working Group) have disappeared and have left a huge void that needs to be addressed.

PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL PANEL ON SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY AND PRACTICE INNOVATIONS

Provincial and Territorial representatives were invited to profile an innovative policy or practice advance in service delivery that has been or is being implemented and is demonstrating positive impacts. The intent of these panels was both knowledge sharing amongst provinces and territories and also informing researchers and policy makers of innovations underway that might merit research attention and/or follow-up. Two panels spanning all provinces and territories were presented.

All representatives submitted a synthesis document to provide an at-a-glance overview of their innovation, issue targeted, key outcomes and contact information. These formed part of the Symposium Participant Workbook and are available at www.ccdf.ca under ‘**Current Projects**’. This report includes only an overall description of the innovation. Readers are encouraged to refer to the website for a more comprehensive description and to follow up with the representative personally to access further information.

Part 1 – Nunavut; Manitoba; New Brunswick; Ontario; Nova Scotia; Alberta; British Columbia

Nunavut

Nunavut presented their 'Work Readiness Program' that works primarily with Inuit in the North Baffin region of Nunavut and is aimed at those with weak attachment to the labour force. Rozy Singh, Manager of Career Services, Kakivak Association presented on behalf of Nunavut.

◆ Key Features:

- Work Readiness Program focused on underemployed adults in partnership with the mining industry
- Employers wanted a Work Readiness/Life Skill Program so that they could recruit job-ready workers directly from the program
- Unique feature was involvement of family members as work maintenance and job retention are huge problems given that most workers are away from home and community during work weeks ; this proved to be very effective
- Still being evaluated but looks very promising

Manitoba

Manitoba's Christine Waytiuk, Regional Manager for Employment Manitoba presented their 'Career Development Gateway'. This is a portal providing access to information on career development tools and resources to all Manitobans.

◆ Key Features:

- Manitoba has developed a 'Career Development Gateway', a strategy based on an extensive consultative process
- Consultations revealed that citizens were overwhelmed by the information

available and were unable to use it effectively

- Unique feature of Gateway is that it is truly "made in Manitoba"; all information is province specific and has been evaluated, ranked and only top sites accepted
- Gateway has been tested with clients and service providers
- Results include increased access to and use of resources; increased awareness of career development; increased use of over 150 tools and resources, and the gradual building of a coordinated system of career development

New Brunswick

New Brunswick's 'Employment Counselling Training Strategy' was initiated in 2010. It is province wide and staff are trained in seven comprehensive modules to support the delivery of high quality employment counselling services to New Brunswick residents. This was presented by Mylène Michaud, Acting Director of Program Design and Support, Employment Division of the Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour in New Brunswick.

◆ Key Features:

- Investing in career practitioner training has been a huge priority in the province
- Training strategy has included training trainers so that capacity is developed and will be sustained within the province
- Now expanding training strategy to reach out to social development and First Nations providers and include new competency areas such as poverty reduction
- Provincial partnerships are now occurring (e.g. adapting Manitoba's ethics course to New Brunswick)

- Certification is under development with UNB and Université de Moncton with certification managed by the New Brunswick Career Development Action Group
- Overall a major investment in development of the career practitioner profession and one that is paying off in terms of results with clients and practitioner work satisfaction

Ontario

Ontario has collected 'Data to Support Evidence-based Local Planning'. Data has been collected on more than a million employment and training interventions per year (related to multiple Employment Ontario employment and training programs) and provides an unprecedented window into labour market and employment issues at the community level. Barbara Simmons, Director of the Service Delivery Branch for the Employment and Training Division (ETD) of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities presented.

◆ Key Features:

- Focus is on how to use the wealth of data to create services customized for the needs of specific communities with a particular focus on youth, Aboriginal and long term unemployed
- Currently conducting 4 pilots in diverse communities to look at variables such as use of daycare, housing, and Stats Canada data to uncover cross correlations across the data that will identify what specific services are needed in specific communities
- A promising tool to create customized services at the community level

Nova Scotia

Judy Lawrence, Program Consultant presented 'Careers Nova Scotia' that aspires to create a coordinated continuum of services for all Nova Scotians to access information and build career

management skills to better prepare for and take advantage of current and future work opportunities.

◆ Key Features:

- Walk-In, mobile and online services are in place to extend access
- Aim is seamless services: e.g., common branding of all delivery points (names, titles, look); standard menu of services
- External service provider contracts will be split; management costs to cover infrastructure costs under one agreement separate from services contracts
- Outreach to employers a key service priority
- Has potential to revolutionize current service delivery

Alberta

Alberta reported on "Impacts of integrating Income Support with Career Services". Government re-organization resulted in the Career and Employment Consultant role being expanded to include the administration of the Income Support Program. This was presented by Linda Willis, Manager of Career Services.

◆ Key Features:

- Three major reorganizations in last 10 years including integrating income support with career services
- Impacts of this have included:
- Centres have very different look and feel for clients from both services (employment and income support)
- Much stronger emphasis on employment for income support clients; service levels have decreased as a result for regular employment clients;
- Different focus of Service Provision vs. Benefits Provision:
 - Service Provision: focus on comprehensive assessments and

service planning and management of transitions; ongoing services as long as needed

- Benefits Admin Provision: focus on entitlement, rules based, crisis intervention, no emphasis on ongoing services
- Results in competing challenges and priorities
- Tensions are still plentiful and being worked on constantly

British Columbia

British Columbia has established the “BC Centre for Employment Excellence”. Anne Hill, Director of Contract, Policy and Quality Assurance with the Employment and Labour Market Services Division of the Ministry of Social Development explained the mission of the Centre is to provide a single coordination point for research to connect both the BC employment services sector and the employer community with the best and emerging information about employment and training programs, practices and resources.

◆ Key Features:

- 2012 launch of Integrated Employment Program of BC followed three years of intensive consultation
- Agreed that single coordination point for research, innovation and dissemination should exist
- Currently a three year core funding agreement with a significant budget for ongoing innovative research
- Single coordination point for research to connect services and employers so that best information is available to both
- Objectives are to enhance knowledge for better employment outcomes, evaluate innovative practices to be tested and evaluated, and develop a community of practice
- Key results to date are a website, learning from practice videos,

comprehensive inventory of services, research proposals

- Keen to share and disseminate any innovations across Canada

The panel members were thanked for the quality of the presentations and for the quality of the innovations, many of which are unknown outside of provincial/territorial boundaries.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE LOW-SKILLED AND WEAK ATTACHMENT RESEARCH PANEL

Weak labour market attachment is a term often used to describe clients who have employment challenges. What it actually means and how accurate it is, are not well understood. Dr. Dave Redekopp is a Lead Researcher on a project looking into this construct among other research questions. He was asked to provide a perspective on Labour Market Attachment.

Thoughts on Labour Market Attachment – Dr. Dave Redekopp

- ◆ Labour Market Attachment is a term used commonly but not used consistently or well defined
- ◆ Research question is to discover if clients with low labour market attachment actually do less well than those with high labour market attachment. The fact is that we do not really know
- ◆ What you see in the literature on labour market attachment are definitions posited as spanning a spectrum of attachment levels such as the Fuente’s six point scale (Employed; Underemployed part-time; unemployed; seeking work but not available now; available but not looking for work and those who are inactive). Fuente’s scale helps to differentiate a little but remains a

snapshot look; at no point do we know what the actual attachment is—attached and hating it; attached and loving it; we do not know the nature and depth of attachment

- ◆ Invited all to think about how useful the idea of labour market attachment actually is and what factors influence it—socio- economic, personal attributes? Do they predict attachment or are they components of attachment? Finally is it a useful construct?

Research Panel #2 on Low-Skilled and Weakly Attached Adults included the following projects:

Stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing

Stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing was a three year research project based in Winnipeg to assess the use of Stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing to move ambivalent clients towards employment. Roxanne Sawatsky, Founder of Empowering Change presented this study.

◆ Research Question:

- By using Stages of Change (to identify client readiness) and Motivational Interviewing (the model to move ambivalent clients forward) would we see:
 - A decrease in program drop out after the first point of contact
 - Increase in clients finding first time employment
 - Increase in clients maintaining long term employment

◆ Research Results:

- As compared to the control group with the study group demonstrated:
 - 25% decrease in clients being released from employment assistance services

- 34% increase in first time employed numbers
- 48% increase in 6-month employment retention

Embedding Motivational Interviewing in Employment Services for Income Assistance Recipients

Embedding Motivational Interviewing in Employment Services for Income Assistance Recipients is a British Columbia demonstration project and was presented by Reuben Ford, SRDC. This project is incorporating motivational interviewing into existing income assistance programming. The approach is intended to help clients overcome ambivalence towards employment and to address the barriers and challenges that may be holding them back from seeking and securing gainful employment.

◆ Research Questions:

- Given promising findings from earlier evaluation of the use of motivational interviewing in a faith-based non-profit corporation offering employment services in Winnipeg, there has been policy interest in whether findings can be replicated in different settings. This project considers two research questions:
 - a. How well can Motivational Interviewing (MI) be integrated into employment services for income assistance recipients in a public service setting?
 - b. Does adding Motivational Interviewing into employment services for income assistance recipients improve motivation, employability and access to the labour market? Does it help to produce sustainable employment and reduce recurring periods of income assistance?

◆ **Research Results:**

- The project has collected baseline data from all project participants using a pen-and-paper survey and is implementing a 3-month follow up survey to both MI-stream and non-MI stream clients in order to assist in the estimation of program impact.
- Research is still in progress. The impacts of receipt of the MI-stream services will be assessed by comparing outcomes for the MI-stream group to the statistically-identical control group. It is anticipated that MI-stream group members will have advanced further along their stages of change with respect to employment, will be more likely to have continued to access services, will be more likely to have sought employment and that more will have left income assistance. These hypothesized outcomes will be tested through the analysis.
- Researchers are already learning that the barriers long-term income assistance recipients have to overcome in order to return to the labour market are complex. Many clients in this population have addiction issues or mental health issues to tackle. MI certainly has a role to play in motivating treatment of these issues, but it suggests the model (one “stages of change” model applied with respect to employment) is too simplistic when there may be two or three “stages of change” on other dimensions, like seeking treatment.
- The project will be examining health outcomes, but given the exposure to Motivational Interviewing, additional relevant outcomes to consider will include the ability of the client to maintain housing and adhere to treatment.

Career Development Services for Lower-Skilled Unemployed Adults

Career Development Services for Lower-Skilled Unemployed Adults was presented by David Gyarmati, Research Director, SRDC and Karen Myers, Research Director, SRDC. This presentation outlined two projects: Learning and Active Employment Programs Project (LAEP) and Career Development Services and Skills Development Programs: Gaps, Innovations, and Opportunities (CDS). The broad goals of these projects were to investigate the extent to which employment training programs are effectively meeting the needs of unemployed Canadians and to identify gaps, promising approaches and opportunities.

◆ **Research Questions:**

- The first project examined structural factors, individual characteristics, and program design and delivery factors that influence the effectiveness of training for unemployed low-skilled adults. The second project identified the range of individual needs and barriers that employment and training programs may need to address in order to effectively support positive labour market transitions. An international scan was conducted to identify promising practices in other jurisdictions and Canadian consultations identified some of promising approaches, designs, and delivery practices that are effectively meeting the needs of lower-skilled unemployed individuals. Major gaps and opportunities were identified and recommendations for options to test innovative approaches to enhancing service delivery in a Canadian context presented.

◆ **Research Results:**

- A complex set of individual characteristics and structural factors interact to enable or hinder participation and successful completion

of training, and ultimately influence whether participation is associated with positive labour market outcomes.

- LMDA program evaluations indicate there is a high degree of variation in participant outcomes across Canadian jurisdictions. Few studies, if any, explore how these differences arise.
- Canadian consultations identified a number of programs and practices that are believed to be working well. Several perceived gaps included: lack of evidence-based assessment tools and service decision models; lack of high quality, flexible training options; lack of options to combine training with work experience; lack of retention-oriented services and need for deeper engagement of employers.
- The final report identified several opportunities for further research including:
 - Test common assessment processes to determine the extent to which consistent assessment enhances service decision models and improves client outcomes.
 - Investigate the effectiveness of promising collaborative approaches to service delivery in terms of whether they are associated with increased quality and quantity of services and whether they enable better matches to client and employer needs.
 - Test whether providing tailored career development services improves client outcomes.
 - Test a 'career pathways' approach to provide high quality occupational training that provides training for occupations that are in demand in the local labour market and delivered in a manner responsive to the needs of working-age adults.

WORKING GROUP #2

The following represent key comments that were presented to the plenary session from the second working group:

◆ *From what you have heard so far, what stands out for you regarding low skilled/low attached workers/clients?*

- Client assessment is key and needs to lead the service delivery model; measuring and ensuring good assessments is a challenge and needs attention
- We make assumptions about low attached individuals based on attached individuals. We assume that full time employment is the preferred outcome for all. We need much more careful study of the low attached as a group to be able to base our interventions on their realities, not our assumptions
- "Readiness" for the labour market is a key resource issue; how much do we invest on making someone "ready"? What is the return on investment and is there a point at which it is not prudent to continue to invest?
- Approach for low attached is often highly coercive and some of the approaches presented flipped this thinking in a positive direction
- The evidence suggests that a client/customer centered approach is essential to build connections and relationships with the client. These relationships facilitate success
- Resources to support training are needed in order to be able to implement new approaches with very encouraging results
- Consultations with clients are needed

◆ **From what you have heard so far and from your particular perspective, what stands out to you as important to follow up on/do something about with respect to front-line practice; policy; research; other?**

- We often pre-decide what success in our services is for clients; we do not ask clients to identify their own definitions of success
- Budgets are not influenced by research that points to evidence based practices that work; budgets remain fixed for much too long and are unresponsive (e.g. motivational interviewing appears to work; no funding for training practitioners in the approach)

- There needs to be a strategy to share research findings across the country and to publicize what works so that new approaches get integrated into service provision; an umbrella mechanism is needed
- The time and effort to support this population needs to be recognized
- Need for a strategy to look at the responsibility of employers for this population. Stronger links are needed between employers and the secondary school system
- Pathways out of entry level dead-end jobs need to be transparent

A final short Plenary Question/Answer Session completed Day 1 of the Symposium.



DAY 2 – OPENING KEYNOTE

Dr. John McCarthy

Dr. John McCarthy, Director of the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (www.iccdpp.org) offered an international scan of policy and research developments in the field of Career Guidance.

Policy and Research Developments in the Field of Career Guidance – Brief International Scan

Dr. McCarthy pointed to developments internationally from which Canada might benefit. He noted that the research agenda in Canada is exemplary, far stronger than most countries, but the level of policy attention and discussion is weaker than in many, if not most, countries.

The lack of a National Forum was presented as a major weakness inhibiting policy and program development, sharing and cooperation. He noted that in Europe, since 2006, 18 EU countries have established National Guidance Forums as a way to bring all stakeholders (e.g. education, employment, trainers, service providers, consumer associations) together to work collaboratively in a coordinated and coherent way; in 9 other EU countries there are other government mechanisms. For example in France there is an Inter-Ministerial Delegation on Guidance (employment, education, vocational training, higher education, youth). This group has implemented a “citizen entitlement to career guidance”, specific criteria for services as a requirement for funding and common branding of service centres. There are models and examples for Canada to benefit from.

As a support to policy development, he highlighted a Policy Development Comparative Tool developed by the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network that includes five key areas and criteria to use to assess strong and weak policies. These areas include Access to

services; Career management skills (both acquiring and assessing them); National coordination and cooperation; Quality assurance; and the Evidence base.

He cited several countries, notably Australia and New Zealand that are establishing National Career Development Strategies and highlighted Norway that has conducted a national survey on user needs for, experience with, and evaluation of career and employment services.

Finally he pointed out that all countries face a jigsaw of services, policies and research challenges. Canada is not alone in this. While Canada is clearly leading in research and the evidence base, our major weakness is being able to use our research results to leverage policy development. This seems to be the huge Canadian gap. His analogy was that Canada walks the walk but has yet to talk the talk!

He committed the ICCDPP to assist in disseminating Canadian research and the results of this Symposium internationally.

Question and Answer Session:

What kind of research is most likely to generate more support for research?

- Aim for a standardized way of basic data collection. Evidence collection is critical; longitudinal data collection is important but maybe even more important is basic data collection across all provinces/ territories. Without that evidence base, services cannot really be planned. Our research scope needs to be expanded to test what is currently working well.

Are there research questions being asked about the role of career and employment services in countries with very high unemployment?

- Most of the focus is on interventions such as guarantee programs, apprenticeships, subsidies. People are

looking for political solutions but not many are evident on the horizon.

◆ **How can we go about getting a National Forum?**

- This is a question for Canadians. From an outsider's perspective, this forum is very rich and advanced but is this a one-off? Are there not issues that need to be discussed between provinces/territories and broader communities of employers, trade unions and service providers? In European terms, a national forum or mechanism is taken as a "given"; in Canada it is undeveloped. A mechanism is needed at national levels. It is an essential mechanism and it is very difficult to understand why budgets could not support inter-provincial/territorial learning. It is for Canadians to make this happen.

John was thanked for bringing new tools and resources to our attention, for pointing to exemplary examples from other countries from which Canadians can learn and for challenging us to finding mechanisms to establish a National Canadian Forum.

Research Panel #3 on Overall Career and Employment Service Delivery included the following projects

LMI Impact on Career Decision-Making

The Impact of LMI on Career Decision Making project, completed by the Canadian Research Working Group on Evidence Based Practice in Career Development (CWRG) was presented by Bryan Hiebert, Adjunct Professor in Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies at the University of Victoria and member of the CRWG. Investigations into the effectiveness of LMI most often look at LMI as part of a larger intervention such as career or employment counselling. This study isolated the use of LMI as a viable

approach, independent of other interventions such as psycho-educational workshops or counselling.

◆ **Research Questions:**

- If client needs are assessed and clients are given LMI tailored to meet their needs, (a) to what extent is independent self-help a sufficient process in order for clients to use LMI effectively and (b) to what extent does assistance by a service provider enhance effective client use of LMI?

◆ **Research Results:**

- Clients in all treatment conditions experienced substantial positive change during the course of the intervention in their knowledge of how to use LMI, their skills for using LMI, and their confidence and optimism regarding their ability to manage their future career paths. ***These changes were statistically significant and clinically meaningful.***
- 95% of clients indicated that their competence in understanding and using LMI was OK after participating in this research compared to 55% before participating in this research. The amount of change was similar across all three dimensions of the self-assessment survey: Knowledge, Skills, and Personal Attributes (attitudes).
- Client subscale scores in knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding using LMI were between 50% and 100% higher at the end of the intervention compared to before the intervention began.
- Of particular note were items that suggested increased ability to self-manage careers, such as: A clear vision of what I want in my career future; A clear understanding of what I need to do to move forward in my career; The ability to access career resources that can help me implement my career

vision; Knowledge of print and online resources that help me to research career/employment options; Confidence in my ability to manage future career transitions.

- 80% of clients attributed the changes they experienced as resulting from participation in the program and not other factors operating in their lives.
- At the end of the program 35% of the participants were employed (compared to 23% before the program began) and two-thirds of those had a job that was a good fit with their preferred employment future. 65% of those who had not yet found a job said they felt sufficiently prepared to continue using the knowledge and skills they had developed in the program and did not need to follow up with individual or group assistance.
- Practitioners said that participating in this project helped them be more focussed in their work with clients and also to have greater confidence in clients' ability to self- manage if given appropriate resources tailored to their needs.

Assessing the Impact of Career Information and Services across the Employability Dimensions

Assessing the Impact of Career Information and Services across the Employability Dimensions, a study by the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF), is comparing client outcomes in four dimensions of employability (career decision-making, skills enhancement, job search and job maintenance) when clients are (a) supported by a career development practitioner and career resources tailored to their need(s) vs. (b) provided only tailored career resources. How does the client's attachment to the labour market influence these outcomes? Do clients who show a propensity for self-help achieve different outcomes than those with a low self-help propensity? This project was presented by Dr.

Dave Redekopp, President and Founder of the Life-Role Development Group and Senior Researcher on the project.

◆ **Research Questions:**

- If clients are given a comprehensive needs assessment to determine their employability need(s), what is the relative impact on client knowledge, skill, personal attribute and educational/labour market outcomes of (a) self-managed tailored career resources and (b) tailored career resources with focused support from a career development practitioner?

◆ **Research Results:**

- Research is currently underway and no findings yet.
- We expect clients to benefit (in both capacity and employment/training) from tailor-made resources alone, and to benefit more when these resources are supported by a career development practitioner.
- We expect the above benefits across all four dimensions of employability.
- We expect low labour market attachment (LMA) clients to do less well than high LMA clients
- We expect clients with a high propensity to self-help to do better in both conditions than those with a low propensity to self-help.

The Impact of LMI Delivery Modes on Self-Efficacy and Employment Related Outcomes

This study looked at the impact of customized Labour Market Information (LMI) on the self-efficacy of displaced autoworkers as they looked for new employment. This project explored how LMI influences career decision making and if LMI can help to direct people to seek work in new growth sectors versus the sector from which they were displaced. Presented by Denise Ghanam, President, Ghanam Consulting.

◆ Research Questions:

- Does customized LMI positively change displaced workers job related self-efficacy?
- What labour market activities (such as increased job search behaviour) are associated with increases in job-related self-efficacy?
- Does customized LMI have a positive effect on displaced workers identifying training requirements and course availability leading to employment in new growth sectors?
- Does customized LMI have a positive effect on labour mobility of displaced workers into new growth sectors?
- Does the mode of delivery (one-to-one counselling versus group facilitation) of the customized LMI influence the labour market outcomes of job search, re-employment and/or retraining?

◆ Research Results:

- Job-related self-efficacy (JRSE) is positively impacted by the provision of customized LMI (clearly shown by statistically significant differences in the pre and post test scores of the treatment versus control groups).
- Increased JRSE is positively correlated to increases in all measures of job search behaviour (info gathering, job search activities, and time spent on job search).
- Provision of customized LMI appeared to favourably influence the desire to seek further training. Almost one-half (47.8 %) of the treated interview participants were weighing educational opportunities (with only one considering a program that was primarily automotive in focus).
- Delivery of customized LMI did not have a positive effect on labour mobility of displaced workers into new growth sectors. There was no positive

correlation between increased career information gathering, increased job search activity, and increased hours spent on job search per week and finding satisfactory employment.

- Qualitative data revealed also that most workers investigate a fairly small geographic zone for their job search (with a number of barriers identified that limit labour mobility).
- One-to-one counselling appeared to have a greater impact on career decision making while group facilitation affected job search behaviour more. Even with only one short intervention, there was some sustained residual impact on the group delivery participants. (These findings are supported by both quantitative and qualitative data).

Développement d'une approche visant à mobiliser la clientèle dite éloignée du marché du travail

Presented by Nicole Galarneau

Recherche auprès des personnes en situation de précarité et de pauvreté; une approche novatrice dans le domaine de l'employabilité destinée à la clientèle dite éloignée du marché du travail visait particulièrement à améliorer la manière de mobiliser cette clientèle dans un parcours vers l'emploi, en tenant compte de divers défis sociaux, économiques et politiques présents au moment de l'élaboration du projet. Afin de construire une offre de service innovatrice pour cette population, le RQuODE a demandé à ses organismes membres de proposer des projets spécifiques guidés par une programmation et une structure générale construite à partir du modèle de participation sociale continue proposé par Riverin-Simard et Simard (2004). Neuf sites ont construit des programmes spécifiques avec des clientèles variées. Tous les sites sont situés dans des milieux socio-économiquement défavorisés, répartis dans cinq régions administratives du Québec. Le projet Personnes et communautés en mouvement (PCM)

s'est déroulé sur une période de près deux ans, de 2008 à 2010, et a été suivi de plusieurs mois d'analyse du volumineux et riche corpus de données recueillies pour son évaluation.

◆ **Clientèle éloignée du marché du travail**

Description :

- ⊙ Faible scolarité
- ⊙ Absence prolongée du marché du travail
- ⊙ Monoparentalité
- ⊙ Vieillesse: 45 ans et plus
- ⊙ Problèmes de santé
- ⊙ Sortie d'un établissement de santé ou de détention
- ⊙ Enfant de moins de 5 ans à charge
- ⊙ Dépendance de plus en plus grande à l'assurance emploi: prestations cumulées de 48 mois et plus

◆ **Questions de recherche :**

Les trois objectifs d'évaluation de l'étude sont :

1. Décrire les différents programmes et les milieux dans lesquels ils sont implantés en étayant par des documents, notamment les activités menées et le contexte de leur réalisation;
2. Évaluer les effets¹ sur la mise en mouvement, le maintien dans le projet, l'intégration en emploi et le maintien en emploi pour l'individu;
3. Évaluer les effets² pour la communauté.

◆ **Résultats de la recherche :**

- ⊙ Les cibles de performance sont atteintes en moyenne de manière

remarquable, avec des fluctuations d'un site à l'autre qui peuvent s'expliquer à la lumière des six conditions de réussite de la programmation de PCM, que nous avons qualifiée d'intégrative et contextualisante, qui soutiennent l'activation intégrée et contextualisée de six logiques d'intervention.

- ⊙ Les six conditions à la réussite de la mise en œuvre d'une programmation intégrative et contextualisante visant la mise en mouvement de personnes dites éloignées du marché du travail basée sur une approche centrée sur les contextes de vie sont les suivantes : 1) la durée, 2) l'ouverture et la souplesse, 3) le partenariat territorial, 4) l'implication dans la communauté, 5) la directionnalité sur la formation et le travail et 6) la formation du personnel.
- ⊙ Les résultats obtenus confirment la pertinence d'une telle programmation pour la population visée.
- ⊙ Des analyses croisées ont permis de dégager un phénomène transversal de reconnaissance à partir duquel l'équipe de recherche a modélisé un processus de réinsertion sociale et professionnelle qui pourra soutenir une programmation intégrative et contextualisante à l'intention de personnes absentes du marché du travail depuis plusieurs années. La réinsertion y est vue comme un processus dynamique de transformation de l'individu dans son rapport à soi, aux autres et à la société fondé sur des liens de reconnaissance mutuelle.

¹ Alors que le protocole initial utilisait le terme « retombées », le terme « effets » est ici privilégié en raison de sa meilleure correspondance avec la littérature en évaluation de programmes.

² Idem.

PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL PANEL ON FROM PRACTICE TO RESEARCH

Several of the research projects were done in employment offices with career service providers and with regular employment office clients. It is a privilege to be able to conduct front-line research and it is recognized that in order to do so, cooperation is needed at many levels of service delivery. There are demands on staff and on operations. A select number of provinces that had participated in front line research were asked to discuss this experience, and to outline the challenges and benefits of participation. They were also asked to give their views on the importance of actual front-line research for career and employment offices and staff.

New Brunswick

New Brunswick participated in the LMI Impact on Career Decision Making Study. Cindy Lanteigne presented their experience as follows:

- ◆ Counsellors often feel on a treadmill where they cannot really work with clients in the ways they would like to; the research gave them an opportunity to respond much more to the needs of clients
- ◆ Participating in the research strengthened practitioner feelings of professionalism
- ◆ Often practitioners lack feedback on whether they actually do improve client lives; they question whether they are doing the best they can for clients; the research results confirmed positive outcomes and also revealed that they may not need to help all clients to the same degree
- ◆ Developed some new tools and processes such as checklists: LMI booklets based on client needs; assessment interview protocol; all value add to services practitioners are able to offer

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan participated in three research projects. Alastair MacFadden presented their experience as follows:

- ◆ Multiple organizational changes in the department forced constant change and innovation; in that fog they tried to support and participate in research projects; Impact of LMI on Career Decision Making study, the Common Indicators project that is currently underway and Motivational Interviewing
- ◆ Being involved in the research forced the department to develop a future concrete vision; the research created energy and an expectation for change and innovation; it has actually been a stabilizer amidst the many changes

Alberta

Alberta participated in the Employability Dimensions project that is currently underway. Melissa Sliter presented their experience as follows:

- ◆ Alberta is focusing on maximizing services through self-directed services and the project was very timely given this emphasis
- ◆ Challenges were: short timelines; no time to engage other client groups to participate; aligning service delivery protocols against research protocol demands
- ◆ Benefits and what worked well: regular briefings with senior officials built buy-in and enthusiasm across the department; practitioner understanding of the importance of data integrity and developing a strong evidence base have increased; actual client tools developed for the research are excellent and value added for regular services.

Quebec

Participation au projet *Personnes et Communautés en Mouvement* touchant une clientèle éloignée du marché du travail

Présenté par Nicole Galarneau

- ◆ Défis: donner à chacun des sites carte blanche pour le choix des stratégies plutôt qu'imposer des règles a posé certains problèmes parfois; demander aux intervenants de travailler en dehors de leur lieu de travail habituel; recruter des conseillers ayant la capacité de s'adapter à des conditions et des milieux différents; travailler avec les instances gouvernementales quand les règles face au choix des clients sont différentes; faire face au manque de connaissance en ce qui touche le système de soutien financier pour la clientèle éloignée du marché du travail.
- ◆ Avantages: création d'un réseau d'intervenants qui se sont donné du soutien pendant la recherche; développement de méthodes et stratégies créatrices de prestation de services; les intervenants ont reconnu avoir effectué de nombreux apprentissages.
- ◆ Les intervenants participants ont acquis des connaissances et des habiletés qu'ils veulent partager avec les autres. Expérience professionnelle très positive.

WORKING GROUP # 3

The following represent key comments that were presented to the plenary session from the third working group:

From what you have heard with respect to overall service delivery, what stands out for you as important learning? What are the possible implications for front-line practice; policy; research; other?

- The importance of a collaborative approach was stressed and there is an obvious and pressing need for a national forum to ensure knowledge exchange
- Inter-provincial and Inter-departmental partnerships are key
- The research needs to inform practice across all provinces and territories
- The evidence base for career and employment services is now much stronger but this message remains muted; political masters retain a single vision of a job as the only valid outcome; the evidence base needs to be much more strongly disseminated
- Measures of client "progress" towards employment need to be highlighted, measured and credited
- A need to research current practices and not just innovations; many current practices are achieving results and are neither evaluated nor credited
- The tools and resources developed in the research need to be widely disseminated and accessible

PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL PANEL ON SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY AND PRACTICE INNOVATIONS – PART 2

Part 2 – Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon

Saskatchewan

Alastair MacFadden, Executive Director of Labour Market Planning presented Saskatchewan's "Talent Teams" - a one stop service to support market planning for major employment projects.

◆ **Key Features:**

- Unemployment rate is very low (3.8%) in Saskatchewan and while there was a

history of effective rapid response teams (EI, training, immigration) when there was a sudden lay-off, there was no equivalent Talent Team approach to support a buoyant economy and large development projects

- Talent Teams were initiated and include provincial labour market services, training institutions, provincial immigration services, and partners in Aboriginal and other community organizations
- Talent Team Approach has been a pleasant surprise for employers, demonstrating that government is implementing integrated workforce planning

Prince Edward Island

Lora Kemp, Program Development Analyst presented the N3XT Network, an online tool to respond to the lack of career awareness and information among PEI youth.

◆ Key Features:

- N3XT Network uses videos, blogs and social media and comprises three areas: Website; N3XT Jobs to expose youth to work opportunities; N3XT TV that is hosted by youth who go into workplaces and film career and work opportunities for a bi-weekly telecast.
- The program is already being used in secondary school career education classes. It is unique in that it is student voices exposing other students to workplace opportunity
- While created primarily for PEI students and stakeholders, content is readily available to education and labour force groups from across Canada

Northwest Territories

Jacqueline McLean, Regional Superintendent for Advanced Education, South Slave, Education,

Culture and Employment presented an “Under-Skilled Employed Pilot Project”.

◆ Key Features:

- Small northern community (population 500); 40% employment but over 50% of these workers work rotational shifts outside the community; meanwhile employers in the community reported struggling to find qualified workers and train them
- Focus groups revealed employer needs in bookkeeping, computerized accounting and audit preparation
- Project brought specific short-term training in these areas into the community with exceptional results with respect to training program completion, improved work performance and employer satisfaction

Yukon

Anton Solomon, Acting Director for Labour Market Programs and Services with Yukon Education presented their ‘Labour Market Framework for the Yukon’ a continuing strategic consultation process that is tailored to the realities of small population communities and intended to develop the Yukon Labour Market and Yukon’s economic growth over the next 10 years.

CHANGING CLIENT NEEDS AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSES

The final panels were Thematic Panel Discussions intended to highlight changing client employment needs and organizational responses to these needs. Panel 1 was asked to highlight changes that are occurring and evident with respect to client needs. How are services responding? Are services and practitioners able to respond? Panel 2 was asked to highlight career practitioner training initiatives responding to changing client needs.

Provincial and Territorial Panel on The changing face of client needs and service delivery challenges:

British Columbia

British Columbia was represented by Tannis Goddard:

- ◆ Her company (Training Innovations) has been using web based services since 2004
- ◆ Her experience suggests strongly that web-based services are going to grow and increasingly will be the preferred modality for clients to access services. Her experience suggests that clients increasingly want to be able to work independently at times convenient to them but to have access to professional support as they progress
- ◆ To make this effective, issues that the field must address include:
 - Ethical and security issues have not been researched and addressed in practice
 - Research on what makes for a successful online intervention is needed; the key features that are essential in order for clients to progress are still not clear
 - Training for practitioners; no program currently available in Canada trains practitioners in web based service delivery; moving from face to face to on-line requires significant learning and significant changes in practice
 - There is an opportunity to shape this field and also a challenge because if the career and employment services field does not take leadership, some other competitor will.

Manitoba

Manitoba First Nations was represented by Darrell Cole:

- ◆ Darrell stressed the importance of designing interventions in consultation with end users, especially First Nations. Many of the available programs and interventions continue to be designed with good intent but no real needs and reality assessments and no meaningful involvement and input of end users. If we were to do this, our programs would change dramatically as would our outcomes.

Nova Scotia

Cathy Casey specifically addressed the changing needs of clients and noted the following groups on the increase:

- ◆ Clients with mental health issues (stress, anxiety, job loss and family related)
- ◆ Youth graduates who cannot find work
- ◆ Older worker clients whose skills are not current and who do not want to pursue extended training
- ◆ Mandated clients who are obliged to seek assistance in order to qualify for benefits.

She stressed things we need to stop doing and start doing:

- ◆ **Start:**
 - One stop access to services
 - Increase in pre-employment programs
 - Early career preparation for youth
 - Stronger relationships with employers and community partners
- ◆ **Stop:**
 - Segregating services and isolating clients from other services more suited to their needs.

PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL PANEL ON ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSES TO CHANGING AND EMERGING CLIENT NEEDS

A select number of new professional career development programs are emerging in response to changing client needs that demand more advanced career practitioner knowledge and skill to respond effectively. These are examples:

Nunavut: Arctic College Certification

presented by Rozy Singh

- ◆ Certification program at Arctic College; Inuit content is built into the courses; greatly appreciated by participants and a first of its kind
- ◆ Already have graduated three which is a huge achievement; now the program is expanding to more community outreach workers
- ◆ Highly transferable skills development program transferable to many departments in the north

Manitoba: University of Winnipeg Diploma Program in Career Development

presented by Gail Langlais

- ◆ Graduates are eligible for international certification and university is investigating crediting the courses towards degree status; recognition of move to professionalize the field
- ◆ Objective was to develop a higher standard of practice and professional identity among practitioners
- ◆ Similar to Nunavut, program is attracting career development providers outside of government across the province
- ◆ Sustainability has been built in through a train the trainer component

New Brunswick: First Nations High School Career Development Practitioner Training Program

presented by Glenn Tremblay

- ◆ Provided background on First Nations people being “helicoptered” into secondary schools in New Brunswick with no training or orientation to what their roles were and /or what their program objectives were
- ◆ A focus group identified learning how to help youth stay in school and how to help them shape a career direction as paramount training needs
- ◆ Training is underway and already positive impacts are evident, not only in terms of practitioner job satisfaction but positive impact on First Nations Students

WORKING GROUP #4

Working Group #4 addressed the summative questions posed as a result of the Symposium. These were:

- ◆ **Significant investments have been made in the field of career and employment services. The results are impressive but the reach and influence on policy and practice remains limited. What should be done to broaden the reach, influence and impact? What steps need to be taken by whom in order to make it happen?**
- ◆ **There is still much that we do not know. A future research agenda could serve to fill gaps. Looking ahead to a future research agenda, what is most important to study and learn? What steps need to be taken by whom in order to make it happen?**

The following represent key comments that were presented to the plenary session from the fourth and final working group:

◆ **What should be done to broaden the reach, influence and impact? What steps need to be taken by whom in order to make it happen?**

- We need to challenge and activate existing pan-Canadian policy bodies, notably CMEC and the FLMM. The need for a National Forum that meets regularly needs to be championed by one or both of these organizations
- The Secretariat of the FLMM is under the responsibility of a province; this responsibility rotates; we need to identify a champion province that will take leadership and put a National Forum on the table
- The BC Centre of Excellence is a model for provincial dissemination, has offered to disseminate broadly and this needs to be an opportunity taken. Assuming the BC model is successful, it could become a prototype to be duplicated in other provinces
- If research is going to get widely disseminated, we have to:
 - Simplify language
 - Say in 30 seconds what message we want to convey
 - Figure out why anyone should care about this
 - Tell stories—provide the narrative behind the research
 - Develop the elevator pitch
- Researchers need to know Marketing 101 and how to access policy makers; we need to become more able to sell our product
- Ongoing high quality research is needed through field projects; HRSDC needs to continue to lead and to engage with provinces to define what data is there and what else is needed
- A central clearinghouse is needed for completed research: FLMM Working

Group? SSHRC? ICCDPP? CCDF? Need to have it available and publicized;

- Practice Guides need to be developed following research so that research actually gets implemented
- Collect good examples of practice nationally; need a national repository of research and practice;

◆ **Looking ahead to a future research agenda, what is most important to study and learn? What steps need to be taken by whom in order to make it happen?**

- We need a Symposium on developing a research agenda; it takes much more than 15 minutes to figure out what data we have and what we are missing
- Investigate how our data can link to other data the government already collects
- Redress and focus on social assistance recipients and their complex needs including but not restricted to employment
- Redress and focus on what is working for Aboriginal and Inuit
- Develop and train in current assessment tools
- Measure effectiveness of programs already in the field and reported to be successful
- Given limited resources in the school system, research when is the best time to intervene with career education for students in K-12
- Research what works for immigrants
- Build best practices for giving parents the right tools
- We already have good evidence—our challenge is to move assertively to an implementation agenda
- Build momentum and a movement to establish a National Forum bringing together on a regular basis policy, practice and research

There were strong themes and convincing evidence that emerged throughout the Symposium that signaled a National Call to Action. As John McCarthy explained from an international perspective, that there are some countries that ‘talk the talk’ and others that ‘walk the walk’. The ‘talk the talk’ countries have developed comprehensive national strategies but have minimal research to support their strategy. And in comparison, Canada should be proud as a leader when it comes to its commitment to research and therefore ‘walks the walk’ and needs to focus on developing a national, collaborative and inclusive career development strategy and ‘talk the talk’. The following are four opportunities to act:

1. **Initiate a National Career Development**

Strategy: The government of Australia recently released a green consultation paper on their career development strategy. It may provide a useful prototype. The paper stresses that career development benefits both individual needs and national productivity. Five key policy objectives are outlined from their paper as follows:

- a. Raise education attainment and skill levels
- b. Support successful career transitions
- c. Raise labour force participation
- d. Address disadvantage
- e. Respond to the challenges of an ageing population

Designing a consultation process and developing a green paper on a National Career Development Strategy for Canada could be a key starting point for the work of a National Forum

2. **Develop a National Forum** – In order for the provinces and territories to be able to share information, a national forum needs to be established. This was a unanimous recommendation. There is a need for ongoing national forum that involves knowledge sharing, innovations and an action agenda. This should include federal and provincial representatives including

Education, Labour and Not-for-Profit organizations

3. **Develop a National repository for research and tools**

- A lot of funding has gone into researching what works in employment and career services and this information needs to reach the people delivering these services across Canada. There is significant support for establishing a centralized hub where information on completed and ongoing research is kept and made available nationally.

4. **Commit to a Future Research Agenda**

- From this symposium, we have garnered that there is great value in applied research and an essential need to expand and continue the research. Here are the proposed areas of research for a continuing research agenda:

- a. Research current practices; we do not really know what is working well now and the results that are currently being achieved
- b. Research assessment processes to uncover what works; build a consistent approach to assessment based on evidence
- c. Conduct further research with both employers and young adults to address career development programs and initiatives that would begin to bridge supply and demand
- d. Engage employers much more in the development and delivery of career development programs and services
- e. Continue to build the evidence base for career and employment services
- f. Identify funding sources and new partnerships

SYMPOSIUM CLOSING

Catherine Demers, Director of Employment Partnerships was invited to close the Symposium. She described career development services as the gateway to training and employment for well over 60% of Canadian clients seeking services and yet at the same time, until the relatively recent round of research projects, there was limited evidence of what works well. Catherine reviewed key themes from the Symposium that stood out for her and key actions that she was going to attempt to pursue. She emphasized that the importance of a National Forum and finding ways to ensure that this Symposium was not a one-off event were strong messages she was taking with her.

COMMENTARY AND CONCLUSION

The Symposium was an ambitious experiment bringing together researchers, provincial/territorial representatives and policy makers. The intent was to create an opportunity for reciprocal dialogue. Researchers would inform provincial/territorial representatives of research results and possible applications to services; provincial/territorial representatives would have opportunities to consider how to use the research results, tools, and protocols to strengthen client services. Provincial/territorial representatives for their part would inform researchers and policy makers of initiatives that are underway in their respective jurisdictions that may or may not be related to research but are innovative and are demonstrating positive results.

To achieve such reciprocal dialogue, researchers needed to present their results from an operational perspective and to do so under rigid time constraints. Provincial/territorial representatives needed to describe innovations with sufficient detail to capture the interest of researchers and policy makers with respect to possible follow-up and identifying new areas for investigation and to do so under even more rigid time constraints.

Working groups were challenged to not only assimilate a large amount of information but to consider the “so what”; what can/should be done and what steps need to be initiated so that implementation opportunities are not lost. Working groups also operated under strict time constraints and yet were exceptionally productive.

The Symposium did succeed in being a true knowledge, research and practice exchange as well as a catalyst for follow-up activities including plans for seeking sustainability for events of this nature and for a permanent forum for ongoing knowledge exchange amongst provinces/territories. As the recommendations from the final Working Groups attest, Symposium attendees moved from knowledge sharing to a small number of important and strategic recommendations that, if actioned and implemented, would place career development on the policy agendas of governments, education and labour market ministers, significantly strengthen career development programs and services for Canadians, continue the evidence-based research that is so critical for service improvement and foster and support ongoing knowledge and innovation exchange across provinces/territories.