



Canadian Paediatric Surveillance Program Update

CPSP review hails program as “excellent and unsurpassed”

The Canadian Paediatric Surveillance Program (CPSP) generates epidemiological research data and provides important public health information quickly and inexpensively — this according to the program evaluation held in the fall of 2003.

“It is an important mechanism for surveillance of human health and well-being of one of the most vulnerable populations in Canada, our children,” says Dr. Robert McMurtry in his evaluation summary. “The CPSP has done very well in regard to its current objectives.”

A former Assistant Deputy Minister with the federal government who served on the *Romanow Commission on The Future of Health Care in Canada*, Dr. McMurtry chaired the Expert Advisory Group (EAG) who oversaw the evaluation. The group also consisted of experts from abroad, a community paediatrician, and a provincial epidemiologist.

“We were struck that such an inexpensive program could have such Canada-wide support from paediatricians,” said Dr. Margaret Berry, a member of the EAG and an active participant in the CPSP program. “It is a good mechanism for finding low-frequency, high-impact conditions that otherwise would be quite difficult to identify.”

The evaluation was based on the CDC (Centres for Disease Control) system attributes criteria for evaluating public health surveillance systems. EAG members first reviewed extensive background program materials in three key areas: the initiation of a study, the surveillance process, and the impact of information dissemination. They then received a synopsis analysis of feedback data from four anonymous surveys sent to over 2400 individuals, including program participants, investigators, current and past steering committee members, and public health officials.

The panel concluded that the CPSP was exceptional and unsurpassed by any comparable program known to the group. They also emphasized that the CPSP is an important collaborative tool for surveillance, research and policy development.

“The CPSP is a gem, a light under a bushel,” says Dr. McMurtry.

For more details, contact Andrea Medaglia, Senior CPSP Coordinator, at andream@cps.ca or visit www.cps.ca and follow the links to CPSP. ✱