

IN-CAM Outcomes Database: Collaborative Research Database To Benefit Complementary And Alternative Medicine

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The McGill University Health Centre Research Institute and the University of Calgary in collaboration with Centennial College are launching the first-ever searchable database of outcome measures intended for complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) researchers - the IN-CAM Outcomes Database. This innovative initiative promises to improve the quality and the range of CAM research that will lead to more effective treatments in the future.

"The mainstream use of complementary and alternative medicine continues to grow rapidly, however, more research needs to be done in this field," says Trish Dryden, Director of Centennial's Applied Research Centre and a project co-investigator. "Nobody has put research instruments in a database that is responsive to CAM researchers' needs - until now."

The project is funded by the Lotte & John Hecht Memorial Foundation and the Canadian Interdisciplinary Network for Complementary and Alternative Medicine Research (IN-CAM).

IN-CAM co-Directors Dr. Marja Verhoef and Dr. Heather Boon believe that a coordinated, interdisciplinary and collaborative effort is needed to address the many gaps that exist in CAM research, for example, the type of health benefits people are seeking from CAM and how these needs vary depending on a person's beliefs, culture and context. The IN-CAM Outcomes Database recognizes a range of outcome measures which address different health domains.

"This database provides CAM researchers with tools in an interactive forum to improve their research questions and methodology," says co-investigator Dr. Mark Ware, who is also Director of clinical research at the Pain Clinic of the McGill University Health Centre. "We hope that this database will foster a community of CAM researchers and provide a forum for information exchange." CAM researchers will be able to use the IN-CAM Outcomes Database to rate and comment on outcome measures and to propose new measures to be added.

As one of the principal investigators, University of Calgary's Dr. Verhoef will launch the database at the International Conference for Complementary Medicine Research held in Australia from March 28 to 31. John Weeks, an international opinion leader in integrative medicine, has already listed the IN-CAM Outcomes Database as one of the 10 most significant projects in integrative medicine in 2007-08.

Article adapted by Medical News Today from original press release.

The Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (RI MUHC) is a world-renowned biomedical and health-care hospital research centre. Located in Montreal, Quebec, the institute is the research arm of the MUHC, the university health center affiliated with the Faculty of Medicine at McGill University. The institute supports over 600 researchers, nearly 1200 graduate and post-doctoral students and operates more than 300 laboratories devoted to a broad spectrum of fundamental and clinical research. The Research Institute operates at the forefront of knowledge, innovation and technology and is inextricably linked to the clinical programs of the MUHC, ensuring that patients benefit directly from the latest research-based knowledge. The Research Institute of the MUHC is supported in part by the Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec. For further details visit: <http://www.muhc.ca/research>.

The Centennial College Applied Research Centre (ARC) supports and advances learning, innovation and solutions to transform lives and communities. The centre's mission is to enhance continuous learning for all, foster social transformation and innovation, increase employment and knowledge transfer, and build partnerships. ARC works closely with industry, communities and government stakeholders to support innovation and commercialization. It provides essential direction and strategic planning for research, and structures to support high quality research. ARC is an integral part of Centennial College, Ontario's first publicly funded college of applied arts and technology, established in Toronto in 1966. For more details visit: <http://www.centennialcollege.ca/arc>.

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