

# Learning What Works

Evidence from SRDC's social experiments and research

## March 2014

### IN THIS ISSUE

- BC CfEE to promote innovation at career development conference
- SRDC evaluating innovations in health care
- Mapping the road to employment for individuals with developmental disabilities
- New associates in Toronto and Vancouver offices

### BC CfEE to promote innovation at career development conference

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence and the BC Career Development Association are hosting the 2014 BC Career Development Conference, March 7-8 in Richmond, British Columbia. Under the theme *Partnering for Tomorrow's Workforce*, the Association is sponsoring over 30 presentations and panel discussions. In addition, the Centre is presenting seven sessions focused on *Promoting Innovation in Practice*.

The annual conference provides a learning forum for the career development community and is the largest of its kind in Western Canada. Conference delegates represent a wide range of stakeholders in the employment services sector — researchers, policy makers, academics, employers, practitioners, and government representatives. The program will be relevant to anyone working in career development or employment policy, research, and programs.

The involvement of the Centre brings a new perspective on research and evidence to the conference. A session on early implementation lessons from the Employment Program of British Columbia is sure to be a highlight, given the impact of the Program on the career development community. The Centre has also organized a presentation on the first application of social impact bonds in North America: a New York City program intended to increase employment opportunities for young offenders.

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence is an independent research and knowledge-sharing organization created to act as a single coordination point for research on employment in BC. The Centre's website connects the BC employment services sector and the employer community with the best and emerging information about employment and training programs, practices, and resources. The Centre is operated as a division of SRDC. It is funded by the Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia.

[Register for the conference.](#)

[Visit the Centre's website.](#)

## SRDC evaluating innovations in health care

SRDC was recently selected to evaluate projects with three new clients: Canada Health Infoway, the Green Shield Canada Foundation, and the University of Toronto. These projects all focus on innovations in healthcare — either the technologies used to deliver healthcare services or the ways in which healthcare services are coordinated across organizations. All of the projects aim to improve access and quality of service, while increasing the efficiency of the health care system.

The Direct Lab Access project, sponsored by Canada Health Infoway, studies the impact of patients having direct, online access to their laboratory results. Availability of this service is most widespread in British Columbia. SRDC is assessing how patients use this service and the impact it has on patient experience, patient-physician relationships, and physician practices. The results thus have the potential to inform the planning and delivery of digital health information services across the country.

The other two projects — evaluations of the BRIDGES Collaborative and the Health Innovation Collaborative — are focused on service innovations for people with complex chronic health conditions. BRIDGES is a collaborative run by the departments of Medicine, Psychiatry and Family and Community Medicine at the University of Toronto. It uses an incubator model to support nine different projects testing innovations in integrated healthcare delivery.

Similarly, the Green Shield Canada Foundation sponsored Health Innovation Collaborative is a three-year initiative that supports five different healthcare organizations to work together as they develop innovative programs and services, focusing on big-picture change for seniors. This project is designed to address two of Canada's greatest healthcare challenges: the country's aging population and the rising costs of supporting patients with complex chronic conditions in hospitals or long-term care. More information can be found at [gscfoundation.ca](http://gscfoundation.ca).

For both projects, SRDC is evaluating the potential for collective impact, which is a new way to assess the process, functioning, and outcomes of such collaborations. SRDC is taking a developmental evaluation approach in both cases, working closely with project stakeholders to identify challenges and help improve the initiatives as they develop over time.

For more information [contact Heather Smith Fowler](#).

## Mapping the road to employment for individuals with developmental disabilities

In December 2013, the BC Centre for Employment Excellence launched a project to develop an online database of best practices concerning the employment of people with developmental disabilities. The BC Employment Mapping Tool is being designed as a resource for individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, service providers, employers, and policy makers. It aims to increase understanding of how best to support people with development disabilities in preparing for and maintaining employment.

By enabling users to upload text or media files that relate their experiences with employment and disability support services, the tool will facilitate the sharing of first-hand knowledge of best practices to other stakeholders. A key aspect will be the identification of innovative approaches for assisting developmentally disabled people overcome barriers to finding or keeping a job. The tool's map-based interface will allow users to search for such information that is particular to their own regions.

The project is being developed in partnership with the UBC Centres for Inclusion and Citizenship and Social Spatial and Economic Justice, with financial support from Community Living BC. The 17-month pilot will involve 30-35 individuals with development disabilities in communities across BC. If the tool is successful in collecting and sharing such information, the technology may be useful for a larger population or to other groups of job seekers facing barriers in the labour market.

The BC Centre for Employment Excellence is an independent research and knowledge-sharing organization created to act as a single coordination point for research on employment in BC. The Centre's website connects the BC employment services sector and the employer community with the best and emerging information about employment and training programs, practices, and resources. The Centre is operated as a division of SRDC. It is funded by the Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia.

For more information [contact Shawn de Raaf](#).

[Visit the Centre's website](#).

## New associates in Toronto and Vancouver offices

SRDC was overwhelmed by the response to our recent recruitment notices. After reviewing hundreds of applications and interviewing a number of highly qualified candidates, we are very pleased with the results: Mark McKerrow and Max Palamar accepted positions in the Toronto office, while Kemi Odegbile joined the Vancouver office.

Olufunmilola (Kemi) Odegbile joins SRDC from Fraser Health and Provincial Health Services Authority where she was accountable for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of health services designed to improve population health. Dr. Odegbile has a Graduate Certificate in Health Services Management from George Washington University, a Master of Public Health from the School of Public Health and Health Services at George Washington University, and a Doctor of Medicine from the College of Medical and Biological Sciences at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, Brazil.

Mark McKerrow comes to SRDC from McMaster University. He has twelve years of social research experience, managing and analyzing quantitative data, formulating workable research designs, and drawing inferences with experimental and observational data. Dr. McKerrow has a Ph.D. in sociology from Cornell University, as well as an M.A. in sociology and B.Sc. in Engineering from the University of Guelph.

Max Palamar holds a Master of Arts in Economics from the University of Toronto and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Psychology from the University of Waterloo. His research interests include adult education and labour retraining, financial literacy, and policy applications of behavioural economics.