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Guidelines as Knowledge Translation (KT): Activities at the Canadian Partnership against Cancer

Louise Zitzelsberger¹, Margaret Harrison², Melissa Brouwers³, George Browman⁴, Barbara Poole⁵, Walley Temple¹

¹Canadian Partnership against Cancer, Ottawa ON, Canada, ²Queens University, Kingston ON, Canada, ³McMaster University, Hamilton ON, Canada, ⁴British Columbia Cancer Agency, Victoria BC, Canada, ⁵British Columbia Cancer Agency, Vancouver BC, Canada, ⁶Alberta Health Services, Calgary AB, Canada

The Canadian Partnership against Cancer is a KT organization with an aim to accelerate the production of new knowledge and put into action what is already known in cancer control. As one of its priority areas, the Cancer Guideline Action Group (CG-AG) focuses on the optimal use of evidence using guidelines as the vehicle. The Knowledge to Action cycle (Graham et al 2006) is a guiding framework which can be used to describe the way the CG-AG is putting guidelines to work.

KT takes place within a context; two projects focus on enhancing or understanding this context. Through building a knowledge base of stakeholders, filling training gaps and profiling best practices in evidence development and implementation, the Capacity Enhancement Program is aimed at improving capacity in the Canadian context. The Communities of Practice (CoP) project seeks to understand the milieu in which KT occurs – through developing indicators to describe and evaluate CoPs as KT entities in activities focused on guidelines.

Three projects can be situated in the Knowledge to Action cycle – creation through to sustained use. CAN-ADAPTE is developing a Canadian version of a methodology which places guideline adaptation within a broader context of implementing best practices. The Synoptic Reporting Tools project embeds guidelines at the point care via templates (checklists) for capturing cancer surgery data. The Guidelines, Resource Allocation and Public Engagement project is developing an educational tool to help decision makers better understand the complex interaction of factors involved in allocating resources and how evidence can be used in this process.

A large scale Canadian effort in knowledge translation using guidelines as leverage to improve quality in cancer control is taking place. Lessons learned and approaches used may be useful to other countries undertaking similar KT efforts.