



# Patients, Policy & Public Health **BACKGROUND**

## **PATIENTS, POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH (PPP) ENABLING PLATFORM** Research Leader: **Dr. Allan Becker**

### **OBJECTIVE**

This PPP Enabling Platform focuses on benefits for patients, policy and public health across Legacy Projects. It integrates expertise in the social sciences, including psychology, sociology, medical geography, ethics, law and health economics, to inform evidence-based public health policy, patient and health professional outreach, and the development of educational and allergy and asthma management tools.

### **NEED FOR RESEARCH**

The vision for this platform is to span the knowledge continuum, from knowledge creation to mobilization. AllerGen's knowledge creation activities build on the progress made in patient, healthcare professional and policy-relevant research in biomedical and social sciences.

Knowledge synthesis involves taking existing knowledge that is fractured, disparate and unorganized, and synthesizing it in such a way that it becomes useful to policy and decision makers, as well as to researchers who are designing the next steps in long-term Legacy Projects

and Enabling Platforms. Knowledge translation occurs as part of the development of an evidence-to-action framework, where knowledge creators translate knowledge for use by user and receptor groups.

AllerGen plans to continue building on selected projects ongoing from the 2009-2012 funding cycle to support research that enables active knowledge movement along the knowledge continuum, adding value and disseminating knowledge to end users, and ultimately improving the everyday lives of Canadians.

### **Patients, Policy & Public Health (PPP) Enabling Platform Projects**

#### **12PPP1: Technology-enabled Knowledge Translation and Mobilization** (PI: Levinson)

This project aims to create an Internet-based enabling platform for the Network to facilitate the formation and management of online communities supporting AllerGen-related projects. The platform will support a number of Web 2.0 functions, including distribution of White Papers, encouraging dialogue on Network research initiatives, and providing a potential recruitment and retention vehicle for research participants. Online participation and a series of web analytics will be measured. A key knowledge mobilization

objective is to improve intra-Network communication and collaboration through the creation of an online AllerGen community. Engagement of Network investigators and the general public will be enhanced by this online community platform.

#### **12PPP2: Promoting Health Equity for Vulnerable Populations affected by Asthma and Allergies** (PI: Stewart)

This project aims to improve the relevance and use of health education programs and enhance health program effectiveness by supplementing professional knowledge with the first-hand knowledge of peer groups. This approach will

optimize the capacity of low-income children and families to manage asthma/allergies, and promote the use of accessible and acceptable technologies. Predicted effects of the education program for Aboriginal communities include: enhanced awareness of lung health; improved knowledge about social factors influencing chronic lung disease; and increased access to culturally relevant resources related to respiratory health.

### **12PPP3: The Platform for Outcomes Research and Translation in Asthma and Allergy (PORTAL)**

(PIs: Lynd, Marra, and Ungar)

This research team will analyze parental and teen preferences studies, and expand previous studies to other populations, including practitioners. The team will also complete a disease-based model for asthma. These proposed modeling projects are being undertaken under the auspices of a larger project related to Population Modeling of Respiratory Disease (PopResp). PopResp will be a micro-simulation model following individuals from birth to death (including immigration/emigration patterns). As individuals progress through the model, their simulated quality of life, costs, and epidemiologic measures of lung disease will be collected. The model can be used as a generic, standardized, and validated paradigm to project the burden of respiratory diseases in future and to estimate the cost, effectiveness, and budgetary impact of competing health technologies.

Integration of models across diseases is important in evaluating the benefit of risk factor modification activities such as smoking cessation programs whose effects relate to several health conditions. Given projected changes in the demographic and socio-economic status of Canadians, this activity will be crucial for predicting the future burden of asthma and COPD, evaluating the impact of potential changes in regulations for air pollution on respiratory diseases, and performing economic evaluation of emerging health technologies in respiratory medicine.

### **12PPP4: White Paper Series**

(PI: Caulfield)

Several studies suggest that the general public receives most of its information about health and science from the media. The media also play a significant role in policy development. Therefore, it is important to understand how evidence is discussed and portrayed by different media to different groups and the general public, and what is at stake for different actors and institutions. There are a number of controversial topics within the scope of AllerGen's research (e.g., concern about allergic reactions to vaccines; medical and societal issues related to the expansion of the scope of practice for naturopathic practitioners; airline food allergy policy; genetics and personalized healthcare) that have captured the attention of the media, the general public and policy makers. This research team explores the current use of evidence in health policy decisions and how best to facilitate the use of evidence in future decisions. Given the various social dimensions and complexities of allergy and asthma, white papers are an ideal vehicle for the analysis of how best to use "evidence" in health policy decisions, at both the clinical and policy levels.

### **12PPP5: Development of an Evidence-based Certified Allergy Educator Program Planning Workshop** (Complete)

This project undertook to support the development of an operational plan to introduce a national, evidence-based Certified Allergy Educator credential. Those certified could work in family health teams to provide disease management plans, education and information to people living with allergies, especially food allergy. Target audiences include certified asthma educators, pharmacists, respiratory therapists, and nurses.

### **12PPP6: Mobilizing Best Practices in Asthma & Allergy Management & Use of The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) in the Canadian Sport & Recreation Community** (Complete)

In February 2013, AllerGen partnered with Clean Air Champions to host a two-day strategic planning workshop to identify opportunities to mobilize best practices, and use the AQHI, in asthma and allergy management within the Canadian sport and recreation community. The workshop sought to inform the development of an operational plan and implementation strategy for a multi-year KMB initiative to support sport participation by Canadians (especially youth) living with allergies and asthma. However, a "user pull" analysis, recommended by RMC, determined that additional AllerGen investment in this initiative was unwarranted.

### **13PPP-SI-1: Asthma Performance Indicators (API) National Strategies Workshop Proceedings**

(PI: To)

In April 2013, a meeting was held to solicit input and advice from a panel of experts knowledgeable and experienced in quality of care and/or asthma performance indicators to develop a national strategy for implementing and evaluating evidence-based indicators for benchmarking and monitoring asthma care in Canada. Recommendations from this meeting were used to draft a proposal to CIHR to fund a nation-wide asthma performance indicator implementation and evaluation study, and will also be used to develop a strategy for implementing and evaluating asthma performance indicators on a national level.

### **13PPP-SI-2: Allergy Educator Education in Canada**

(PI: Becker)

Following upon the work of 12PPP5, with the aim of creating a national, evidence-based Certified Allergy Educator credential, this project will conduct a strategic needs assessment survey of the potential target audience for allergy/anaphylaxis educator education in Canada, including Asthma Educators, Academics, Dieticians, Allergists, lay organizations and others. In parallel with the needs assessment, the investigators will begin to define critical core curriculum components required for an effective Allergy Educator program. This is a critical first step in development of a national allergy educator education process leading toward a diploma or national certification.