

## A Healthy Balance of Research, Policy and Practice:

### The Healthy Balance Research Program strategy for knowledge generation, knowledge translation and knowledge uptake

<b>Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Structure</b>	<p><b>Co-Directors:</b> Barbara Clow, Atlantic Centre of Excellence for Women's Health</p> <p>Carol Amaratunga, Institute of Population Health at the University of Ottawa</p> <p>Brigitte Neumann, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women</p> <p><b>Funding:</b> Canadian Institutes of Health Research</p> <p><b>Support:</b> Dalhousie University IWK Health Centre Bureau of Women's Health and Gender Analysis</p> <p><b>Research Teams:</b> Team Q – Focus groups</p> <p>Team P – Micro-ethnographies</p> <p>Secondary Analysis Team – Quantitative data analysis</p> <p>Survey Team – Population-based survey</p>	<p><b>Knowledge Generation:</b> <i>Team Q:</i> Conducted 18 focus groups including 98 women and 9 men ranging in age from 17-85. Participants in the focus groups represent a wide range of social, economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. <i>Team P:</i> Conducted in-depth case studies including 24 hours of participant observation of caregivers in their own homes, with a sample of caregivers representative of various diversity groups. <i>Secondary Analysis:</i> Analysis of GSS 2002 data and the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth to make determinations about gender, caregiving, paid and unpaid work, health, and the impact of caring for children with disabilities on self-reported health status in the Atlantic Canadian context. <i>Survey Team:</i> Completed a population-based survey which has produced a selected statistical profile of caregivers in Nova Scotia and will result in a report on caregiving and health and caregiving and employment.</p> <p><b>Knowledge Translation:</b> The co-directors, Equity Reference Groups members, as well as other knowledge users have had continuous input into the research process including the development of research questions and methodology, data collection and the development of various formats for the presentation of findings.</p> <p><b>Knowledge Uptake:</b> The knowledge translation activities of the Healthy Balance Research Program have contextualized the research findings providing greater opportunities for knowledge uptake. The products of the Healthy Balance Research Program are community- oriented, inclusion-driven and accessible. The formats used for the presentation of the findings of the Healthy Balance Research Program have been designed to highlight the implications for policy as well as service delivery and health promotion.</p> <p><b>Evaluation:</b> The potential for adapting the Healthy Balance model for use in future</p>
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		<p>research projects will be evaluated using specific criteria to measure the success with which the program findings have been accepted as well as the overall performance of the program.</p>
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**Commitment to Inclusion and Community Participation**

**Equity Reference Groups:**

Aboriginal Women

African Canadian Women

Immigrant Women

Women With Disabilities

**Knowledge Generation:**

Equity Reference Group members have participated in the research design, collection of data, participant recruitment and selection, and data analysis.

**Knowledge Translation:**

The involvement of Equity Reference Groups has allowed the research to develop in a manner that is sensitive to the needs and norms of diverse communities. Equity Reference Group Members have been able to disseminate findings within their communities, organizations and networks.

**Knowledge Uptake:**

Equity Reference Group members have been integrating the knowledge and findings of the Healthy Balance Research Program into their lives and advocacy work.

**Evaluation:**

An evaluation of the Equity Reference Groups as a methodology for inclusion and community participation in research will be conducted by an external evaluator.

**Public Forums for Dissemination of Findings**

**Roundtable for Canadian policy makers co-hosted by the Canadian Policy Research Networks, September 2005, Ottawa, ON.**

***Finding a Healthy Balance : Research, policy and practice on women's unpaid caregiving in Nova Scotia, May 2-3, 2006, Halifax, NS.***

**Reports and Academic Publications**

**Website: <http://www.healthyb.dal.ca>**

**Theatre piece written and performed by Irondale Ensemble Project**

**Knowledge Translation:**

The **roundtable** co-hosted with the Canadian Policy Research Networks allowed for dialogue between researchers, caregivers and policy makers about the Healthy Balance research findings and policy implications of the impact of unpaid caregiving on women's health, well-being and work-life balance.

The ***Finding A Healthy Balance...*** forum provides an opportunity to work with researchers, policy makers, caregivers and community and business leaders to contextualize the findings of the Healthy Balance Research Program and identify strategic priorities for action.

The Healthy Balance Research Program has **published reports and publications** that appeal to a variety of audiences. Articles have been published in academic journals including *Feminist Economics* and *Atlantis*, as well as research oriented newsletters such as the *Women's Health Research Bulletin*. Policy focused reports include a statistical portrait of caregivers in Nova Scotia. The Healthy Balance Research Program has also published an illustrated collection of personal stories of caregiving.

The Healthy Balance **website** provides general information to a broad audience in a format that is easily available and accessible.

The **theatre piece** written and performed by Irondale Ensemble has the unique opportunity to visually depict the complexities of unpaid caregiving and the caregiving relationship.

**Knowledge Uptake:**

Contextualizing research findings through a variety of events and publication formats provides greater opportunities for knowledge uptake by researchers, policy makers and caregivers.

**Policy Advisory Committee**

**Members from federal and provincial government, the private sector and community organizations.**

**Knowledge Translation:**

Policy Advisory Committee members provide expertise on specific programs, policies and issues relevant to the development of policy recommendations as well as advice on approach, target audiences and format of policy recommendations.

**Knowledge Uptake:**

The Policy Advisory Committee provides opportunities for networking and knowledge transfer between researchers, the public and private sectors and community groups. It is hoped that Policy Advisory Committee members will bring an increased awareness of Healthy Balance research and issues related to women's unpaid caregiving in Nova Scotia to their affiliated departments and organizations.

**Caregiver Resource**

A community product developed and informed by Equity Reference Group Members.

**Knowledge Translation:**

A Caregiver Resource informed by the Healthy Balance research and Equity Reference Group members will be a method for bridging the gap between existing resources and caregivers in Nova Scotia. The resource will be produced in partnership with government departments and community organizations.

**Knowledge Uptake:**

Knowledge Uptake will be facilitated by ensuring that the Caregiver Resource is culturally and linguistically appropriate and developed with a diversity and gender lens.