



Toronto
Public
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Research

2018

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Recognition

Karen Wade

In 2018 Karen Wade, Supervisor and previous Coordinator of the RER process at TPH retired after 7 years in the role. Karen was instrumental in modernizing the TPH RER policy and establishing its first formal REB in 2015. She guided the many, complex research projects that came to the REB through the RER process. Karen's exemplary attention to detail and ongoing process improvements ensured that RER at TPH has evolved into the established program it represents today.

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Highlights

This fifth Annual Report of Toronto Public Health (TPH) Research profiles key activities related to TPH Research Ethics Review (RER) in 2018.

In 2018:

- It is the Research Ethics Board's third year of operation
- 16 proposals were submitted for RER
- 17 proposals received ethics approval¹
- REB Member capacity building was undertaken related to the following topics:
 - Including Pregnant Women in Clinical Research: Regulations and Stakeholders Views
 - Understanding Informed Consent: Seeking Coherence Between Ethics, Law, and Regulations
 - New Guidelines for Fair Research Participant Compensation
 - Tri-Agency Research Data Management Agreement

¹ This number includes proposals that were submitted in late 2017 but were approved only in 2018.

Research Ethics Review Policy and Process

The Toronto Public Health (TPH) Research Ethics Review (RER) [Policy](#) outlines the criteria for TPH RER and describes the five-step RER process:

- Pre-screening, when necessary, to determine if projects require RER
- Organizational approval based on assessment of the proposals for relevance, feasibility, scientific merit, and privacy and information management issues
- REB review of proposals which receive organizational approval
- Notifying Principal Investigator(s) of the Research Ethics Board (REB) decision
- Ongoing ethics monitoring until completion

Sixteen proposals were submitted for TPH RER in 2018. Seventeen proposals received TPH REB approval, some of which were submitted in 2017.

One research project formally ended in 2018 after beginning in 2017. Furthermore, three research projects, which received approval in 2017, applied and received continuing research approval in 2018. The approval extended the one-year research window by one year (i.e., from 2018 to 2019).

More information about the RER process, types of projects requiring RER, and responses to Frequently Asked Questions about the RER process is available on the TPH [RER website](#). If you have other questions regarding the RER Policy and process please contact:

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Research Ethics Board

The Research Ethics Board (REB), which is scheduled to meet monthly, is comprised of 12 Members, plus the REB Chair. Heather Sampson, the REB Chair, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Community and Family Medicine at the University of Toronto. For the most current list of 2019 REB members, please consult [the RER website](#).

The following TPH staff were members of the REB in 2018:

- Tara Brown (Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention)
- Dr. Stephanie Gower (Healthy Public Policy)*
- Phat Ha (Healthy Public Policy)
- Dr. Heather Richards (Healthy Environments)
- Dr. Herveen Sachdeva (Communicable Disease Control)
- Anne Wenger (Healthy Communities)
- Debra Williams-Conliffe (Healthy Families)

External REB members in 2018 were:

- Dr. Patricia Hughes (Community Member)
- Dr. Nancy Kreiger (University of Toronto)
- Maria McDonald (Community Member)
- Dr. Brenda Roche (The Wellesley Institute)
- Dr. Thomas Tenkate (Ryerson University)
- Connie Uetrecht (Community Member)

*Term ended in 2018

Research Proposals Approved

In 2018, seventeen research proposals relevant to five Toronto Public Health (TPH) Directorates were approved through the TPH Research Ethics Review (RER) process. Six projects were collaborative projects involving TPH staff and external researchers, and eleven were conducted by external researchers (see Figure 1).

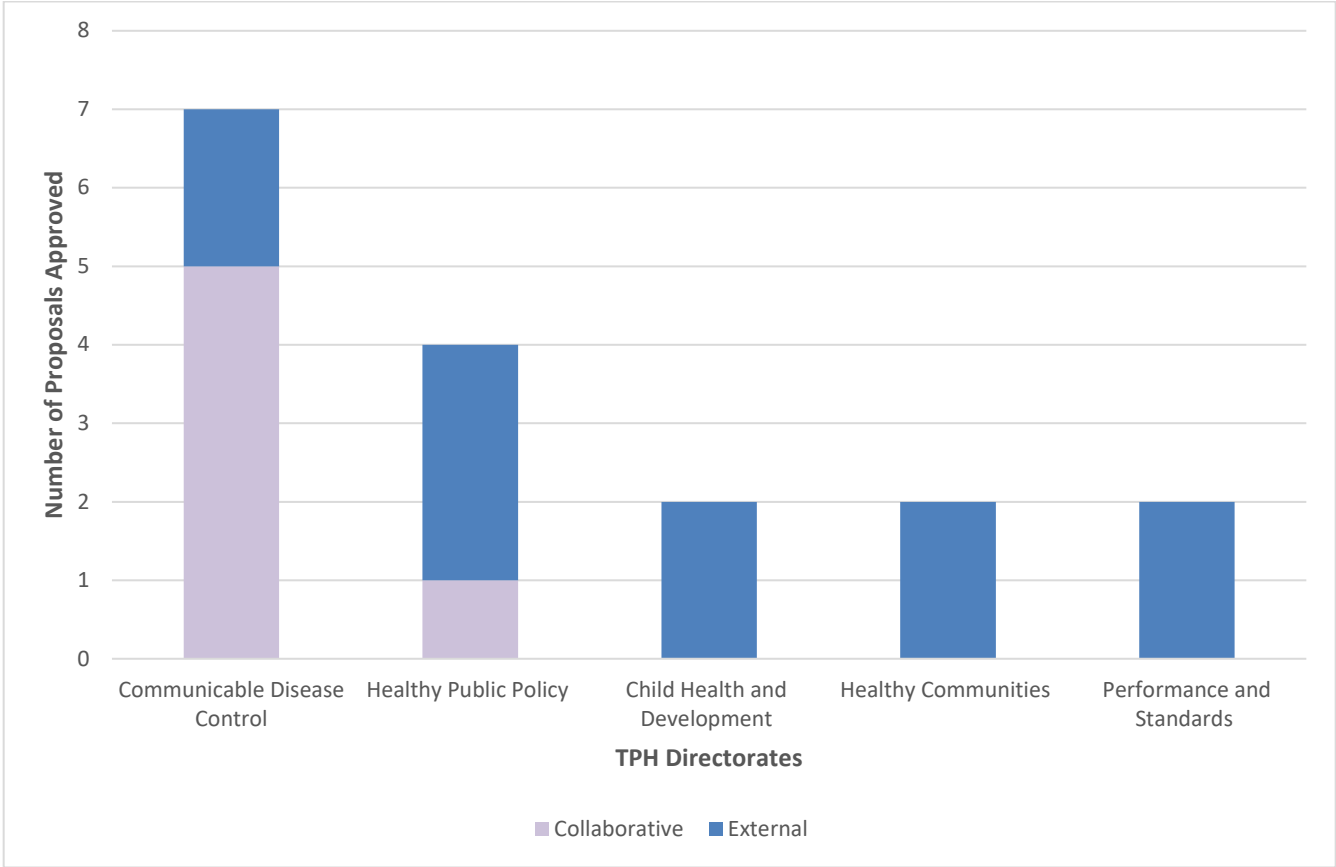
Relevance of Proposals to TPH Directorates

The proposals approved in 2018 were assessed for feasibility and relevance to Toronto Public Health's mission and mandate by at least one Directorate (see Figure1):

- 7 applications were assessed by the Communicable Disease Control Directorate
- 4 were assessed by the Healthy Public Policy Directorate
- 2 were assessed by the Child Health and Development Directorate
- 2 were assessed by the Healthy Communities Directorate
- 2 were assessed by Performance and Standards Directorate

Five Directorates (i.e., Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Healthy Environments, Dental and Oral Health Services, Strategic Support, and Finance and Administration) did not assess proposals for relevance and feasibility in 2018.

Figure 1: Proposals Approved by Type of Research and TPH Directorate Relevance 2018



Research Proposals Approved in 2018

A complete list of the titles of all research proposals approved in 2018 is presented below.

Proposals are grouped by three categories: internal, collaborative or external depending on the level of responsibility TPH staff had in the research process:

- **Internal Projects:**
If the proposal's Principal Investigators and Investigators are TPH staff, then the project would be categorized as internal. There were no internal proposals approved in 2018.
- **Collaborative Projects:**
If the Principal Investigators or Investigators in a proposal includes both TPH staff along with individuals external to TPH then the project would be categorized as collaborative. There were six collaborative proposals approved in 2018.
- **External Projects:**
If the proposal's Principal Investigators and Investigators does not include any TPH staff then the project would be categorized as external. This would hold true even if TPH staff are listed as: (1) Other member of the research team; (2) Other resources as these roles do not have the same level of responsibility as Principal Investigators and Investigators. There were 11 external proposals approved in 2018.

Collaborative Projects

1. Mixed methods study to assess the feasibility of the recruitment and retention strategy for a randomized trial to compare the effectiveness of point of care overdose education and naloxone distribution versus referral to an existing community program in the management of simulated opioid associated resuscitative emergencies
2. Monitoring trends in the prevalence of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), associated behavioural, socio-demographic and systemic factors, and health care utilization among first and second generation African and Caribbean people who reside in Toronto and Ottawa
3. Optimizing the delivery of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) post-exposure prophylaxis: a randomized controlled trial of text messaging support and physician to nurse task – shifting
4. An emergency services – public health partnership to facilitate timely identification of trends in Toronto's opioid crisis
5. Bringing Bacterial sexually transmitted infections (STI) to the agenda for comprehensive sexual health care: Community-directed interventions to facilitate testing among men who have sex with men (MSM)
6. The King Street pilot study on mobility and environmental perceptions

External Projects

1. The Ontario integrated supervised injection services research program: Examining uptake and impacts in different community settings and models of care
2. Investigating local food policies in North America – The local Healthy Food Environment Policy Index (Food-EPI) project
3. Healthy by design evaluation
4. Healthy by design - youth component
5. 1-Day cognitive behavioural therapy workshop for postpartum depression – A pilot study
6. Ontario Locally Driven Collaborative Project (LDCCP) funded impact assessment of the health equity Indicators
7. Canadian Immunization Research Network (CIRN): Canadian National Vaccine Safety network (CANVAS) surveillance of adverse events following immunization among children and adults immunized with the influenza vaccine
8. Effectiveness and feasibility of providing prenatal breastfeeding support to vulnerable mothers as an extension to the Canada prenatal nutrition program
9. Identifying, refining, validating and operationalizing indicators and sub-indicators of best practice guideline implementation and sustainability: A framework to drive measurement
10. Strengthening continuous quality improvement (CQI) in Ontario's Public Health Units (Phase 2 Project 1) and development of a public health CQI vocabulary (Phase 2 Project 2)
11. Climate change discourse and policies: Depoliticizing and humanizing climate change in Ontario through a public health frame