2012-2013 HIGHLIGHTS

Faculty

Director and Principal Investigator: D. Linn Holness


Funding

The Centre was first funded in 2004 by WSIB. In 2012 funding transferred from the WSIB to the Ministry of Labour, Prevention Office. An annual grant of $400,000 provides core infrastructure funding for research program development, knowledge translation activities, research pilot funding and student support. Additional support for salaries and infrastructure comes from the University of Toronto (Dalla Lana School of Public Health/Department of Medicine) and St. Michael’s Hospital (Department of Occupational and Environmental Health). Research grants provide the funds to carry out specific research projects.

Aims

CREOD is dedicated to the prevention of work-related diseases and improving the early recognition and timely response for those individuals affected by work-related disease.

Our goal is to contribute to policy, knowledge and practice in both the workplace and clinical settings, to optimize effective prevention measures, health outcomes and return to work opportunities.

We strive to work across disciplines, methodological paradigms and with stakeholders committed to creating healthier workplaces.
Our primary objectives are the following:

1. To build research programs in the following focus areas:
   - Occupational Skin Disease (Program Lead: Irena Kudla)
   - Occupational Lung Disease (Program Lead: Susan Tarlo)
   - Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (Program Lead: Ron House)
   - Biological Hazards (Program Lead: James Scott)
   - Cross-cutting Themes e.g. Recognition and Reporting and Joint Health and Safety Committees (Program Lead: Kathryn Nichol)

2. To build capacity through support of students and building of research infrastructure e.g. clinical databases, and strong knowledge exchange with system knowledge users.

3. To build a knowledge network by building strong relationships in the health and safety system and strengthening knowledge exchange between researchers and knowledge users at both the practice and policy level.

Progress

A sample of current research activity include the following by program area:

**Skin Disease**
- Development of tools to promote awareness and prevention of occupational skin disease
- Outcomes following return to work intervention for workers with occupational skin disease

**Lung Disease**
- Estimating the burden of work-related asthma
- Indium and interstitial lung disease

**Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)**
- Infrared thermography for diagnosis of HAVS
- Health care utilization in workers being assessed for HAVS

**Biological Hazards**
- Microbial contaminants in metal working fluids
- Influenza and health care workers

**Cross-cutting Themes**
- Needs assessment of front-line consultants in HSAs for occupational skin disease
- Audit tool for joint health and safety committees and acute care hospitals

Significance and Impact

Three significant system impacts created as a result of the establishment of CREOD include:

1. The development of bodies of knowledge in each of the research program areas
2. The attraction of students and researchers to this significant area of need and under-represented area of focus and attention
3. Growing system awareness of the importance of early recognition of occupationally related disease and the key factors to support prevention
Practical impacts include:

1. Workplace prescription for contact dermatitis and HAVS
2. Knowledge synthesis on occupational skin disease
3. Suite of awareness posters on skin disease for workplaces
4. Clinical data bases at St. Michaels Hospital for contact dermatitis and HAVS

Plans for the Next Year

The priority for the next year is continued development of the research programs including updating their research plans, collaborators and knowledge translation plans.

Selected Publications 2012-13

**Occupational Skin Disease**

- Malaiyandi V, Houle M-C, Skotnicki S. Airborne allergic contact dermatitis from Tylosin in pharmacy compounds and cross-sensitization to macrolide antibiotics. Dermatitis 2012;23:227-230.
Occupational Lung Disease


Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome and Vibration


Biological Hazards