The long winter turned out to be a busy – and sometimes a bit frantic – season for the DSEN Coordinating Office (DSEN CO). As usual we engaged stakeholders and presented the Network to diverse audiences in symposia and national conferences, held two Network meetings (late Fall and Spring) and organized a KT Workshop moderated by Dr. Ian Graham to advance DSEN’s KT strategy by the development of adaptive research results reporting templates to respond to various stakeholders’ information needs.

As we recently had the opportunity to witness at the CADTH Symposium, “DSEN” has become quite a brand name and that is evidence of good communication, but more to the point, of a true and verified need for DSEN’s researchers’ activities. With the creation and staffing of a DSEN-CADTH liaison officer position, we will work on developing new links to the provinces and territories. We will continue to engage decision-makers at the provincial and territorial levels, and will certainly endeavor to develop greater and easier access to data for our teams of researchers, but also for the research community at large. Better, faster, and simpler access to population based administrative data is crucial to ensuring that post market drug research is done in a timely manner and that the DSEN teams have the agility to respond to decision makers’ needs. To this end and in a constant exercise to reduce timelines, we received the DSEN Steering Committee’s recommendations to renew the network teams and to fund some projects up front. We also streamlined the peer review process for project level rapid review.

The DSEN CO wishes you a pleasant summer and invites you to read some of the papers published (see “Selected Publications” below) by DSEN researchers and New Investigators. We’ll meet again next fall for the seventh Semi-Annual Network Meeting (set for October 17th, 2014).

Robert Peterson MD, PhD, MPH
Executive Director, Drug Safety and Effectiveness Network
UPCOMING EVENTS

Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research (CAHSPR), Toronto, May 12-15, 2014

“Convergence of Health Policy and Evidence - Bridge Over Troubled Water” is the theme of CAHSPR 2014 conference to be held in Toronto. This year’s conference will focus on aspects related to evidence-informed policy and decision making. See more.

Drug Safety and Effectiveness Semi-Annual Network Meeting, Ottawa, October 17, 2014

Since the creation of the Network, the DSEN Coordinating Office has been holding semi-annual network meetings to facilitate knowledge translation (KT) and sharing of best practices amongst Collaborating Centres and other stakeholders.

DSEN will hold the seventh event of the series on October 17, 2014 in Ottawa to bring decision makers, DSEN funded researchers, and trainees together to gain common understanding of the integration of KT in research, and to enhance Network functioning.

More details to follow closer to the date.

Drug Information Association- DIA Canadian Annual Meeting, Ottawa, October 28-29, 2014

“Thinking Globally, Acting Locally for The Well-Being of the Patient” – This year DIA will bring key thought-leaders and experts from various fields to explore this challenging dilemma for the Canadian stakeholders.

Canadian Association for Population Therapeutics (CAPT), Toronto, November 2-4, 2014

“Drivers of Change: how HTA and policy affect perceptions of value and health care practice”. DSEN is planning to hold a session at the CAPT meeting. See more.

EVENTS


This particular Network meeting was focused on the different needs of the provinces and territories and was held at the Albert at Bay Suite Hotel. Forty-six participants from the research and the decision making arenas attended the meeting.

Robert Peterson, the DSEN Executive Director gave welcoming remarks and explained that the objectives of the meeting revolved around what happens in the provinces after a drug is authorized for release on the Canadian market. CADTH’s Director of the Common Drug Review (CDR) and Optimal Use of Drugs, Chander Seghal, presented the CDR and other services offered to the provinces and territories by CADTH. Carole Marcotte, Director of drug evaluation for listing at the Institut d’excellence en santé et services sociaux (INESSS) in Québec, explained the functioning of the institute and the integrated decision making in the province. Diane Forbes from the DSEN CO presented the key points and the rationale behind the joint project developed between DSEN and CADTH, which aims to support the submission
of Queries relevant to decision making within public drug plans. Lunch was accompanied by a keynote presentation by Brian O’Rourke, President and Chief Executive Officer of CADTH, who spoke to synergies and opportunities in CADTH and DSEN collaborating.

The afternoon session was devoted to the work accomplishments of the network teams and Collaborating Centres in addressing Queries submitted by provinces and territories. See complete meeting report.

**DSEN Knowledge Translation Workshop, Ottawa, February 21, 2014**

The DSEN Coordinating Office (CO) held a half-day consultation workshop to discuss its Knowledge Translation (KT) strategy in a neutral environment. The meeting was facilitated by Dr. Ian Graham, Senior Scientist at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute and Professor at the University of Ottawa, and attended by 20 participants representing various relevant stakeholders. Expectations of knowledge creators and end users were presented and actively discussed at the meeting. Inputs originating from these interactions will be incorporated into a DSEN KT guidance document that will include a series of annotated reporting templates and which also makes great use of available literature, previous KT efforts by the DSEN CO, and consultations with DSEN research experts and end users.

**Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse, Ottawa, March 6, 2014**

DSEN Associate Director Diane Forbes gave an overview of the Drug Safety and Effectiveness Network’s activities to the CIHR funded Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse meeting held in Ottawa.


This sixth edition of the Semi-Annual Network meeting brought trainees into the spotlight. The meeting was held at the Lord Elgin Hotel in Ottawa and was attended by 56 participants. This meeting was scheduled in conjunction with the annual CIHR funded Drug Safety and Effectiveness Cross-Training Program (DSECT) Welcoming Meeting, allowing the new DSECT trainees and the DSEN trainees to network and mingle with the Network’s various researchers and stakeholders.

The meeting was devoted to presentations on diverse career paths in post market drug research by Tammy Clifford (CADTH), Suzanne Cadarette (University of Toronto), Daniel McLean (Health Canada), and Christine Voggenreiter, (BC Health). Trainees from DSEN and DSECT then presented their research work.

Lunch provided an occasion to hear from Health Canada’s Director of the Office of Legislative and Regulatory Modernization, Mr. David K. Lee. Mr. Lee’s keynote speech “Regulatory Renewal in the Context of Drug Benefits, Harms, and Uncertainties” was extremely well received and of interest for all the meeting’s participants.

The afternoon sessions were comprised of an update on training from each of the DSEN teams, and a panel of more “experienced” trainees and their personal views on improving post market drug research training in Canada.

The next DSEN Semi-Annual meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 17, 2014.
Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) Symposium – The Realities of Health Care Decision Decision-Making: Evidence, Values, and Collaboration, Gatineau, April 6-8, 2014

The 2014 CADTH Symposium was held in Gatineau in April. The Symposium marked the occasion to celebrate CADTH’s 25th anniversary and provided many occasions for interesting and thought provoking sessions as well as lively networking between various sectors with an interest in how evidence is used to support informed decisions about drugs and other health technologies.

Besides being a sponsor and having an information booth, DSEN hosted a session to profile its efforts to increase evidence on drug safety and effectiveness and grow capacity within Canada to undertake high-quality post-market research. At this panel session titled “Decision-Maker: Research Interfacing / The DSEN Canadian Experience”, DSEN-funded researchers presented their work using a storyline format to highlight the steps of DSEN’s Query Management process, from query development to research findings uptake. Moderated by Dr. Robert Peterson, the panel was composed of four Network researchers Dr. Ingrid Sketris (CNODES), Dr. Sasha Bernatsky (CAN-AIM), Dr. George Wells (CCNMA), Dr. Pierre Ernst (CNODES), and Susan Pierce, from Health Canada’s Pharmacy Policy Development Division, Non-Insured Health Benefits Directorate.

Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology (SOCI), Ottawa, April 10, 2014

On April 10th, Dr. Robert Peterson and CIHR Chief Scientific Officer and Executive Vice-President, Dr. Jane E. Aubin appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology (SOCI) to discuss unintended consequences in the use of prescription pharmaceuticals. This series of hearings is part of a four-phase senatorial study of prescription pharmaceuticals in Canada that includes:

1. the process to approve prescription pharmaceuticals with a particular focus on clinical trials (See report);
2. the post-approval monitoring of prescription pharmaceuticals (See report);
3. the off-label use of prescription pharmaceuticals (See report); and
4. the nature of unintended consequences in the use of prescription pharmaceuticals

DSEN FUNDING NEWS

Congratulations to:

- Nawal Farhat from the University of Ottawa who received a DSEN Doctoral award for her project entitled: A retrospective cohort study of the risk of adverse cardiovascular events following concomitant use of clopidogrel and proton pump inhibitors.
- Steve Kanters from the University of British Columbia who received a DSEN Doctoral award for his project entitled: Comparative effectiveness and safety profiles of new antiretroviral therapies for the treatment of drug naïve HIV infection: A novel use of network meta-analysis.
- Colleen J. Maxwell and Susan E. Bronskill from the University of Waterloo (Ontario) who received a DSEN Bridge Funding award for their project entitled: Exploring frailty and its role in the assessment of high risk medications and risk for poor health outcomes in vulnerable populations.
- Cristiano S. Moura from McGill University who received a DSEN Fellowship award for his project entitled: Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and serotonin/norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors use and fracture risk.
• **Kevin L. Schwartz** from the Sunnybrook Research Institute (Toronto) who received a DSEN Fellowship award for his project entitled: *Linking laboratory and administrative data to study influenza and influenza vaccine epidemiology.*

**RECENT DSEN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

DSEN has recently funded four new Queries through the Rapid Funding for DSEN Targeted Research tool:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bruce Carleton</td>
<td>SEARCH and PREVENT</td>
<td>Optimizing Chronic Hepatitis C Treatment Using Pharmacogenomic Biomarkers</td>
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<td>Richard B Kim</td>
<td>CAN-AIM</td>
<td>SNRI, bupropion and mirtazapine use during pregnancy and the risk of persistent pulmonary hypertension of the newborn (PPHN)</td>
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<td>Samuel S. Lee, Colin J. Ross</td>
<td>KSRU</td>
<td>Comparative safety and effectiveness of antiretroviral therapies</td>
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<td>Anick Berard</td>
<td>KSRU</td>
<td>Safety of antiepileptic drugs</td>
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Please take a look at the [DSEN prioritized research agenda](#) which has been updated in March 2014.

**GOVERNANCE**

Announcements

The DSEN Coordinating Office would like to welcome Ms. Anne Lamar who is acting in the interim as Associate Assistant Deputy Minister of Health Products and Food Branch following the departure of Ms. Kathryn McDade.

Ms. Lucie Robitaille has left the Institut national d’excellence en santé et services sociaux (INESSS). A new member will be nominated to the DSEN Steering Committee (DSEN SC) shortly.

We thank Ms. McDade and Ms. Robitaille for their work on the DSEN SC and wish them good luck in their new endeavors.

The next DSEN SC meeting is tentatively planned for next Fall.

**OTHER NEWS**

The pharmacogenomics-based personalized medicine program, led by Dr. Richard Kim (DSEN PREVENT) entitled “Personalized Medicine at London Health Sciences Centre: Implementation of a Dedicated Ambulatory Clinic and Inpatient Consult Service” was awarded as the most innovative, transformative and adoptable program in the category of Best innovation in Evidence-Based Care, at the Innovation Showcase (sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care) held in November 2013. The award was presented to Dr. Kim by Minister Deb Matthews, Deputy
Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term are for Ontario.


**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM DSEN FUNDED RESEARCHERS**


Tricco AC, Soobiah C, Berliner S, Ho JM, Ng CH, Ashoor HM, Chen MH, Hemmelgarn B, Straus SE; Efficacy and safety of cognitive enhancers for patients with mild cognitive impairment: a systematic review and meta-analysis; CMAJ, 2013 Nov 5;185(16):1393-401

Tricco AC, Soobiah C, Antony J, Hemmelgarn B, Moher D, Hutton B, Straus SE; Interventions to decrease the risk of adverse cardiac events for post-surgery or chemotherapy patients taking serotonin (5-HT3) receptor antagonists: protocol for a systematic review and network meta-analysis. Syst Rev. 2013 Jun 28;2:45


review and network meta-analysis. Syst Rev. 2013 Sep 10;2:73