

# **Need, Supply & Demand of Psychologists in Canada: Follow-up to Canadian Psychological Association Summit**

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**Lisa Votta-Bleeker, Ph.D.  
Canadian Psychological Association**

# When, Where, Who and Why

- November 8-9, 2013 in Ottawa, ON
- Over 75 participants; 16 presenters

## **Objectives**

- To identify data needs and gaps that psychology, and other health scientists and practitioners might need to consider when it comes to workforce planning
- To identify opportunities and partnerships that can help scientists and practitioners fill the gaps necessary to workforce planning, and addressing the mental health needs of Canadians

# Summit Speakers

## Data

- Canadian Institute for Health Information, Statistics Canada, Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organizations, Survey on Professional Satisfaction

## Training

- Academia, Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs, Canadian Association of Post-Doctoral Scholars, MITACS

## Needs/Contributions

- Mental Health Commission of Canada, Correctional Service of Canada, Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces, Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research, College of Family Physicians of Canada, Australian Clinical Psychology Association

# What We Heard

# Data...CIHI, Statistics Canada

- 46% increase in registered psychologists over the past 15 years (3x the growth of population)
- 48 psychologists per 100,000 Canadians
- Population is aging
  - 25-26% are between the ages of 35-54 and 37% are over 55
- # of students graduating from PhD programs is increasing
  - 156 in 2011 compared to 133 in 2005
- 2011 National Household Survey showed that:
  - 20% of earned doctorate degrees were in clinical
  - NL has the highest # of people/psychologist – QC has the lowest

# Data...Regulators

See value in common data set (service provided; populations served; need to provide accurate data to programs/legislators)...but

- Not all have resources to develop IT systems and maintain data collection
- Are concerned about asking registrants to provide more information
- Complying with legislation re: how data is collected and shared

# Psychologists in Academic Setting

- Loss of data with discontinuation of surveys specific to academic staff and earned doctorates
- In 2010, there were ~1900 FT faculty in Canada
  - 21% increase from 2000-2010
- # of women has increased from ~100 to ~850 over 30 years
- 35% of faculty are full professors; 36% and 23% are associate and assistant
- 310-340 new PhDs every year

# Current and Needed Training Opportunities

- By 2016, 20,000 faculty across disciplines will need to be hired; between 2006-2010, less than 5000 were hired
- ~35% (or 115 PhDs) cannot gain full-time academic positions in Canada per year
- # of doctoral students applying for internships has been increasing (180 in 2012 APPIC match) – 25% didn't match but did go on to complete internship and graduate
- Some unaccredited internships are unpaid; unaccredited settings need students to work towards accreditation



# Post-Doctoral Scholarships

- In 2013, ~900 respondents completed their highest degree outside of Canada
- Two-thirds earn less than \$45,000/year and have poor access to employment benefits
- 50% satisfied with their current employment classification
- Concern = limited availability of career development opportunities and postdoc-specific training

**Does need, supply and demand match in  
psychology?**

**Probably not and we don't know**

# What we do know...

- We are not preparing scientists for jobs that exist – by venue or types of expertise
- Some funders evaluate and provide funding on basis of training “highly qualified personnel” – but academic spots aren’t available
- Faculty opportunity is limited by changes to mandatory retirement and economic pressures that may limit replacement of varied positions

# What we do know...

- We are challenged by a lack of integration at the planning and funding level when it comes to applied programs
  - doctoral programs demand practice requirements that they don't fund and over which they have no control
- The practice resource defined by accreditation is quite different than the practice resource defined by regulation

# What we do know...

- When there is a supply problem – is it only about supply or about the kind of supply being offered?
- Need to think about conditions of work as barriers or enablers to retention and recruitment
  - Compensation
  - Supply
  - Conditions of work
  - Geography
  - Discordance between expertise, role and function

# What we do know

- Roles for which psychological scientists and practitioners may be best or uniquely suited are being filled by other kinds of scientists and practitioners
  - often by those with less training and who command lower annual salaries

# What We Need to Do

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As a discipline and profession, we need to:

- Better communicate what are our sub-specialties and skill sets
- Apply and adapt our skills to match onto the needs of stakeholders, decision-makers, and communities
- Commit to understanding populations most in need
- Respond to the need of individuals and to the needs of society for their individuals, and the needs of the people and contexts in which they live and work
- Shape and respond to mental health policy and agendas
- Expand our training to include communication, program evaluation, public policy, management – to name a few



# Conclusions

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- **We need better data:** we need to systematically collect information about our health scientist and practitioner resources upon which successful health workforce planning must rely.
- **We need better training:** we need to better align training objectives/goals to career realities and train our workforce with the skills that respond to the health needs of communities.
- **We need to make better contributions:** we need to do a better job in science and practice both addressing the health related problems that stakeholders, communities, and policy makers present, and highlighting the unique skills psychologists have to address them.

***Thank You!***

To contact us:

[executiveoffice@cpa.ca](mailto:executiveoffice@cpa.ca)

613-237-2144 ext. 323