
NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: July 15, 2004

Acadia professor leads study on the health of Atlantic Canada's healthcare facilities

(Wolfville, NS) - Acadia University psychology professor, Dr. Michael Leiter, has received a \$260,000 grant from Health Canada to assist a team in studying workplace conditions for healthcare professionals. The project, "Building Quality Healthcare Workplaces: Nurses as Knowledge Sharers in Atlantic Canada," is headed by Acadia's Centre for Organizational and Research Development (CORD).

"Canada faces serious challenges in making health care careers attractive to young people and in helping current health care professionals thrive in their careers," says Dr. Leiter, founder and director of CORD. "A greater understanding of the qualities that facilitate or hinder the work of improving health care facilities will be of benefit to anyone who calls upon those services."

A multi-disciplinary team comprised of university researchers and health care professionals from Capital Health, IWK, Annapolis Valley Health, Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University, St. Francis Xavier University and Acadia will carry out the research, which studies workplace conditions for nurses in Atlantic Canada. Capital Health is a crucial component in the project, playing a role in the development and eventually the implementation of this endeavor.

"This study will provide valuable information to Capital Health about creating a quality workplace, and will help us address important nursing recruitment and retention issues," said Don Ford, President and CEO of Capital Health. "I am extremely pleased we will be able to play a leading role."

The principal goal of the project is to assess the impact within the Atlantic region of various recommendations meant to improve Canada's healthcare. The project aims to identify conditions that simplify or hinder improvements, as well as detect health care settings that take the lead in improving the quality of work life. The data will be gathered through interviews, focus groups, and surveys. It will include assessing the implementation of recommendations made by a series of government reports, including the Romanow Commission and the Kirby Senate Report, and the impact those reports have had on healthcare facilities in Atlantic Canada.

"Researchers, managers, and public policy makers have identified many of the issues that contribute to increasing the stressfulness of healthcare workplaces," says Dr. Leiter. "We

need a much deeper understanding of the process through which organizations correct mismatches and build healthier, more fulfilling work environments.”

Dr. Leiter, recently appointed as Canada Research Chair in Occupational Health and Well-Being, is an expert on occupational stress and burnout who has spoken about his research across North America and Europe. He is co-author with Christina Maslach of *The Truth about Burnout*.

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