Language and Health: Facilitating Access to Health Care for Linguistic Minorities

In collaboration with the McGill Training and Retention of Health Professionals Project (TRHP) the Institute for Health and Social Policy (IHSP) is recruiting up to 8 graduate students for a six month fellowship starting February 2015. The research component of the TRHP brings together a network of researchers investigating health care access for linguistic minorities (HCALM-Network). This research is part of a growing movement worldwide to understand patient-practitioner communication and its impact on health care delivery.

The Language and Health student program provides a unique opportunity to bring together the expertise of the HCALM-Network community on access to health care and the IHSP’s focus on policy with the goal of supporting young researchers who hope to make a difference in their communities. The purpose of this partnership is:

1. To encourage new and innovative research on facilitating access to health care for English-speaking minorities in Quebec by providing support to students not currently affiliated with the TRHP through mentorship, training and funding.

2. To equip students interested in access to health care for linguistic minorities with skills and tools to connect with other researchers and the broader community through training on health systems and policy making/knowledge translation.

We are launching a call for proposals for innovative research projects whose focus is to investigate the relationship between language and access to health or social services. Recipients will meet once per month to discuss their research and strategies for translating research to policy. The total amount for this funding envelope is $40,000, to be equally divided among up to 8 awardees. Students who receive this funding will be required to write an 8-10 page report for the IHSP outlining key findings and plans for sharing research with relevant stakeholders.

Research themes include but are not limited to the following:

- Economics of language in healthcare
- Cultural and linguistic competency
- Health or social inequalities
- Health geography and spatial statistics
- Retention of health professionals in remote or rural communities
- Second-language instruction

Proposals must:

- focus on access to health care for English-speaking minorities in Quebec
- include a detailed plan of action and expected deliverables for the six-month program
- demonstrate a clear methodological approach
- touch on impact (how will findings make a difference on the ground)
- be innovative
Students can propose a study on any of the aforementioned research themes including comparative studies. In addition, proposals for studies aiming to measure the cost of language barriers in Quebec's health and social services system are encouraged.

Research proposals are due no later than **January 30, 2015**. The total amount for 2014-2015 program is $40,000, subject to the availability of funds.

Please do not hesitate to contact the IHSP Student Affairs Administrator, Denise Maines, for any additional information that you might need. She can be reached at denise.maines@mcgill.ca or by phone at (514) 398-5631.

The IHSP will communicate its decision of selected proposals no later than February 13. An agreement will be sent to selected candidates and will define roles and responsibilities, payment schedule and reporting template.

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PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Eligibility Criteria
The principal applicant must be a full-time student registered with a Quebec University. Meetings will be held monthly in Montreal. Candidates living outside of Montreal must be available to attend meetings virtually.

Evaluation of Proposals
The evaluation of research proposals will be conducted by the Student Affairs Administrator at the Institute for Health and Social Policy, the HCALM-Network Research Program Coordinator and the TRHP Principal Investigator. Proposals will be evaluated for consistency with the guidelines below, feasibility, quality and clarity.

To Apply:
Please e-mail your proposal, a letter of recommendation supporting your work, proof of enrollment at a Quebec institution, and a scanned copy of your most recent transcript to denise.maines@mcgill.ca by **January 30, 2015**.

Guidelines for Proposal:
Cover page including:
- Your name, institution, department, supervisor(s) name, and your contact information.

Project Summary
- Summary must include: project title, project objectives, hypotheses, research methodology and data sets on which they can be tested (where applicable), as well as anticipated deliverables.

Description of compatibility
- Describe how your research project connects to the Language and Health student program’s objectives.
• Note that one of the key goals of this fellowship is to encourage innovation for HCALM-Network. If you are already associated with HCALM-Network you must also indicate how your research is both new (not already funded by HCALM-Network), and innovative (not currently being researched by HCALM-Network).

Ethical considerations
• If you are working with human subjects you will need ethics approval. Please describe the steps you will take or have taken to obtain approval.

Community Implications and Further Research
• Describe how your work could have an impact on linguistic minorities and/or health care professionals. In addition, explain the significance of your work for further research, theory and practice.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure
• Please disclose any potential conflicts of interests. If there are no conflicts, please indicate “No potential conflict of interest to declare.”

Award Contact Information
• Non-McGill applicants must provide the contact information for the office responsible for inter-institution award transfer.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

The Health Care Access for Linguistic Minorities Network (HCALM-Network) is an interdisciplinary, interinstitutional community of researchers that is part of a growing movement worldwide to understand patient-practitioner communication and its impact on the delivery of health care and social services. In particular, the network investigates communication between patients and health professionals, where the health professional has to use a second language and where this poses a potential language barrier that may compromise equitable access to health care. HCALM-Network is administered by the McGill Training and Retention of Health Professionals Project whose objective is to render health and social services more accessible to English-speaking Quebecers for whom potential language barriers exist.

The objectives of the HCALM-Network are to:

• Understand the ways in which access to health care or social services by linguistic minorities may be limited by linguistic and cultural barriers.
• Identify and develop strategies through which identified barriers may be overcome or reduced.
• Increase dissemination and adoption of knowledge, strategies or best practices which can address the health concerns of minority language communities.
• Expand this emerging field of study.