



**CAPTURE**

Canadian platform to increase usage of real-world evidence

Plateforme canadienne pour accroître l'usage de données probantes du monde réel

# **REPORT ON THIRD INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

**MAY 17 & 18, 2011**

## THE INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

The CAPTURE Project is fortunate for the expert guidance of its knowledgeable and engaged International Advisory Board (IAB), which was formed in spring 2010. This 15-member group includes health promotion funders, health promotion practitioners, evaluators, senior decision makers in health service organizations, knowledge translation specialists, intervention researchers and social enterprise leaders.

CAPTURE's IAB met for the third time on May 17 and 18, 2011, with nine members in attendance. The objectives for the meeting were:

1. To update the IAB on progress to date
2. To engage the IAB in discussion about priorities going forward
3. To engage the IAB in discussion about business models for sustainability

## CONTEXT FOR THE MEETING

The CAPTURE Project is now two years into an initial three-year mandate. These first two years have provided an opportunity to: develop a vision for helping the chronic disease prevention community make better use of real-world evidence to improve primary prevention; consult with a variety of stakeholders; and begin the development of a technology platform. The Project has attracted a great deal of interest among many different stakeholders and has resulted in the creation of software to house a repository of chronic disease interventions, planning and evaluation resources, and tacit knowledge. These features are currently undergoing user testing. There is much more work to be done to realize the full vision of the platform: an end-to-end IT platform for planning, implementing, and evaluating chronic disease prevention programs with connectivity and capacity building supports. This full range of services can be provided

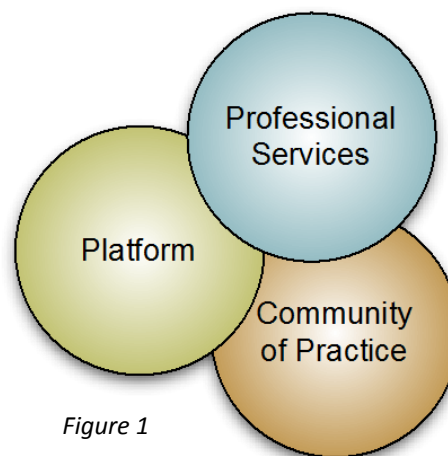


Figure 1

through three interconnected lines of business (see Figure 1). However, with only 10 months remaining in its first funding envelope, the project must determine where to focus its efforts and how to position itself for project sustainability.

Figure 1: CAPTURE Lines of Business

The bulk of the two-day meeting was devoted to the discussion of what CAPTURE should do in the time remaining in its current funding mandate, and what business model it should adopt to pursue sustainability. This discussion was led by consultant Jamie Gamble, who provided a detailed situation analysis of CAPTURE, followed by an overview of three business scenarios:

- **Public Service Model:** Seek funding that would support the platform and community of practice, offer limited professional/capacity enhancing services to platform users (e.g. self-serve training).
- **Fee-Based Model:** Actively pursue fee-based consulting work that generates revenue to finance the public good elements of the platform (the platform and community of practice). Approximately 25-30 mid-sized projects per year would be required to generate the needed revenue to support the public good.
- **Hybrid/blended Model:** Pursue public funding to support the platform and community of practice, and offer a range of fee-based professional services that sustain the rest of the business.

The IAB discussed in depth the prospects and risks of each of the business scenarios and lines of business, and offered their perspective on CAPTURE's priorities and trade-offs going forward.

## THE DISCUSSION

IAB members were not asked to reach consensus in the feedback or advice they provided to CAPTURE. Many expressed differences of opinion in CAPTURE's key strengths and the services it should provide. This list provides a distillation of themes heard throughout the two-day meeting.

### *The importance of quality & niche:*

- It was acknowledged that there are many websites currently available that hold pieces of information that are of value for public health practitioners, but there are none that offer the full range of information, or that focus heavily on tacit knowledge. This was seen as strength of CAPTURE: the "one stop shop" and repository of information not available elsewhere.
- There is a need to capture or stimulate evaluations of programs that have not been peer reviewed, but are of interest and would be of value to practitioners.
- There are many websites available that publish interventions but most only accept material that has been published in academic journals. There are many more interventions that are never written up for academic audiences but would be useful to practitioners; these are not currently housed anywhere else. If CAPTURE can capture and categorize them or assess them so the average user can access them and understand their strengths and limitations, there would be significant interest in this.
- CAPTURE should find a way to label the quality of its holdings. Practitioners and decision makers are constantly being led astray by things that aren't good quality, or not good enough.

### *Meeting stakeholder needs:*

- Front-line practitioners – they need help in conducting evaluations and are interested in connecting with others, having access to interventions, evaluation methodologies, and information that would speak to adaptation or generalizability. The group noted that there are new training programs for evaluation in Canada (e.g. University of Waterloo just developed a Master's Program in Program Evaluation) and the needs for evaluation capacity building may decrease. This could be considered both a risk and an opportunity.
- Decision-makers – the potential clients of the platform – must see the value of CAPTURE: a place to help them learn about individual programs and through synthesis and aggregation, a way to understand progress and accomplishments within an entire funding envelope. For decision-makers, CAPTURE's value is in assisting with policy decisions.
- Federal perspective: aggregation and evaluation for learning are very important. Members believed that it makes good sense for government agencies to purchase arms-length services from an organization like CAPTURE, which could also help them move into a culture of evaluation for learning.

*Regional differences:*

- Because different provinces have different capacities in planning and evaluation, their needs for the CAPTURE platform are varied.
- It was noted that Quebec is not the market for evaluation services, as they are already well-resourced. However, a tacit knowledge repository would be of value to Quebec.
- On the other hand, in Nova Scotia there are fewer resources or expertise to conduct evaluation. There was concern that a repository might be developed in isolation of capacity building services to help them evaluate their work.

*Evaluation consulting:*

- Members cautioned CAPTURE against becoming, or being perceived as, just fee-based rather than public service.
- They wondered if there might be a sliding scale of fee-based services for smaller organizations.
- It was noted that there is a lot of competition out there among evaluation consultants.
- If organizations paid for evaluation services, they may not be willing to post the findings onto the platform? Would they be motivated by the common good?
- Some members felt that chasing \$30-50K contracts would not be worth the resources it requires, and that it wouldn't sustain the organization.

*Tacit knowledge repository:*

- It was observed that nobody else is collecting tacit knowledge in Canada, but collecting this information will not be easy; there needs to be a low barrier way to collect people's experiences. This type of repository would complement the more widely available academically published literature and existing academic repositories (e.g. Cochrane).
- Members asserted that there wouldn't be core funding to fulfill this function without a primary, stable funder.
- There was discussion about how to take busy front line practitioner and help them get their knowledge onto a platform to share so we can all use it. It was noted that few people have time to put info onto the platform.
- It was suggested that CAPTURE needs to collect a minimum data set, reducing the barriers for contributing.
- Some members felt there needs to be critical analysis to filter what goes into the platform.
- One idea was to have two levels of content on the platform: one that would present a very low barrier to entering interventions by requiring only a minimum amount of descriptive information about the intervention; and a second that would entail a review by CAPTURE and a determination of "quality" of the intervention. All interventions would be tagged to indicate whether or not they were "CAPTURE approved."

*IT considerations:*

- Members felt there are rich opportunities for CAPTURE if it could move forward with developing the evaluation features of the platform (evaluation planning, data collection, and data aggregation) but this would require more development time than was currently available.
- It was noted that IT development within industry is far ahead of the academic and health realms.
- Members cautioned that CAPTURE doesn't want to be competing with other IT consultancies.
- If CAPTURE seeks a fee-based model, members wondered about a potential "IT split," which could result in five or six evaluation platforms (built for specific clients), which would fracture the market. They noted that as a public service, CAPTURE should focus on creating IT enabled evaluation tools that would serve all.
- CAPTURE staff noted that potential clients want an IT solution for collecting and aggregating data. They are pursuing major system change initiatives that require an IT infrastructure that on-line survey companies do not provide.

- Partnering with existing IT firms may be an avenue worth pursuing. One member advised that IBM has invested in the University of Ottawa, to develop data mining. He noted that industry has an understanding of how to take the knowledge, explore it, and exploit it. He felt that the partners are out there and that they will offer support services, and possibly funding.

*Academic ties:*

- It was suggested that CAPTURE should continue to work within an academic institution. Members acknowledged that CAPTURE clients value having an academic connection to the platform and its services, which offers “street credibility.”
- It was suggested that CAPTURE could be positioned as an R&D organization focused on supporting organizational transformation to learning organizations.

**THE ADVICE**

There were some consistent themes that arose from IAB members’ discussions. Many of these were galvanized near the end of the two-day meeting, when members were asked to prioritize CAPTURE activities within its current funding mandate.

*Marketing Advice/Business Objectives:*

- CAPTURE is needed – it has a strong brand and a solid reputation. It should continue to position itself as a leader in supporting an expanded evidence paradigm in public health. However, it needs to be recognized that it will take longer than the current funding envelope.
- CAPTURE can’t do it all right now – the project needs to focus on what it can deliver within the next few months to show its value. There are different things that different people value and CAPTURE will have to make hard choices in what it will pursue.
- CAPTURE must clearly articulate the niche that it fills and what it will provide in that niche. Suggestions included:
  - Information with high external validity
  - Place to find completed evaluations (so others can understand the design and replicate it .e.g. share methodologies)
  - Place to find recommended data collection tools
  - Place to find things that are not found elsewhere
  - Place to find out what is happening in public health in Canada
  - Find a way to synthesize information on CAPTURE so others can easily digest
  - Offer services/support/capacity building to help people input content (tacit knowledge) and synthesize it.
- CAPTURE must develop a strong business case to enable it to show its value and market itself to potential funders. CAPTURE also needs to identify the culture of that market to most effectively guide its marketing and engagement work.

*Recommendations for sustainability/ revenue generation:*

- It is essential to continue to offer the “public good” – a baseline of services that are freely-available to all users.

- Rather than pursue many small consulting projects to generate revenue, find two or three major funders that are willing to support the public service side of CAPTURE. The IAB cautioned that if CAPTURE begins to chase money, it will be challenged to stay true to its mission and vision.
- The IT development should support CAPTURE and not become an IT consulting arm.
- CAPTURE should continue its affiliation with a university. There may also be opportunities to build partnerships with other centres beyond the host institution.
- CAPTURE should consider partnering with a technology company to help build the platform and develop the data collection and aggregation features that represent the unique value-add.

*Operational focus to March 31, 2012:*

- Market the assets that have already been created – focus on populating the repository with tacit knowledge and “making it sing.”
- Undertake a few pilot projects to demonstrate synthesis of learning and use these to develop proof of concept messaging and help build its business case. The IAB offered a number of suggested program areas that could be pursued, including diabetes, the Aboriginal Head Start program and immunization.

## NEXT STEPS

The CAPTURE Project thanks our IAB members for their thoughtful comments and their clear commitment to the success of this Platform.

This meeting marked the last time that the IAB will meet as a group to provide CAPTURE with formal input and advice. However, CAPTURE’s leadership will continue consulting with IAB members on an ad hoc basis throughout the remainder of its initial mandate.

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