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# Planning Multi-site Evaluations of Model Programs

Presented by Donna Smith-Moncrieffe  
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# Presentation Outline

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- National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) mandate
- Multi-site evaluations of model & promising Programs
  - Definitions
  - Why conduct multi-site evaluations of model and promising programs?
  - Using Multi-site evaluations to contribute to potential program sustainability





## Presentation Outline cont'd

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- Planning challenges of multi-site evaluations
  - Challenges in the planning stages (8 multi-site evaluations)
  - Key mitigation strategies for implementing multi-site evaluations
  - Sample planning charts/tools:
    - Stop Now and Plan (SNAP®) program: Quantifying fidelity checklists
    - Multisystemic Therapy (MST) program: Proposed correlation of results with fidelity levels
    - Stop Now and Plan (SNAP®): Identifying quantifiable benchmarks for between site analysis





# NCPC Mandate/Core Activities

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## **Mission statement:**

To provide national leadership on effective and cost-efficient ways to both prevent and reduce crime by addressing known risk factors in high risk populations and places

## **Core activities:**

- Supporting targeted interventions in local communities
- Building and sharing practical knowledge with policy makers and practitioners



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# NCPC priorities:

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Provide funding for the following target groups/crime issues:

- Children and youth at risk
- Crime prevention in Aboriginal communities
- Prevent recidivism among high-risk groups
- Priority crime issues (youth gang, drug-related crimes)



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# Model and Promising Programs: NCPC Definitions

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## Model Programs

- Prevention program that meets the highest standards (i.e. peer-reviewed evaluations with rigorous designs )
- Demonstrates significant sustained reduction in problem behaviour or risk factors for criminal offending
- Effectiveness is maintained over time

## Promising Programs

- Demonstrates some reductions in problem behaviour or risk factors for criminal offending
- Program components have been evaluated with less rigorous designs (i.e. pre and post tests)





# Definitions: Multi-site evaluations

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NCPC criteria used to be considered multi-site:

- √ One central evaluation for all sites (multi-center)
- √ Intent to deliver the same program in at least 2 or more different regional settings
- √ Within and between site analysis is conducted and reported in one report
- √ Intent to implement sites concurrently
- √ Differences in setting, target group or additional non-core components are apparent



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# NCPC Planned Multi-Site Evaluations

## Type of Multi-site Evaluation

- 2 model programs and 6 promising programs (up to 4 sites in different Provinces)

## Evaluation Designs

- Randomized control trial (SNAP® program only)
- Matched comparison group & Cost benefit analysis (where causal links can be established and where variables can be monetized)

## Duration of Evaluations

- 4 to 5 year duration with 1 year follow up

## Contract Type

- External contracted evaluations
- Competitive process (posting on MERX)



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# Why Conduct Multi-site evaluations with Model Programs?

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Building the knowledge base of “what works” for wider dissemination across Canada

- Increases confidence that observed impacts (effectiveness) can be attributed to the intervention
- Increases knowledge about the program elements that contribute most to its effectiveness
- Increases knowledge about the contextual factors that contribute to effectiveness

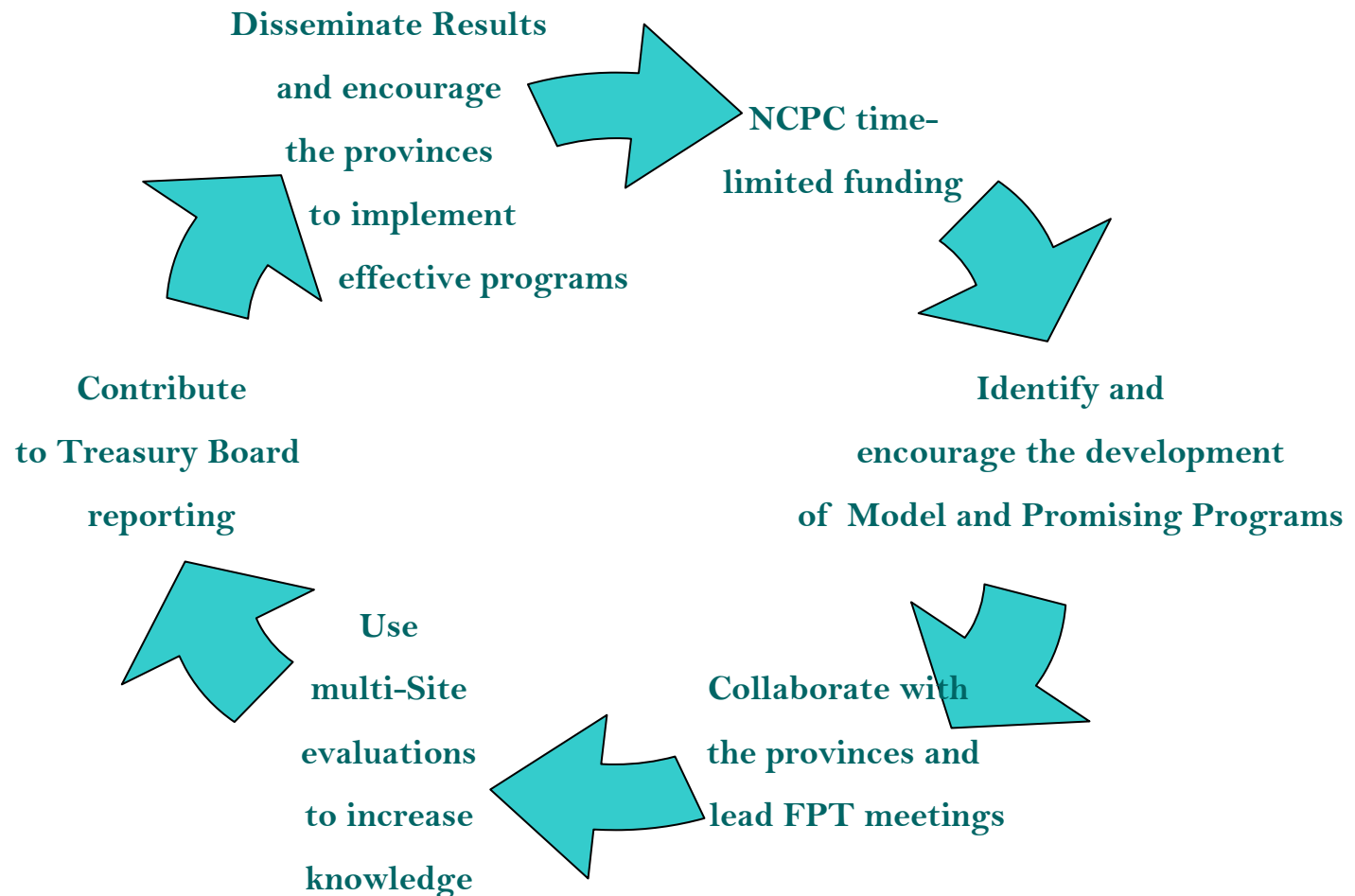


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# Multi-Site Evaluations: Contributing to Potential Program Sustainability





# NCPC Challenges: Planning Multi-Site Evaluations

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- Co-ordinating the timing for all sites
- Ensuring program fidelity within each site is high (80% or higher)
- Identify quantifiable benchmarks for key outcomes (increases comparability for a between site analysis)
- Variation in program developer involvement
- Delays in contract approvals (at least one project within the multi-site needs to be approved before the evaluation contract can be processed)



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11

# Mitigation Strategy: Addressing Variation in Timing for all Sites

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Issue/Challenge

Call for proposals in different provinces occurred at different intervals throughout the year. A number of factors contribute to variation in program development and approval time periods.

Implications

- Within site analysis is feasible but between site analysis and pooling is not feasible until all of the sites are at similar stages

Mitigation Strategy

- NCPC encouraged organizations to develop key model and promising programs (prioritizing exercise)
- NCPC funded “knowledge to practice” seminars to train organizations in the development of model and promising programs (helps prioritize key programs)



# Mitigation Strategy: Ensuring Fidelity is High in each Site

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## Issue/Challenge

Sponsoring organizations potentially deviate from the intended program. Fidelity problems result from varying interpretations of the program, inability to attract the proper target group or intentions to test a new component that is not part of the model.


## Implications

- Between site analysis and interpretation is unreliable when each site implements the program differently.

## Mitigation Strategy

- Develop quantifiable fidelity check lists
- Ensure funds for frequent fidelity checks are available
- Ensure research and evaluation staff are available to support program officers developing model and promising programs





# Mitigation Strategy: Ensuring Fidelity is High in each Site (cont'd)

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**Sample : Quantifiable fidelity checklist (note: this is not the full checklist)**

√ Target Group Population Met:	8/10
√ 12 Cognitive Behavioural group Sessions	10/12
○ Sessions delivered weekly within 3 months	
○ Delivered by a trained facilitator	
○ Approved manuals used (weekly documentation)	
√ 12 Cognitive Behavioural concurrent parenting sessions	10/12

**Fidelity Level: High**

**Total Score: 28/34 or 82.4%**

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**Fidelity Legend**

No Fidelity:	0-29%
Low Fidelity:	30-69%
Moderate Fidelity:	70-79%
High Fidelity:	80-100%



# Mitigation Strategy: Sample MST: Proposed Correlation of Results with Fidelity Levels

	Site 1 (MST)	Site 1 (Control)	Site 2 (MST)	Site 2 (Control)
MST re-conviction Rates (%)  <i>(known data)</i>	59.3%	69.2%	59.3%	58.3%,
MST Levels of Fidelity (%)  <i>(proposed)</i>	75% or Mod Level	Usual Services	55% or Low Level	Usual Services
Recommendation	Further exploration not required		Further explore weak areas of fidelity	



# Mitigation Strategy: Identifying Quantifiable Benchmarks for Between Site Analysis



Issue/Challenge

Data are not present for all outcomes of interest or they vary significantly between studies. Significance testing types also vary (Statistical significance, Clinical Significance and Effect Sizes).

Implications

- The benchmark set for sites may be atypical leading to an inaccurate interpretation of program efficacy

Mitigation Strategy

- Use meta-analysis results if available (standardizes results)
- Set benchmarks using results that have been produced only from programs implemented with high levels of fidelity



# Sample Planning Chart: Identifying Benchmarks for Key Outcomes

Key Outcomes	Target (At 12 weeks only)	Site 1 SNAP	Site 1 Control	Site 2 SNAP	Site 2 Control
<b>Conduct-Type Behaviour (CBCL)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Moderate effect sizes</li> <li>○ ½ SD change</li> <li>○ Stat. Sign. changes (p&lt;0.05)</li> </ul>				
<b>Police Contact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 100% ↓ at 6 months</li> <li>○ 80% ↓ after 6 months</li> <li>○ 70-75% ↓ 1 (annually after program completion)</li> </ul>				



# Planning Challenges Cont'd: Variation in Program Developer Involvement

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**Issue/Challenge**

Program developers for promising and model programs vary in their involvement. Licensing requirements and fee schedules are also variable.

**Implications**

NCPC involvement in customizing budgets, developing program theories, fidelity checklists and quality assurances will vary and require increased FTE involvement

**Mitigation Strategy**

- Plan all 8 multi-site evaluations on a case by case basis
- Assess licensing and quality assurance requirements in the early stages of project development.





# Summary: Planning High Standard Multi-site Evaluations

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- √ Ensure central co-ordination approach is used (i.e. One evaluation firm oversees all evaluations for each site)
  
- √ Enhance fidelity and quality assurance checks
  - √ Target population is well defined and each site adheres to the criteria
  - √ Core set of instruments are used for all sites (including same risk assessment)
  - √ Quality assurance procedures are implemented (including fidelity checklists)
  - √ All sites implement core components (additional non-core components are recognized and analyzed accordingly)
  
- √ Identify quantifiable benchmarks/targets for key outcomes
  
- √ Correlate fidelity levels with key outcomes to explain variation between sites





# Contact Information

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20