

Welcome to the Fall 2008 newsletter of the POWER Study.

It has been a very busy and productive year for us. Soon, we will begin the launch of Volume 1 of our Report with the release of the *Burden of Illness* chapter. The remaining Volume 1 chapters (*Access to Health Care, Cardiovascular Disease, Cancer*) will then be released sequentially. We have also completed *Introduction and Framework* chapters to provide informative background and context for our Report. You will be able to download individual chapters from our website ([www.powerstudy.ca](http://www.powerstudy.ca)) and from the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) ([www.ices.on.ca](http://www.ices.on.ca)) website.

While Volume 1 goes into production, work on the chapters for Volume 2 is well underway. Technical Expert Panels for the *Reproductive and Gynecological Health, HIV Infection, Musculoskeletal Disorders* and *Diabetes* chapters met to rate and select indicators for inclusion. The working groups finalized the indicator lists for their respective chapters and data analysis plans are being developed.

Our findings will also be available in a web-based interactive format. Shortly after each chapter is released, findings will be posted on the ICES inTool at [www.ices.on.ca](http://www.ices.on.ca). This will allow public

health personnel, policymakers and planners, LHIN staff, health care providers, the public, and researchers to access and display findings according to their needs.

From the outset of the study, the perspectives and expertise of women's health stakeholders across the province have been integral to shaping our Report. In March 2008, we held stakeholder consultations for Volume 2 — to request advice on priorities for indicator selection, data sources and other issues. Prior to this we held stakeholder consultations for Volume 1 — to gather feedback on preliminary findings and advice on messaging these findings for our various audiences.

We continue to seek and encourage input from our Advisory Council, whom we last met with in June of this year. We are grateful for their valuable strategic support and recommendations on the design, implementation and dissemination of information.

Our research team has continued to grow over the past year, adding valuable expertise to the various chapter working groups. We are disseminating our results in the form of abstracts, posters and presentations as we move forward. Some of these activities are highlighted in the *out & about* section below.

## Newsletter # 3, Fall 2008

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We will keep you informed as to our news and progress via future newsletters and on our website. And as always, if you have any comments, suggestions or questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Finally, I would like to invite you to join us for our annual Holiday Celebration on December 17<sup>th</sup>. Please R.S.V.P. to: [powerstudy@smh.toronto.on.ca](mailto:powerstudy@smh.toronto.on.ca)

Arlene S. Bierman,  
 Principal Investigator, POWER Study



Dr. Bierman at the "Let's Get Talking" Community Discussion Series in April.

### POWER: out & about

- Dr. Nahid Azad presented the poster, "*Gender and Regional Variation in Quality of Care for Congestive Heart Failure*" at the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Congress in Gender Medicine in Stockholm in September/08.
- Dr. Arlene Bierman presented "*Integrating a Social Determinants of Health Approach to Chronic Disease Prevention and Management*" in a Plenary Session at the Association of Ontario Health Centres Conference in Ottawa in June/08.
- Dr. Laurie Elit presented "*Equity Indicators for Cervical Cancer Prevention in Ontario Women*" at the 64th Annual Meeting of the Society of Obstetricians & Gynecologists of Canada -- Society of Canadian Colposcopists in Calgary in June/08.
- Dr. Monika Krzyzanowska presented "*Sex, Income and Age-Related Differences in Colorectal Cancer Care*" at the 44th American Society of Clinical Oncology Annual Meeting in Chicago in June/08.
- Dr. Arlene Bierman presented "*Improving the Health of Ontario's Women: Where do We Stand? Lessons from the POWER Study*" at the "Let's Get Talking" Community Discussion Series in Toronto in April/08.

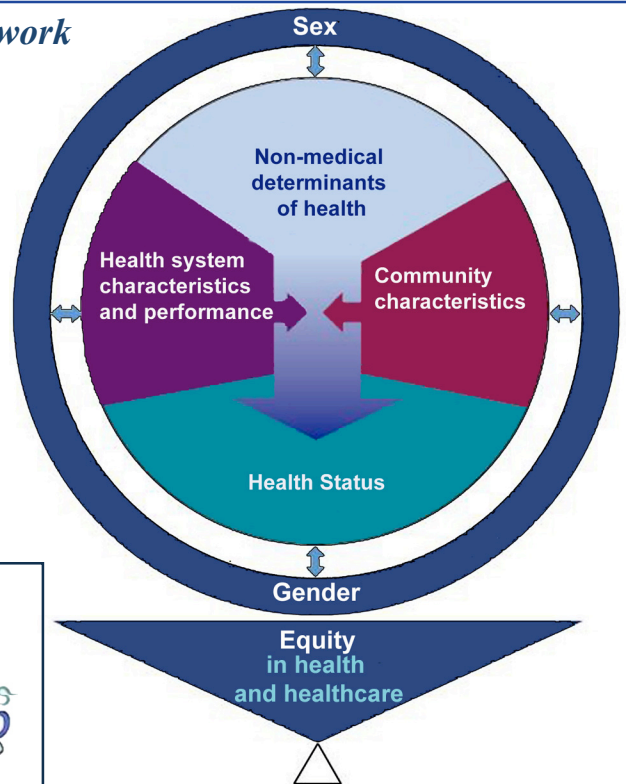
For a more detailed list please visit [www.powerstudy.ca](http://www.powerstudy.ca)

## FEATURE: The POWER Gender & Equity Framework

The perspective we used to choose indicators, analyze data, interpret findings and report results is represented in our POWER Study **Gender and Equity Framework**. It was developed to guide us in developing a Report that is meaningful and actionable for decision-makers and other stakeholders in women's health across the province.

The framework recognizes that while the non-medical determinants of health are the primary determinants of health status, this relationship is modified by both health system characteristics and performance as well as by community characteristics. All of these provide opportunities for intervention. In addition, the framework makes a distinction between "sex" and "gender" and is centered on the concept of equity in health and health care.

Our *Framework* chapter will include more information on the goal, approach, framework, and scope of the POWER Study.



### UPCOMING EVENT – CAFÉ SCIENTIFIQUE

The Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute of St. Michael's Hospital and the CIHR Café Scientifique will present "Gender Inequities in Health: What can we do the close the Gaps? Dialogue and Debate".



Panellists will include:

✦ **Arlene Bierman, MD, MS**

*Ontario Women's Health Council Chair in Women's Health*

*Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute of St. Michael's Hospital & University of Toronto*

✦ **Carolyn Clancy, MD**

*Director, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality*

*US Department of Health and Human Services*

✦ **Gillian Hawker, MD, MSc**

*Chief of Medicine, Women's College Hospital*

*Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto*

✦ **Andreas Laupacis, MD, MSc (moderator)**

*Executive Director, Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute of St. Michael's Hospital*

Tuesday, November 25, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

The GLADSTONE HOTEL ✦ 1214 Queen Street, West, Toronto

For more information, please contact [jkopelow@sympatico.ca](mailto:jkopelow@sympatico.ca) (RSVP Required)

Please join us for the  
**POWER HOLIDAY  
 CELEBRATION**  
 Wednesday, December 17th, 4:30 - 7pm  
 University of Toronto Faculty Club  
 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto  
 R.S.V.P. to: [powerstudy@smh.toronto.on.ca](mailto:powerstudy@smh.toronto.on.ca)

## Upcoming Chapters: The Burden of Illness & Cardiovascular Disease

### The Burden of Illness:

We report on the **Burden of Illness** experienced by Ontarians, and how it differs by sex, socioeconomic status, ethnicity and geography. By painting a picture of these inequities in health in the province, we identify many opportunities for improvement, present objective evidence to inform priority setting, and provide a baseline from which to measure progress.

We provide information on the Burden of Illness as follows:

1. Overall population health and functional status
2. Chronic disease risk factors
3. Chronic conditions
4. Sexually transmitted infections
5. Patterns and causes of mortality

### Cardiovascular Disease:

Women are known to have different patterns of **Cardiovascular Disease** and historically have been treated differently than men in terms of access, diagnosis, and treatment. We report on how the quality of care and health outcomes of cardiovascular disease differ by sex, gender and socioeconomic status. This information can be used to identify areas where disparities can be reduced and care can be improved.

We report on the spectrum of cardiovascular disease as follows:

1. Health and functional status
2. Heart failure
3. Ischemic heart disease
4. Cerebrovascular disease

The POWER Study is a partnership between St. Michael's Hospital and the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and is funded by Echo: Improving Women's Health in Ontario.

*The opinions, results and conclusions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect endorsement by Echo, or the Government of Ontario, which funds Echo.*