# International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation

### **University of Toronto**

**Strategic Plan** 

2011-2014

**November 2010** 

### ICDR Strategic Plan 2011-2014

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The University of Toronto International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation (ICDR) recently embarked on a strategic planning process to guide its evolution for the next three years (2011- 2014).

The external scan revealed that the academic nature of our organization is a key strength; ICDR is relatively unique in the international disability and rehabilitation milieu because of our academic grounding. As such, priority has been given to furthering our scholarly agenda through research and education and building a sustainable fiscal and human resource base.

These directions build on our strengths and highlight the opportunities for ICDR – they provide direction for our education and research programs and outline steps needed to sustain and grow our organization. One of the key directions is the recruitment of a Scientific Director who is a senior-level member of the academic community. This new development, in synergy with the strategic directions noted below, will enable ICDR to mature into a major force both within the University of Toronto and beyond into the global disability and rehabilitation field.

With a renewed vision, mission and values, we will pursue the following strategic directions:

#### **Strategic Directions**

#### Scholarly Agenda - Education

- ICDR will develop and deliver educational offerings on international issues in disability and rehabilitation at the University of Toronto and globally which stress our social responsibility role.
- 2. ICDR will provide support and coordination for students across the Rehabilitation Science Sector at University of Toronto to fully participate in international student clinical internships.
- ICDR will develop a business model to offer international student placement opportunity and support for rehabilitation students from other academic institutions.

#### Scholarly Agenda - Research

4. ICDR will build on current successes and expand our research enterprise in a strategic and programmatic manner.

- a) ICDR will build research initiatives in established thematic areas:
  - HIV, disability and rehabilitation
  - Educational scholarship in global rehabilitation and disability
- b) ICDR will initiate new research themes in important, emergent areas such as (but not limited to):
  - Appropriate adaptive technologies for use in low- and middleincome countries
  - Human resources development for rehabilitation in low- and middleincome countries
  - Occupation, disability and development
  - Human rights, rehabilitation and disability.
- 5. ICDR will work with the University of Toronto Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Science (GDRS) to develop a Global Health and Rehabilitation Field.
- 6. ICDR will foster and develop research in each Knowledge Cluster, which reflects the needs and priorities of the communities with whom the Knowledge Clusters work.

#### Infrastructure and Organizational Sustainability

- 7. ICDR will build a sustainable organizational structure that enlarges its presence in the University of Toronto and supports an increased focus on our scholarly agenda.
  - a) ICDR will work with the Rehabilitation Sector Leadership to recruit a senior researcher to be Scientific Director of ICDR.
  - b) With the recruitment of its Scientific Director, ICDR will begin to transition to a new structure that best supports our focused functions.
  - c) ICDR will seek EDU-C status within the University of Toronto framework for centres and extra departmental units.
- ICDR will create a business model to be more independent of the Rehabilitation Sector core budget over the next 3 years.
  - a) ICDR will seek multi-year commitments from current funding sources
  - b) ICDR will diversify its revenue stream.
- ICDR will continue to be powered by its volunteers and moved forward by the individuals who are committed to our vision and aligned with our values of social responsibility.

- a) ICDR Working Groups will be modified to become "Knowledge Clusters" that will focus on local partnerships, research development and educational opportunities.
- b) ICDR will formally recognize supporters with established membership criteria in order to acknowledge our partners and engage a larger group of volunteers and funders.

The document elaborates on each of these directions and lists the outcomes that ICDR will use as measures of our success. It is with confidence and a new sense of renewal that ICDR moves forward to make this strategic plan a reality.

#### INTRODUCTION

The International Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation (ICDR) was formed in 2004 with a dream of making global issues related to disability and rehabilitation a focus within the Rehabilitation Sciences Sector, the Centre for International Health, and throughout the University of Toronto. ICDR quickly became a hub for like-minded people interested in, and committed to a common vision and a set of values.

Our growth since 2004 has been described as organic, an appropriate term for our initial approach to development. With minimal resources we have survived and thrived. Our successes include formal partnerships in eight countries and informal relationships in many others. We have become a point of entry for rehabilitation students, faculty and clinicians seeking international experiences. Most go on to join the dozens of volunteers who have kept the Centre running.

From the start, we have been committed to an approach that integrates research and education into our service delivery and capacity-building activities. This academic focus has increased over the years as we attracted more faculty involvement, and was cemented with the appointment of an Academic Director in March 2009.

Academic approaches to global issues, particularly as they relate to health, are increasingly the focus of initiatives at the University of Toronto in general and the Faculty of Medicine specifically. In January 2009, the University of Toronto, Faculty of Medicine Strategic Plan Implementation Working Group commented in their report entitled "Social Responsibility as our Academic Responsibility":

**Social accountability** refers to the commitment of Academic Health Sciences Centres to demonstrate social responsibility in their education, research and service activities. This can be achieved by developing policies and setting measurable benchmarks for the engagement of communities, the expression of certain values, and their translation into practice.

This philosophy resonated at ICDR and many students are attracted to the Rehabilitation Sciences Sector because of our increased focus on global issues. Changes in attitudes due to the passage and ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (May 2008) creates a global setting which is ready for this strategic plan.

As we reach almost 6 years of development, it is now time to review and plan for the future. It is within this context that we have undertaken this strategic planning process.

#### THE PLANNING PROCESS

In 2009, after five years of growth and development, it was time to take a closer look at where we had been, where we were and where we wanted to head in the future. We therefore undertook the following activities:

- **Internal Review:** Development and publication in September 2009 of "ICDR: A Five-Year Retrospective" describing ICDR's achievements, available at http://www.icdr.utoronto.ca/Files/PDF/7ebfad291a3710a.pdf.
- External Review: A formal external evaluation conducted by two leaders in the field involving consultation with stakeholders in the autumn of 2009. The external review report is available at <a href="http://www.icdr.utoronto.ca/Files/PDF/b08b2ef31d3f66d.pdf">http://www.icdr.utoronto.ca/Files/PDF/b08b2ef31d3f66d.pdf</a>.
- **Stakeholder Review:** Focused discussions were convened with the University of Toronto Rehabilitation Sciences Sector (RSS) Department Chairs in the spring of 2010.
- Consultation: A Strategic Plan Steering Committee led a far-reaching consultation across the university and with a wide range of rehabilitation organizations;
- **Strategic Plan Development:** The Strategic Plan Steering Committee built on the information and insights from the above activities to create this strategic plan.

The time is right for us to move from our former model of organic growth to implementing a strategic plan that focuses our energies. We are committed to ensuring that we build on the strengths of our first 5 years as we position ourselves for the future.

#### VISION FOR ICDR

The strategic planning process provided an opportunity to review, renew and recommit to our vision, mission and values. A major strength of ICDR has been its culture and core values, which have guided the organization since its inception. We have attempted to maintain their intent and spirit while adapting them to our current situation.

#### Vision:

ICDR will be a leader in research and education in the rehabilitation sciences focused on improving the lives of people with disabilities globally.

#### Mission:

The mission of ICDR is to advance the function and well-being of people of all abilities through a scholarly mandate that focuses on:

- Education: Enriching the educational experience of rehabilitation science students locally and globally; and providing professional development for rehabilitation professionals to become more responsive to global needs;
- **Research:** Contributing to new knowledge on international issues in rehabilitation and disability.

We achieve our mission through authentic long-term partnerships with colleagues and organizations in low- and middle-income countries.

We are driven by a commitment to social responsibility. Our education, research and service activities work towards addressing the priority health concerns of the communities, regions and/or nations we partner with; and the priorities are identified jointly by people with disabilities, governments, healthcare organizations, health professionals and the public.

#### Values:

- Sustainability: We promote the use of local expertise to facilitate selfreliance independence and relationships among individuals and communities.
- Respect: We recognize the talents and abilities of those with whom we
  work, and the central role of those whose lives are affected by what
  we do.

- **Partnership:** we strive for authentic partnership with those we work for and with.
- Rights-based approach: We work to promote and advocate for human rights, social justice, and equity for all people.
- Innovation and excellence: We encourage broad, holistic and appropriate responses to the complex needs of people with disabilities and their communities.
- **Inclusion:** We welcome, respect and partner with people with diverse abilities, opinions, and backgrounds.

ICDR's Values "The more I read it, the more I liked it"

Luc De Nil
Chair, Department of Speech – Language Pathology
Executive Chair, Rehabilitation Sciences Sector

#### ICDR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

#### Scholarly Agenda - Education

#### Strategic Direction # 1

ICDR will develop and deliver educational offerings on international issues in disability and rehabilitation at the University of Toronto and globally which stress our social responsibility role.

The University of Toronto is a leader on the international stage and, through ICDR, has a significant opportunity to extend further leadership in education related to rehabilitation. This includes the development of curricula in countries with emerging rehabilitation programmes and professions as well as development of curriculum to address global considerations here in Canada.

#### Measures of Success:

- Teaching modules addressing rehabilitation and disability issues, cultural sensitivity and current global trends delivered in the curriculum of all Rehabilitation Sector departments
- An interdisciplinary learning activity in partnership with the University of Toronto Centre for Interprofessional Education
- A graduate course offered through the Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Science and/or in partnership with other University of Toronto departments and schools
- A continuing education program targeted at local rehabilitation/health care providers and other interested learners
- Curriculum and training programs developed, created in collaboration with our partners, that can effectively be delivered to meet the needs of lowand middle-income countries
- Social responsibility integrated into all programs

We need to be part of a generation of teachers that helps to mobilize both our colleagues and younger students around thinking globally.

Dr. Lynn Wilson

From: Advancing Health and Equity through Primary Health Care. Global Health Program, Family and Community Medicine, U of T. Feb 2010

ICDR will provide support and coordination for students across the Rehabilitation Science Sector at University of Toronto to fully participate in international student clinical internships.

ICDR has increasingly been involved in the education of students and rehabilitation professionals both locally and globally. One of the key methods for achieving this education has been through international clinical internships.

The interest in pursuing these opportunities has been steadily increasing among the student body across all departments in the Sector. The students seek unique opportunities to learn skills and develop understandings from new cultures and settings that allow them to be more effective health care providers.

ICDR, through its long-standing partnerships in various locations, is well placed to support student internships with assurances of appropriate supervision and safety. Our partners also appreciate the consistency with which students arrive and the excellence of our students.

#### **Measures of Success:**

- Formalized policies, structures and safe guards across departments to ensure that student opportunities are safe and effective
- Improved coordination and consistency of international experiences
- Creation of an increased number of interprofessional internships, building on the U of T Interprofessional Curriculum
- Program evaluation integrated with our research agenda
- Leadership in the field as we disseminate insights and tools across the University of Toronto and at other academic rehabilitation departments
- Social responsibility integrated into all aspects of the process.

"I feel that the role you have been playing, co-ordinating the students on your end and being here to start up the internship has ensured that the students follow the guidelines of U OF T. It creates a bridge between the two cultures that makes the program work well."

Jacquie Leotaud, Principal, Immortelle School, Trinidad

ICDR will develop a business model to offer international student placement opportunity and support for rehabilitation students from other academic institutions.

ICDR receives many requests from students at other Canadian universities and colleges to facilitate and support access to global internship opportunities. We are in a position to offer other universities and colleges the infrastructure support to make this part of their educational opportunities.

- A business model for clinical internship coordination is developed and implemented
- The model to coordinate placements for other universities creates a new income source

#### Scholarly Agenda - Research

#### **Strategic Direction #4**

ICDR will build on current successes and expand our research enterprise in a strategic and programmatic manner.

- a) ICDR will build research initiatives in established thematic areas:
  - HIV, disability and rehabilitation
  - Educational scholarship in global rehabilitation and disability
- b) ICDR will initiate new research themes in important, emergent areas such as (but not limited to):
  - Appropriate adaptive technologies for use in low- and middle-income countries
  - Human resources development for rehabilitation in low- and middle-income countries
  - Occupation, disability and development
  - Human rights, rehabilitation and disability.

ICDR has been growing its research outputs through the engagement of an Academic Director and other faculty, through the increased involvement of our graduate students, and in recent years through the increasing research activities of the Working Groups.

Our opportunities for collaborative and contract research are also growing as our reputation evolves. For instance, we have already developed research projects focusing on HIV, disability and rehabilitation and on educational scholarship.

- Identified leads or co-leads for each research theme
- A structured programme of research for each research theme
- Grant proposals submitted to support these activities
- Strategic linkages for each research theme with Knowledge Clusters to enable the research programs
- The engagement of new faculty from the Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Science and other University of Toronto departments to contribute to new and existing research themes
- Increased number of graduate students working on research themes
- Scholarly productivity and impact of papers and presentations

ICDR will work with the University of Toronto Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Science (GDRS) to develop a Global Health and Rehabilitation Field.

Global health and rehabilitation research is already of interest to a number of GDRS faculty. Issues of global engagement feature prominently in the future plans of the University of Toronto and of the Faculty of Medicine. As demand grows for attention to social responsibility in a global context, more faculty and students will likely be drawn to this field.

#### Measures of Success:

- Admitted graduate students into the new Global Health and Rehabilitation Field
- The creation of a hub that attracts and engages interested researchers

## Global Health is not just about over there. It's about the people in our community here.

Dr Andrew Pinto

From: Advancing Health and Equity through Primary Health Care. Global Health Program, Family and Community Medicine, U of T. Feb 2010

ICDR will foster and develop research in each Knowledge Cluster, which reflects the needs and priorities of the communities with whom the Knowledge Clusters work.

Our Working Groups are a rich source of opportunities, which reflect the grassroots needs of our partners. Our experience has been that as these groups
mature, their involvement and interest in research increases. Within our new
vision, our Working Groups will evolve into Knowledge Clusters that will be
strategically connected to education and research activities. The partnerships
nurtured by the Knowledge Clusters will not only provide the basis for our
scholarly activities, but will also provide opportunities to access sources of
funding not otherwise available to a Canadian university.

- All Knowledge Clusters actively engaged in research projects in partnership with ICDR students and faculty
- All Knowledge Clusters explicitly integrated into research themes

#### Infrastructure and Organizational Sustainability

#### **Strategic Direction #7**

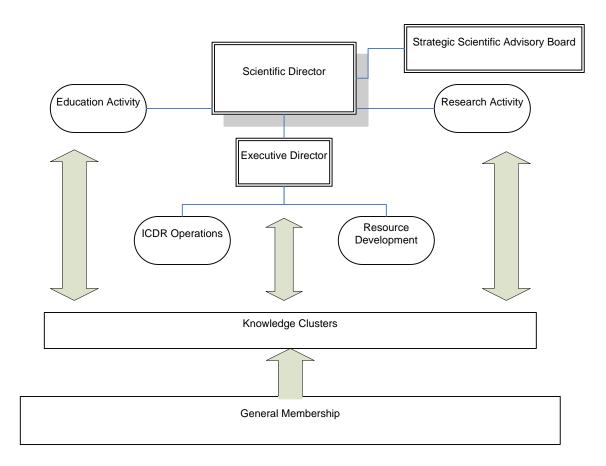
ICDR will build a sustainable organizational structure that enlarges its presence in the University of Toronto and supports an increased focus on our scholarly agenda.

- a) ICDR will work with the Rehabilitation Sector Leadership to recruit a senior researcher to be Scientific Director of ICDR.
- b) With the recruitment of the Scientific Director, ICDR will begin to transition to a new structure that best supports our focused functions.
- c) ICDR will seek EDU-C status within the University of Toronto framework for centres and extra departmental units.

ICDR must develop an organizational structure that is viable and sustainable to effectively enable its vision, mission and values. To achieve these new directions, ICDR requires the leadership of a senior-level Scientific Director who is tenured, has demonstrated success winning research infrastructure and operating grants, and has experience developing a university centre or department.

With a Scientific Director in place, there would need to be a shift to an organizational structure that strategically guides ICDR and facilitates the implementation of the strategic plan.

The proposed organizational structure (see below) also includes new high-level Advisory Boards to provide strategic direction to ICDR and the Scientific Director regarding education and research.



**Proposed ICDR Organizational Structure** 

- The successful recruitment of an ICDR Scientific Director who has the appropriate qualifications and who is committed to ICDR's vision mission and values. Ideally this person would be a tenured professor who has experience leading university-based organizations.
- The retention of present staff and volunteers who continue to be engaged and committed to the vision of ICDR
- Achievement of EDU-C status within the University of Toronto
- Creation of job descriptions and terms of references that facilitate and enable a successful transition to the above organizational structure

ICDR will create a business model to be more independent of the Rehabilitation Sector core budget over the next 3 years.

- a) ICDR will seek multi-year commitments from current funding sources.
- b) ICDR will diversify its revenue stream.

ICDR was originally funded by a variety of sources. However, in the last two years, the majority of funding has come from a sole source – the Rehabilitation Science Sector. This funding has been crucial to the continued success of ICDR, but it has been indicated that this cannot be continued indefinitely due to financial pressures in the Sector.

This strategic plan outlines several new potential sources of income; each needs to be developed and evaluated with imaginative but grounded operational planning.

#### Research:

- The Scientific Director position could be an in-kind contribution from the Rehabilitation Sector or other University of Toronto Department. If those options were not possible, a new source of funding would allow the creation of an endowed chair.
- We expect all research activities to be funded through traditional research funding avenues.
- A driver for the Scientific Director position is to increase the success of research infrastructure grants that would support ICDR operations.

#### **Education:**

- The strategy to offer the coordination of educational placements for University of Toronto students provides an increased value for the Rehabilitation Sector for the current funding they provide.
- The strategy to coordinate placements for other universities creates the potential for a new income source.
- ICDR will also pursue and bid for consultancy contracts in the areas where ICDR has known expertise.

- Three-year funding commitment from the Rehabilitation Sector
- Business model for Clinical Internship coordination
- Two other significant revenue streams
- Sustainable financial position by 2014

ICDR will continue to be powered by its volunteers and moved forward by the individuals who are committed to our vision and aligned with our values of social responsibility.

- ICDR Working Groups will be modified to become "Knowledge Clusters" that will focus on local partnerships, research development and educational opportunities.
- ICDR will formally recognize supporters with established membership criteria in order to acknowledge our partners and engage a larger group of volunteers and funders.

The volunteer-based "Working Groups" have formed the strong basis from which ICDR has developed. They have built the authentic partnerships for which we strive, and have provided the opportunity to nurture our organizational values. Working groups have provided a large volunteer base that has been fundamental to many of the goals we have achieved to date. They embody an excellent community-university partnership and generate much of the enthusiasm and person power which has been a key ICDR asset.

Just as Knowledge Clusters will provide key benefits to the achievement of the ICDR mission, ICDR will provide clear benefits to Knowledge Clusters. These include: use of University of Toronto branding for activities; access to infrastructure support including room bookings, fundraising expertise, and charitable institution status (through the University of Toronto); logistical support; mentorship; and academic expertise.

ICDR has a large grass-roots foundation of support. We want a structure that recognizes and takes advantage of this. Individuals and agencies that support the vision, mission and values of ICDR, and who participate in ICDR activities and have demonstrated a commitment to ICDR will be recognized as members/affiliates.

- There will be strong and effective Knowledge Clusters actively engaged in activities relevant to ICDR's scholarly agenda described in previous directions. These Knowledge Clusters will reflect knowledge and inquiry related to geographical and thematic expertise
- The Knowledge Clusters will involve the diverse communities: local partners from across the University, our community and our global partners

- There will be continued creation of authentic, long-term partnerships with collaborators and communities in resource-poor settings
- We will continue to provide a safe and reliable context for international clinical student internships
- We will enable, support and/or conduct research based on locallyidentified needs
- There will be continuous evaluation and refinement
- There will be a structure and process that outlines the goals, methods and maintenance of ICDR membership
- There will be increased number of volunteers and groups formally associated with ICDR
- There will be increased number of affiliated academics formally associated with ICDR

#### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This strategic planning process has been invaluable to ICDR, enabling us to create a focused plan that builds on our strengths and captures the opportunities that will allow ICDR to make strong contributions to the Rehabilitation Sector, the Faculty of Medicine, the University and our local and global communities.

ICDR offers excellent opportunities to facilitate interprofessional education (IPE) and to establish cross-university, local and international community alliances on intersecting themes related to disability and rehabilitation.

With the support of an extensive community of accomplished and committed people from diverse backgrounds, plus the strong reputation of the Rehabilitation Sciences Sector, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, ICDR has built a strong foundation upon which to build a more extensive and focused enterprise.

ICDR is now in the position to focus our initiatives and expand our actions as outlined in this Strategic Plan. The Plan is ambitious. Implementation will require continued dedication, commitment and support from key stakeholders, including the University of Toronto, the Faculty of Medicine, the Rehabilitation Sciences Sector, and our other partners.

This planning process has clearly demonstrated ICDR's great potential – our mission is strongly aligned with the strategic directions of the Faculty and the larger University of Toronto, we have a group of committed and talented individuals gathered around a core set of values, and we have a network of successful partnerships that position us well to flourish with this new strategic plan.

We feel that the Plan is realistic, specific and relevant. It responds to the issues of today, while offering opportunities for all stakeholders to be engaged in achieving our shared goals. We look forward to the next three years with optimism and enthusiasm.

## "Congrats on such an innovative approach and initiative!"

Sarita Verma LLB, MD, CCFP Professor of Family Medicine Deputy Dean, Faculty of Medicine

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Christopher Sulway, Chair Manager, Planning & Development St. Michael's Hospital Co-Founder of ICDR Founding Co-Chair ICDR Steering Committee

#### **Beverly Biderman**

Author and Disability Activist ICDR Volunteer

#### **Nancy Christie**

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#### **Penny Parnes**

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Chair, Department of Speech – Language Pathology

Executive Chair, Rehabilitation Sciences Sector

#### PLANNING PROCESS INFORMANTS

ICDR would like to sincerely thank the many people who participated in this planning process through generously providing us with feedback and advice:

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#### **Focus Groups**

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Dalziel, Michael

Willekes

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