

# REDEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF EPIDATA



## A Practical Software Tool for Use in the Public Health Field

Arthur A<sup>1</sup>, Guarda B<sup>2</sup>, Garay J<sup>3</sup>, Stevens A<sup>4</sup>, Sieswerda L<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Toronto Public Health; <sup>2</sup>Association of Public Health Epidemiologists in Ontario;

<sup>3</sup>York Region Community and Health Services Department; <sup>4</sup>Brant County Health Unit; <sup>5</sup>Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

### Background

EpiData Entry and EpiData Analysis are key tools for case and outbreak data management, both in Canada and worldwide. Based on field input and pilot testing, the full scope of EpiData capability has yet to be realized. This project focuses on the development and evaluation of standardized tools used for epidemiological training and field management of outbreaks on an international scale.

### Methods

With funding received by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the EpiData Association in Denmark and the Association of Public Health Epidemiologists in Ontario (APHEO) have been collaborating since 2007 on the redevelopment and evaluation of EpiData software applications. EpiData is a free software suite designed to assist epidemiologists, public health investigators and other public health professionals in entering, managing, and analyzing data in the field. The software was created in 1999 and is maintained by the EpiData Association in Denmark. It is also used as a training tool internationally, including the Public Health Agency of Canada's Canadian Field Epidemiology Program.

Through in-person meetings, targeted surveys, and solicited feedback from key public health partners, gaps in knowledge and awareness regarding the functionality and use of EpiData have been assessed, and used to define the knowledge products for development.

### Results

To date, software development has focused on functionality applicable to a range of public health tasks, including the investigation and management of infectious disease outbreaks. Knowledge translation of these advances has been conducted through development of field guides and hands-on workshops. The next phase of the project will focus on developing tools for the use of EpiData in areas outside of communicable disease investigations, including surveys, program evaluation, and management of chronic disease data.

### Conclusion

This poster provides an overview of the Evaluation and Redevelopment EpiData project, and outlines the initiatives currently underway.

This project is a partnership with the EpiData Association in Denmark, the owner of EpiData intellectual property.



#### FUNDING

This project has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

#### Funding Arrangements

- Project began in February 2007 and will continue until March 2011, pending approval from PHAC.
- a total of nearly \$300,000.