

Evaluation of EpiData Workshop, 2011

Background

On February 16 and 17 2011, The Association of Public Health Epidemiologists in Ontario's (APHEO) EpiData Project and the Training Working Group of the Canadian Alliance for Regional Risk Factor Surveillance (CARRFS) held a workshop entitled “EpiData: The Relevance for Local/Regional Risk Factor Surveillance” at the Toronto Marriott Downtown Hotel at the Eaton Centre, Toronto, Ontario. The first evening of the Workshop provided participants with a review of APHEO’s EpiData Project and an update of CARRFS’ activities. On the second day, participants had an opportunity to use EpiData and work through the User Guide. This portion of the Workshop was facilitated by Jens Lauritsen and assisted by Torsten Christiansen. Members of APHEO’s EpiData Expert Panel provided assistance during the hands-on learning of EpiData. A presentation by the Chair of the CARRFS’ Training Working Group, Nawal Lutfiyya, reviewed the principles of a ‘train the trainer’ approach to bring back the skills gained from the Workshop to participants’ organizations. .

The objectives of the EpiData workshop were to:

- Provide networking opportunities*
- Gain knowledge regarding EpiData functionality via hands-on skill development, with a focus on chronic diseases and conditions*
- Promotion of the EpiData Project, its software and CARRFS as an organization*
- Train participants to use EpiData within their work organizations and to train others*

The purpose of this evaluation was to obtain feedback from participants on the quality and utility of the workshop and networking opportunity.

Methods

A self-completed questionnaire was created using publicly available web-based software. The link to complete the questionnaire was sent to all participants via email. The questionnaire was available for completion between February 22 and March 9, 2011. Two reminder emails were sent. Basic frequencies were calculated for each question. The results of the open-ended questions were used to support the qualitative results. All open-ended questions are found in the Appendix.

Results

There were 24 responses for a participation rate of 80% (24/30 total attendees). The results to each question are found in the tables below.

Question 1: The instructor, Jens Lauritsen, fulfilled the learning objectives.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	30%	7
Agree	57%	13
Disagree	9%	2
Strongly Disagree	4%	1
Total Responses		23

Question 2: The presenter, Nawal Lutfiyya (Train the Trainer presentation), fulfilled the learning objectives.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	12%	3
Agree	71%	17
Disagree	17%	4
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Total Responses		24

Question 3: The workshop made good use of my time.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	42%	10
Agree	42%	10
Disagree	12%	3
Strongly Disagree	4%	1
Total Responses		24

Question 4: The workshop was well organized.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	38%	9
Agree	54%	13
Disagree	8%	2
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Total Responses		24

Question 5: I had enough opportunity to meet my personal learning objectives.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	25%	6
Agree	58%	14
Disagree	17%	4
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Total Responses		24

Question 6: The support materials were useful.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	33%	8
Agree	62%	15
Disagree	0%	0
Strongly Disagree	4%	1
Total Responses		24

Question 7: The members of the Organizing Committee were helpful (answering questions/providing clarification during the hands-on training).

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	75%	18
Agree	21%	5
Disagree	4%	1
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Total Responses		24

Question 8: The Instructor was well prepared.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	38%	9
Agree	58%	14
Disagree	4%	1
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Total Responses		24

Question 9: The Instructor demonstrated a good knowledge of the subject area.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	83%	20
Agree	17%	4
Disagree	0%	0
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Total Responses		24

Question 10: The Instructor demonstrated good presentation skills.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	33%	8
Agree	62%	15
Disagree	0%	0
Strongly Disagree	4%	1

Total Responses	24
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Question 11: The Instructor answered questions to help improve my understanding.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	42%	10
Agree	46%	11
Disagree	12%	3
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Total Responses		24

Question 12: I feel confident using EpiData.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	30%	7
Agree	52%	12
Disagree	17%	4
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Total Responses		23

Question 13: Check which statement best reflects your comfort with performing the following tasks BEFORE the EpiData workshop:

	Not at all	With some assistance	Independently	Total
Creating a questionnaire in EpiData Entry	8 (33%)	8 (33%)	8 (33%)	24
Creating validation/checks in EpiData Entry	8 (33%)	9 (38%)	7 (29%)	24
Analyzing data in EpiData Analysis	13 (54%)	9 (38%)	2 (8%)	24
Creating programs/syntax in EpiData Analysis	18 (75%)	4 (17%)	2 (8%)	24

Question 14: Check which statement best reflects your comfort with performing the following tasks AFTER the EpiData workshop:

	Not at all	With some assistance	Independently	Total
Creating a questionnaire in EpiData Entry	0 (0%)	4 (17%)	20 (83%)	24
Creating validation/checks in EpiData Entry	0 (0%)	4 (17%)	20 (83%)	24
Analyzing data in EpiData Analysis	0 (0%)	10 (42%)	14 (58%)	24
Creating programs/syntax in EpiData Analysis	1 (4%)	13 (54%)	10 (42%)	24

Question 15: I feel confident in training others in the use of EpiData.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	25%	6
Agree	42%	10
Disagree	29%	7
Strongly Disagree	4%	1
Total Responses		24

Question 16: This workshop was an effective way to present the workshop content.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	33%	8
Agree	50%	12
Disagree	12%	3
Strongly Disagree	4%	1
Total Responses		24

Question 17: The reference materials (field guide, presentation handouts) improved my understanding of EpiData.

Response	Percentage	Count
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Strongly Agree	38%	9
Agree	58%	14
Disagree	0%	0
Strongly Disagree	4%	1
Total Responses		24

Question 18: I would recommend this workshop to others.

Response	Percentage	Count
Strongly Agree	33%	8
Agree	50%	12
Disagree	12%	3
Strongly Disagree	4%	1
Total Responses		24

Question 19: Please rate the value of this workshop on a scale of 1 to 5 in terms of:

Response	Percentage	Count
1 Practical	46%	11
2	33%	8
3	0%	0
4	17%	4
5 Not Practical	4%	1
Total Responses		24

Response	Percentage	Count
1 Relevant	46%	11
2	17%	4
3	25%	6
4	8%	2
5 Not Relevant	4%	1

		Total Responses	24
Response	Percentage	Count	
1 Essential	17%	4	
2	33%	8	
3	33%	8	
4	8%	2	
5 Not Necessary	8%	2	
		Total Responses	24

Discussion

The participants' responses were very positive. The Workshop was well organized, and the supporting reference materials and assistance provided throughout the Workshop were helpful. The results of the open-ended questions indicated that the hands-on practical application of EpiData was the most valuable.

The instructor, Jens Lauritsen, was well prepared, very knowledgeable about the subject matter, presented well and was able to answer participants' questions.

The majority of participants felt the objectives of the Workshop were achieved: the level of confidence in using EpiData was high, and participants self-reported improvements in their skill level in using the software by the end of the Workshop. This was supported by many of the comments in the open-ended questions: participants reported that they will consider using/start to use EpiData in their organizations.

One third of participants, however, did not feel confident in training others (objective #4). This may be partially explained by the lower level of comfort the participants felt in performing the analysis functions by the end of the Workshop. Future workshops may benefit from allocating more time to the analysis piece and this was supported by the comments from the open-ended questions.

Appendix

Question 20: What aspect of this workshop was most valuable to you? |

#	Response
1.	The manual and step-by-step process of working through the exercises.
2.	Having the creators on hand to understand details/nuances of the program.
3.	Epi Analysis portion, ability to network with colleagues
4.	Training re: EpiData analysis program. I liked the first part walking through what F1, F2 did etc
5.	Train the trainer materials and content.
6.	Hands-on, do-it-yourself style
7.	Hands-on exercises
8.	The manuals and hands on use of the software. The availability of expert epi data users who walked around the room helping each of us out. This enabled me to keep up and feel xonfortable to ask for assistance. The coloured handout may it easy to see the epi data screens.
9.	The hands-on component where we get to "play" with EpiData analysis and entry.
10.	Hands-on practice
11.	Exercises.
12.	Hands on learning and practice
13.	hands on learning visually going through examples
14.	learned some techniques in using EpiData that i did not know before
15.	General discussion about analytical approaches and learning some tips and tricks wrt Entry.
16.	The opportunity to focus on learning EpiData amongst epidemiologists and with the creator of the program.
17.	The opportunity to practice on a dataset.
18.	Facilitated, hands-on practice.
19.	I like the practical aspect of the workshop where we were able to practice on our own.
20.	Practice examples with dataset
21.	Hands-on training.

Question 21: How would you improve this workshop? |

#	Response
1.	The Wednesday night session was not useful. The activities we did could easily have been done remotely.

2.	If you want a train the trainer piece for this workshop it should be a separate session and should make more explicit ties to how to train people on EpiData instead of a generic presentation on how to make presentations to people.
3.	More time; concentrate more on using Epi data for purpose of program evaluation; this is the primary use in the health uni
4.	I would have like to spend more time on syntax like calculating age etc, and learning a bit more about short forms for command lines etc.. I'm sure it is easy to pick up - but a glossary of typical commands would be helpful (though this is probably built within the program)
5.	This workshop did not build upon any of the learnings and skills from the previous workshop that was offered is it had been advertized. The course was far too basic. The workshop should have been held a month later so that training could have at least occurred on the new version of EpiData Manager and Entry.
6.	Spend more time on the analysis part. Incorporate real-life examples from Epis who used EpiData and ran into problems - work through how to resolve the issues.
7.	Make it 2 days (but yes, understand logistics of why it was one day)
8.	Probably, as a visual learner, see the steps displayed on the screen first and then go to the book to do it myself.
9.	Would be nice if the hands-on component has a story component (e.g. applying the software to address an outbreak/cluster investigation)
10.	I would write the syntax clearly and would provide more relevant sample data for presentation purposes and for the participants to work on.
11.	Time to work on own data, more question time.
12.	A day each on EpiData and EpiAnalysis (the first evening was not the best use of time)
13.	I did not feel that the 2nd speaker (training the trainer) was good at presenting. It took away from the message that she was relaying.
14.	At this moment i find it ok, do not find any area to improve
15.	This workshop needed a little more time. Time for Entry was fair, but Analysis was really rushed.
16.	I don't think I got a lot out of the Wed. evening except the social aspect of seeing people. It required a lot of juggling home commitments and I think I would have been fine with just attending the Thursday. For the WHO dataset, it would have been more useful to have the data labels all in the dataset, with maybe one not done so that we could have an exercise to create one. Showing how to add all the information in (which Jans did) would have been a good exercise on its own. Typing in the questionnaire was not a good use of our time. We should have brought it in as a Word document and then just edit the fields - this is more realistic to what we do in real life. I would have liked to have the exercises more concrete and organized.
17.	I would have alloted more time to practice using the software as we dis not really get into the statistical testing. Maybe the train the trainer session could have been moved to the night before, to allow more hands-on time with the software. I would have allowed time for those who use EpiData right now to comment on how they've used it (in PHU scenarios,

	or maybe some field epi experience) and what their experience has been like using it.
18.	The purpose of the Wednesday evening was networking and to resolve any technical issues. Perhaps we could have started one hour earlier on Thursday morning instead of having the Wednesday evening session. We were able to network during breaks and lunch on Thursday. A technical issue I had was not resolved anyway, so I was unable to use EpiData Analysis.
19.	More systematic approach to hands-on training, particularly re: coding. This is second nature to the developer and, unfortunately, I don't think these people are always the best for training purposes.

Question 22: What will you start doing as a result of this workshop? |

#	Response
1.	I will start to use EpiData and EpiData Analyze as a tool for program evaluation. I will also use the checks more regularly.
2.	Will keep EpiData in mind when people are looking for quick access to software for epidemiological analyses
3.	Syntax in EpiData instead of exporting out to other software
4.	using EpiData analysis program
5.	I will recommend colleagues work through the tuberculosis association's online training as I did rather than attend another workshop like this. The online training is laid out much more clearly, and gets in to the advanced aspects of EpiData.
6.	I will use the analysis component more. I will train others on how to create questionnaires.
7.	Start exploring EpiData
8.	train specific staff to use it for in-house evaluations. Use it for small surveys rather than Fluid or survey Monkey because the data does not go into cyberspace.
9.	Share the information with colleagues on my team.
10.	study the EpiData more; try to use EpiData in some areas of my work
11.	Doing some of my analysis in EpiData.
12.	using EpiData to enter paper questionnaire data
13.	looking into the use of EpiData in our PH unit.
14.	explain others to use it and when it would be best to use.
15.	I will use a few more writing tricks in Entry and perhaps some calculated fields more as appropriate. Especially will use the 'Type All Blue' syntax.
16.	I am still not sure how we can use EpiData in our health unit.
17.	I hope to introduce the software as a solution for outbreak investigation, and maybe some small surveys. I will discuss with my team other applications for this software.
18.	I will consider using EpiData for health department surveys.

19. If I require an a database to capture the results of a survey, I feel more comfortable using this than MS Access.

20. Having had experience with EpiData Entry, I will start using EpiData analysis.

Question 23: What will you stop doing as a result of this workshop? |

#	Response
1.	Nothing
2.	exporting to other software
3.	nothing
4.	Stop relying on SPSS for analysis and especially the graphing function (which I particularly love in EpiData)
5.	using MSaccess
6.	Procrastinate about using another software, and just use it!
7.	None
8.	none
9.	trying to set up forms in MS Access
10.	Nothing that I can think of.
11.	Nothing.
12.	We were initially going to provide training to other staff, however, we have decided to wait until the new version comes out rather than training them on this version.
13.	Relying on MS Excel so much!! (Although, spreadsheet programs do have their place - the bias against was evident).

Question 24: Please feel free to provide any other comments regarding the software, the training workshop, or the field guide. |

#	Response
1.	Field guide is great, very detailed!
2.	You may wish to consider adding a few common 'what ifs' into the guide....common issues/problems that people run into and how to resolve them (i.e., around more complicated analysis, longer questionnaire, merging files, merging and exporting longer questionnaires into SPSS), managing the program file/syntax (I seem to recall that in the past some of the syntax would be cut off if got too long...or maybe that was in the editor?). Great workshop - thank you!
3.	Appreciated the financial support from Health Canada for assisting me with the opportunity to attending the session. It was very helpful having people who are familiar with EpiData to cruise the room to offer assistance I appreciated the required preparation - this encouraged me to go back to the web site to down load what I needed and try exercises that were on APHEO website. The co-ordinators are so down to earth and did a great job! It is always very

nice to meet the people who developed the software, I think that in future sessions this may not be necessary as the co-ordinators and other helpers did an excellent job. Thank you very much for this opportunity

4. the software in itself is practical and useful but a bit more complicated because it is not entirely a point and click system.
5. The software is excellent for using in data entry and analysis. Training workshop explained all the benefits the software provides. I really appreciate the training workshop.
6. It's unfortunate that some time was spent trying to figure out the dataset. I think the workshop could have benefited from 2 full days. Intro and Entry on first day and then Analysis on second day. Thank You.
7. It was great - thank you to Jens and the committee. The only drawback is that we didn't really get to practice on the new version - EpiData Manager, which we would ideally be using in the future. FYI - I actually did go on the website and it was not readily apparent how to download the test version, so maybe some more basic instructions would help those of us that are not as tech savvy as others!! Thanks again
8. Although this workshop was great, I'm not sure how useful this workshop is as a new version is about to be launched in the next month or two.
9. Overall, a great workshop. More time for hands on training would have been useful (e.g. a 10min update on next version would have been sufficient). Also, the training presentation could have been shorter - it was a lot of fairly basic info that was discordant with the main objective of the workshop for users (i.e. to learn how to use the software).