



Participatory Research at McGill (PRAM) Presents:

Realist Review: A new method for systematic review for complex policy interventions

In the synthesis of complex intervention programmes, traditional methods of review focus on measuring and reporting on programme effectiveness, often find that the evidence is mixed or conflicting, and provide little or no clue as to why the intervention worked or did not work when applied in different contexts or circumstances, deployed by different stakeholders, or used for different purposes.

This workshop offers a model of research synthesis which is designed to work with complex social interventions or programmes, and which is based on the emerging 'realist' approach to evaluation. It provides an **explanatory analysis aimed at discerning what works for whom, in what circumstances, in what respects and how.** The first step is to make explicit the programme theory (or theories) -- the underlying assumptions about how an intervention is meant to work and what impacts it is expected to have. We then look for empirical evidence to populate this theoretical framework, supporting, contradicting or modifying the programme theories as it goes. The results of the review combine theoretical understanding and empirical evidence, and focus on explaining the relationship between the context in which the intervention is applied, the mechanisms by which it works and the outcomes which are produced. The aim is to enable decision-makers to reach a deeper understanding of the intervention and how it can be made to work most effectively.

2-Day Training Workshop

Learn to design and conduct a Realist Synthesis Review

With **Dr. Geoff Wong,**

Walport Clinical Lecturer, University College London, UK

When: **Tuesday-Wednesday**
June 16-17, 2009

Where: **Department of Family Medicine**
McGill University
517 Pine Ave. West
Montreal, QC

Cost: \$300.00

To Register: Call (514) 398-1357

Or email: pram.med@mcgill.ca

Visit http://pram.mcgill.ca/realist_review for workshop outline and readings

Preparatory reading:

"Nothing as Practical as a Good Theory." Pawson, R. Evaluation 2003:9(4);4 71-490

When reading this article think about your answers to the following questions:

- Why has Pawson focussed on theory as opposed to anything else? For example, is it something to do with the type of interventions he researches or something else?
- What are the implications of what he has written for your review?