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HELP - Crosswalk - Update - 07-26-04
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Health-Education Data Crosswalk

Update - Summer 2004

Over the past two years, HELP has been working with the BC Linked Health Database (BCLHD), housed at the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research (CHSPR) and The Canadian Education Data Network (Edudata) to facilitate an inter-agency agreement to link person-specific databases. In December 2003, approval was received to facilitate the "crosswalk", consisting of a legal agreement and subsequent linkage of the BCLHD and Edudata. By late Spring 2004, the required Ministerial and University signatures on the agreement were in place, which enabled us to begin the linkage process.

legal agreement

getting laws changed

Based on a series of administrative and probabilistic linkage activities developed and previously utilized by the BCLHD, the BCLHD-Edudata crosswalk has now completed linkage of 97 percent of BC school-aged children's personal education and personal health numbers. Additional HELP collected, province-wide Early Development Instrument (EDI) assessment data will be ready to be probabilistically linked into the BCLHD later this year with an expected linkage rate of 85 percent (due to fewer available linkable identifier variables). HELP is currently developing confidentiality protocols and working to obtain ethical approval to collect personal education numbers with the next cycle of EDI assessments, to enable a higher level of linkage to the BCLHD-Edudata crosswalk in future years.

The BCLHD infrastructure brings together person-specific, population-based, longitudinal data across a broad range of health and societal factors from the late 1980s onwards. The BCLHD is one of only a small number of resources in the world where longitudinal research on an entire population can be conducted, and over 100 innovative and policy relevant health research projects have been completed using this database. Edudata, launched in 1999, contains school achievement data for BC's provincial education system (K-12).

As of July 1, 2004, HELP has received infrastructure funding through the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research to launch the "Child and Youth Developmental Trajectories Research Unit". This Unit will build upon the current access and crosswalk agreements with BCLHD and Edudata to establish a "Child and Youth Developmental Trajectories Database" which will facilitate linkage of EDI data, the BCLHD-Edudata crosswalk, and additional socioeconomic census databases, as well as other internal and community-based databases. The linkable resultant data will be a population-based, person-specific longitudinal database including education, health, and school readiness, in addition to socioeconomic census data, from pre-conception to young adulthood. These research activities will contribute to building new insights into child development across the province.

pre-conception to young adulthood

Researchers accessing the Trajectories Database are governed by terms and conditions of BCLHD's Access Policy which stipulates strict data security measures. The Trajectories Database will be managed in accordance with access policies which operate under Section 35 of the BC *Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP Act)* [28], which states that linked data can only be used for research proposals that meet conditions relating to scientific merit, ethical acceptability, and public interest value.) laws

Dr. Clyde Hertzman (Director of HELP) and Victor Glickman (Director of Edudata) are currently planning a presentation with the BC Ministry of Education in Victoria in Fall of 2004. The BC Ministry of Children and Family Development will receive notification of full details when they are available.