

Assessing the Individual-Level Impact of SEARCH Classic

SEARCH IV Cohort Survey Results

October 2006

Submitted to:



Submitted by:



Laurie McCaffrey
McCaffrey Consulting
9332 – 82 Street
Edmonton, AB T6C 2X5
Phone: (780) 432-4074
Fax: (780) 665-7380
E-mail: laurie@mccaffreyconsulting.ca

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Executive Summary.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Survey Results.....	3
Summary of Key Findings.....	31
Appendix A: Survey Questions.....	1

List of Tables

Table 1. SEARCH Participant Follow-up: Overview of Survey Response Rates (2002-2006).....	2
Table 2. Application of Skills in Current Work Environment.....	3
Table 3. Responsibility for Choosing, Using and Creating Evidence.....	4
Table 4. Examples of Increased Responsibility for Choosing, Using, or Creating Evidence.....	4
Table 5. Organizational Support and Opportunity to Apply Skills.....	6
Table 6. Frequency of Contact.....	8
Table 7. Reasons for Contact.....	8
Table 8. Career Development after SEARCH.....	9
Table 9. Individual Level Impact of Program Participation.....	9
Table 10. Adverse Outcomes During the SEARCH Program.....	11
Table 11. Individual Projects: Status of Completion.....	15
Table 12. Oral Presentations: Individual Projects.....	16
Table 13. Barriers and Facilitators to Individual Project Impact.....	20
Table 14. SEARCH Group Projects: Status of Completion.....	21
Table 15. Oral Presentations: Group Projects.....	22

Table 16. Barriers to Group Project Impact	26
Table 17. Types of New Projects	27
Table 18. Roles of SEARCH Participants in New Projects	28
Table 19. Position Changes Reported by SEARCH IV Respondents.....	30

List of Figures

Figure 1. Use of Individual Project Findings for Decision Making.....	16
Figure 2. Perceived Impact of Individual Projects.....	18
Figure 3. Perceived Impact of Group Project Findings	23

Acknowledgements

Special thanks are extended to the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to the development and implementation of the SEARCH IV participant survey.

SEARCH Canada

Mark Biddle
Marney Riendeau
Sarah Hayward
Christine Thompson

Centre for Health Evidence

Kelly Deis
Stuart Drozd
Louisa Fricker
Rob Hayward

SEARCH IV Participants

18 of 28 SEARCH IV participant respondents

Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to gather feedback from SEARCH IV participants regarding the impact of SEARCH participation including application of skills in practice, utilization of the SEARCH network, personal and professional development, and dissemination and application of findings emerging from SEARCH projects.

Questions

Fifteen months after completing the SEARCH program:

- What difference has the program made for participants?
- How do participants use the interpersonal networks established through SEARCH?
- To what extent have skills acquired through SEARCH been applied in practice?
- To what extent have SEARCH project findings been disseminated?
- In what ways have findings from SEARCH projects been used for decision-making?

Methods

The primary method of data collection was an electronic survey accessible through the SEARCH Desktop. Participants without current Desktop accounts were encouraged to contact the Centre for Health Evidence help desk to obtain access.

Key Findings

What difference has the program made for participants?

Participation in the SEARCH Classic program has been consistently rated as a beneficial experience by previous program participants. SEARCH IV respondents described a broad range of impacts including increased networks and connections; increased access to resources (such as the SEARCH Desktop, the expertise of faculty members and other SEARCH participants); increased confidence and leadership skills; ability to influence organization decision making; career development; and increased research skills and competencies.

How do participants use the interpersonal networks established through SEARCH?

It has been well established that program participants from all cohorts continue to use the interpersonal networks established through SEARCH. The majority of SEARCH IV survey respondents reported ongoing contact within the SEARCH network. All respondents (100%) reported contact with at least one member of the network after completing the residential modules. The most frequent type of contact reported by SEARCH IV participants occurred within their own cohort. More than half of the SEARCH IV survey respondents reported monthly or weekly contact with fellow SEARCH IV participants.

The most common reasons for contacting members of the SEARCH network after the residential modules included requests for information, follow-up regarding SEARCH group projects, and provision of information.

The quality of relationships within the network was generally characterized as positive and enduring despite an overall decrease in frequency of contact upon completion of the residential modules.

While increased networks emerged as one of the most positive impacts of SEARCH participation overall, a few participants were much less satisfied with the quality of relationships after the end of the two-year program. Some participants described challenges with other participants and SEARCH faculty members and reported lesser quality relationships as a result. Challenges or tensions were often associated with the process of completing a group project after the end of the two-year program.

To what extent have skills acquired through SEARCH been applied in practice?

The majority of SEARCH IV survey respondents reported that they continued to use the skills acquired through SEARCH on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis. The most frequently applied skills included those related to collaborating and participating in groups and networks: 73% of respondents applied these skills on a weekly or daily basis. Other skills applied on a weekly or daily basis included those related to "being a scholar practitioner" (72%); information management and information technology (67%); being a change agent in ones current work environment (66%); using evidence (66%); and choosing evidence (56%).

A scholar practitioner was defined as "a person who, through their training and experience, combines two realms traditionally separated and often seen as opposites: scholar and practitioner. These individuals incorporate scientific approaches of knowledge making and knowledge use, while being grounded in the everyday endeavor of service delivery or product manufacture."

The majority of respondents reported sufficient autonomy (72%) as well as support from colleagues (67%), supervisors (61%) and organizations (72%) to use the skills acquired through SEARCH.

However, lack of time has persisted as a commonly identified barrier to application of skills in practice. Less than half of respondents (39%) reported sufficient time to apply skills in practice. In contrast, however, some participants noted that SEARCH skills had become integrated in their day to day work.

To what extent have SEARCH project findings been disseminated?

The majority of survey respondents (85%) had completed either a draft or final report based on their individual project at the time of follow-up. Almost half of respondents (46%) had further disseminated findings through a variety of oral presentations including both internal (e.g., departmental presentations) and external audiences (e.g., conference presentations, workshops).

Most respondents (92%) had not further disseminated the findings of their SEARCH project through journal publications, abstracts or other written reports.

Of the five SEARCH IV group projects listed on the SEARCH Desktop, three groups had prepared draft (1) or final reports (2) at the time of follow-up. The results from one group project were submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication. A few respondents (n=5) had further disseminated group project findings via oral presentations (primarily departmental or interdepartmental communications within organizations).

In what ways have findings from SEARCH projects been used for decision-making?

Findings from individual projects completed by SEARCH IV participants were more likely to be used for decision-making than findings from group projects. Sixty-two percent of respondents reported that findings from individual projects were used in practice for decision making. In contrast, only one survey respondent reported that findings from the group project were used in practice for decision making.

Individual project findings supported decisions related to informed consent, development of research and evaluation projects, strategic planning, clinical practice, and the development of resources for specific population groups.

Facilitators to the use of individual project findings included relevance of the project (to the organization or department) and focused nature of the literature review. Barriers to the use of individual project findings included incomplete projects and organizational changes that resulted in decreased relevance of the individual project.

The majority of survey respondents reported that the process of conducting both the individual and group SEARCH projects was beneficial even if the project was not completed as planned or when project findings were not used in practice. The skills developed through the process of completing projects were used extensively in practice (e.g. literature search skills, knowledge of the research process, and understanding of group dynamics).

However, not all respondents attributed benefits to the process of conducting the group project. Four respondents reported various challenges and tensions that created difficult group experiences. Challenges pertained to group dynamics, group size, struggling to complete projects after the end of the two year program, lack of geographical proximity among participants, and lack of clarity regarding project goals and intended outcomes.

Reported barriers to group project impact included timing, incomplete projects, lack of relevance of the project topic to the organization, lack of sufficient data, limited scope of findings, and group process challenges.

Recommendations to SEARCH Canada

1. Given that interpersonal connections established through the SEARCH network have been consistently reported among the most important impacts of SEARCH participation, continue to **support the growth and development of the SEARCH network**. Nurture and support opportunities for both formal and informal interactions.
2. Given that previous participants across all SEARCH cohorts have attributed increased confidence and leadership skills to SEARCH participation, **further explore the leadership development aspect of SEARCH Classic**. For example, encourage conscious reflection regarding SEARCH participants as current and/or future health system leaders recognizing that leadership can take many forms (e.g., leading by example from within ones department).
3. Given the challenges associated with completing group projects after the two-year program, **strongly encourage and/or require completion of SEARCH projects within the two-year time frame**. If projects are not completed at the time of the bi-annual SEARCH conference, a written status report should be requested from the group outlining the reasons for non-completion and any barriers experienced. Details regarding the current status of each group project (whether completed or not) should be updated in the Desktop to facilitate future follow-up and evaluation.
4. Given the identified barriers to using findings from group projects in practice (including timing, incomplete projects, lack of relevance of the project topic to the organization, lack of sufficient data, limited scope of findings, and group process challenges), **revisit the structure, process, and intended outcomes of the group project task within the SEARCH curriculum**. Continue to work with key stakeholders (including sponsoring organizations, supervisors, and SEARCH participants) to ensure that group projects are relevant, completed in a timely fashion, sufficient in scope (neither too broad nor too narrow). Consider maximum group sizes to reduce challenges associated with group dynamics in larger groups.
5. Given the high completion rate and use of findings from individual projects in practice, **continue with the current format for individual projects**. Build on identified success factors (e.g., relevance of topic, appropriate focus) to sustain the benefits of individual project completion.
6. Given the time, energy, and commitment required to complete individual and group projects, **continue to support SEARCH participants interested in further disseminating findings after completion of the two-year program**. Request dissemination plans (including intended dissemination activities and supports required) from each participant at the end of the two-year time frame and document plans in the SEARCH Desktop.
7. Given that lack of time has persisted as a commonly identified barrier to application of skills in practice, **continue to address ways to integrate SEARCH skills in day-to-day work**.
8. Given the positive and constructive feedback provided by the majority of participants, **celebrate successes of the SEARCH program and continue to address challenges**.

Introduction

Background

The Swift, Efficient Application of Research in Community Health (SEARCH) Classic program is a two-year inter-professional development program emphasizing applied research and knowledge translation. The focus of this report is on the perceived impact of program participation among SEARCH IV participants (i.e., the group of professionals who took the program in its fourth iteration) fifteen months after completing the program.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to gather feedback from SEARCH IV participants regarding the impact of SEARCH participation including application of skills in practice, utilization of the SEARCH network, personal and professional development, and dissemination and application of findings emerging from SEARCH projects. The SEARCH IV follow-up survey was conducted as one component of ongoing follow-up with all program cohorts.

Questions

Fifteen months after completing the SEARCH program:

- What difference has the program made for participants?
- How do participants use the interpersonal networks established through SEARCH?
- To what extent have skills acquired through SEARCH been applied in practice?
- To what extent have SEARCH project findings been disseminated?
- In what ways have findings from SEARCH projects been used for decision-making?

Methods

The primary method of data collection was an electronic survey accessible through the SEARCH Desktop. Participants without current Desktop accounts were encouraged to contact the Centre for Health Evidence to obtain access. The Centre for Health Evidence provided ongoing support throughout the duration of the data collection period to facilitate participant access to the Desktop. The survey questions are reproduced in Appendix A; however, the formatting appeared differently in the electronic version.

Survey Development

The survey questions, with some minor modifications, were the same as those used with SEARCH III participants (January 2006) and SEARCH I and II participants (May 2002). Survey questions were developed based on interviews and focus groups with SEARCH participants, discussions with SEARCH program staff, and a literature review regarding the evaluation of continuing education programs. Questions were pilot tested with three members of the SEARCH Network Committee. Feedback from committee members was incorporated into the final survey instrument.

The survey was programmed electronically by the Centre for Health Evidence.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were addressed in detail during the planning and development of the SEARCH III survey project (launched in January 2006). Tools developed by the Alberta Research Ethics Community Consensus Initiative (ARECCI) were used by the consultant and three independent reviewers to classify the survey project by primary purpose and level of risk. The project was classified as non-research, minimal risk. The reviewers also provided opinions regarding the ethical acceptability of the SEARCH III survey project. Suggestions were incorporated into the final project materials and approved by SEARCH Canada for implementation.

Participant Recruitment and Response Rate

An e-mail invitation to complete the survey was sent to all SEARCH IV participants (except participants who were also now SEARCH program staff) on September 8, 2006 (n=27 of 28). Two e-mails were returned undeliverable; new addresses for both undeliverable messages were obtained through individual requests for information. Follow-up reminders were issued on September 21 and September 28, 2006. The survey was closed on September 29, 2006. The data was collected and formatted by the Centre for Health Evidence and provided to the consultant for analysis.

In total, 18 of 27 participants (67%) who were sent the e-mail request started to complete the survey. However, 5 of 18 respondents stopped completing the survey after the first few sections. In total, 13 of 27 respondents (48%) provided more complete data.

Previous SEARCH participant response rates have ranged from 67% to 78% of program participants (see Table 1).

Table 1. SEARCH Participant Follow-up: Overview of Survey Response Rates (2002-2006)

Cohort	Years of Program Participation	Total Number of Program Participants	Number of Survey Respondents	Date of Survey	% of Population (within cohorts)
SEARCH I	1996-1998	25	19	May-Jun, 2002	76%
SEARCH II	1998-2000	25	17	May-Jun, 2002	68%
SEARCH III	2001-2003	27	21	Jan-Mar, 2006	78%
SEARCH IV	2003-2005	27*	18	September, 2006	67%

Survey Results

Application of Skills in Current Work Environment

The majority of SEARCH IV survey respondents reported that they continued to use the skills acquired through SEARCH on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis (see Table 2).

Table 2. Application of Skills in Current Work Environment

To what extent do you currently use skills related to.....	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
... choosing evidence (e.g., information searching and retrieval, critical appraisal, research syntheses, etc.) in your current work environment?	--	11% (2)	33% (6)	39% (7)	17% (3)
... using evidence (e.g., managing the interface of research and practice, organizational change and change management, etc.) in your current work environment?	6% (1)	17% (3)	11% (2)	44% (8)	22% (4)
... creating evidence (e.g., research design, data analysis, developing and funding research projects, etc.) in your current work environment?	6% (1)	28% (5)	39% (7)	17% (3)	11% (2)
... information management & information technology in your current work environment?	--	11% (2)	22% (4)	17% (3)	50% (9)
... collaborating and participating in groups and networks in your current work environment?	--	6% (1)	22% (4)	17% (4)	56% (10)
...being a change agent in your current work environment?	--	22% (4)	11% (2)	22% (4)	44% (8)
...being a scholar practitioner in your current work environment?	--	22% (4)	6% (1)	39% (7)	33% (6)

The most frequently applied skills included those related to collaborating and participating in groups and networks: 73% of respondents applied these skills on a weekly or daily basis. Other skills applied on a weekly or daily basis included those related to "being a scholar practitioner" (72%); information management and information technology (67%); being a change agent in ones current work environment (66%); using evidence (66%); and choosing evidence (56%).

A scholar practitioner was defined as "a person who, through their training and experience, combines two realms traditionally separated and often seen as opposites: scholar and practitioner. These individuals incorporate scientific approaches of knowledge making and knowledge use, while being grounded in the everyday endeavor of service delivery or product manufacture."

Responsibility for Skills in Current Work Environment

As illustrated in Table 3, the greatest reported increase among SEARCH IV respondents was for “choosing evidence”: 55% of respondents reported that their responsibilities for choosing evidence had increased or increased substantially from the time they started the two-year SEARCH program.

One half of respondents reported that their responsibilities for using evidence; information management and information technology; and collaborating and participating in groups and networks had stayed the same between the beginning of the SEARCH program and the time of follow-up.

Table 3. Responsibility for Choosing, Using and Creating Evidence

To what extent has your responsibility for each of the following areas changed, if at all, from the time you started the two-year SEARCH program until now?	Decreased Substantially	Decreased	Neutral/ Stayed Same	Increased	Increased Substantially	Does not apply or not stated
... choosing evidence	--	6% (1)	28% (5)	33% (6)	22% (4)	11% (2)
...using evidence	--	6% (1)	50% (9)	17% (3)	17% (3)	11% (2)
...creating evidence	--	6% (1)	39% (7)	28% (5)	11% (2)	17% (3)
...information management & information technology	--	6% (1)	56% (10)	17% (3)	6% (1)	17% (3)
...collaborating and participating in groups and networks	--	6% (1)	56% (10)	17% (3)	11% (2)	11% (2)

Where applicable, examples of how responsibilities had increased are provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Examples of Increased Responsibility for Choosing, Using, or Creating Evidence

Category	Examples of How Responsibility Increased
Choosing Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Now responsible for development of health status report for our region, so search for information/data, synthesize info from various sources, etc.</i> ▪ <i>Given more responsibility for providing evidence when a decision has to be made.</i> ▪ <i>Responsibility increased when I accepted a position of Health Care Analyst with the health region. Responsible for information searching, retrieval and critical appraisal of best practice evidence particularly as it relates to issues in Long term care.</i> ▪ <i>During my participation in SEARCH and following I have become one of the people in the organization that people frequently come to to seek out information or get assistance to do their own information searches. I have been asked by middle and executive managers to do searches of the literature to assist them in decision making. This was not a role that I played before SEARCH.</i> ▪ <i>Collecting and disseminating latest evidence to staff</i> ▪ <i>We created a research position to assist the organization in determining a level of research sophistication previously unavailable to us. Involvement in SEARCH has also decreased the likelihood of projects and initiatives being</i>

Category	Examples of How Responsibility Increased
	<p><i>passed by due to lack of research skill.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Informal expectation that information gained from improved network will be shared among colleagues. Direct requests to do literature searches on clinical and managerial content.</i> ▪ <i>I have been asked, as a member of the team, to be responsible for finding evidence to support our practice (or changing practice) in specific areas.</i>
Using Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Responsible for promoting and championing the use of RAI tools within the long-term care setting and demonstrating how the use quality indicators and outcome measures can positively impact the quality of care.</i> ▪ <i>Synthesizing research for project work; changing workflow; creating decision making tools.</i> ▪ <i>As an organization, we are more apt to search the literature for examples of what is being accomplished or not accomplished in the field. Our capacity to determine need, develop responses to need and evaluate the outcomes of those responses has increased considerably.</i> ▪ <i>Moved into a new role in supporting staff to do this type of planning.</i>
Creating Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Currently working on farm injury prevention research project, also participating in a group that is developing a UEY proposal which will involve data collection from 5 year olds re school readiness.</i> ▪ <i>I have been involved in reproducing my group project as a research project in the region. I am frequently asked to assist with development of PE/QI surveys. I have done the data entry and analysis and assisted with the report writing for a number of surveys conducted in the organization.</i> ▪ <i>Local and regional program evaluation - setting research design, data analysis</i> ▪ <i>As an organization, we now feel that when we lack the evidence to determine an action in specific populations, we are more apt to simply develop a research question that will provide that evidence. There is less guessing, more concise activity and greater probability of success in program outcomes as a result of creating our own evidence.</i> ▪ <i>I have changed positions, and have responsibility in helping others set up how they collect data to inform their programming.</i> ▪ <i>More dedicated time to program evaluation, staff capacity building to do EBDM, etc.</i>
Information Management & Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The onus has fallen on the new position created to develop and manage information to enhance and complement the work of the organization.</i> ▪ <i>Was doing this work before, but just have more dedicated time to contribute towards data collection and management.</i>
Collaborating & Participating in Groups/Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>More participation in group and committee work where evidence-based decisions are expected.</i> ▪ <i>Part of the increase was because my change in job during the SEARCH program which would have increased those activities anyway. However my participation in SEARCH was probably a factor in being successful in getting the job. I do get asked to participate with some groups because of the research background that I can bring to the group.</i> ▪ <i>While we have always had a positive track record for collaborative effort, we find ourselves being much more proactive in establishing networks and collaborating outside of the traditional "box" of disease prevention, treatment, support and advocacy.</i>

Organizational Support and Opportunity to Use Skills

The majority of respondents reported sufficient autonomy as well as support from colleagues, supervisors and organizations to use the skills acquired through SEARCH (see Table 5).

However, lack of time has persisted as a commonly identified barrier to application of skills in practice. Less than half of respondents reported sufficient time to apply skills in practice. In contrast, however, some participants noted that SEARCH skills had become integrated in their day to day work.

Table 5. Organizational Support and Opportunity to Apply Skills

Currently.....	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ Not Stated	Agree	Strongly Agree
I receive support from colleagues to use skills acquired during SEARCH	--	6% (1)	28% (5)	50% (9)	17% (3)
I receive support from my direct supervisor to use skills acquired during SEARCH	--	6% (1)	33% (6)	28% (5)	33% (6)
My organization is supportive of research	6% (1)	--	22% (4)	61% (11)	11% (2)
I have sufficient autonomy to use the skills acquired through SEARCH	--	6% (1)	22% (4)	39% (7)	33% (6)
I have sufficient time to use the skills acquired through SEARCH	17% (3)	6% (1)	39% (7)	33% (6)	6% (1)

Utilization of the SEARCH Network

The majority of SIV survey respondents (67%, n=12) reported that they currently used the interpersonal networks established through SEARCH. The remaining respondents reported that they did not use the interpersonal networks established through SEARCH (22%, n=4) or did not respond to the question (11%, n=2). However, almost all participants (including those who reported they did not use the SEARCH network) subsequently reported contact with at least one participant subcategory within the network. The nature and type of communication within the SEARCH network after completing the residential modules is described next.

Exploring Contact within the SEARCH Network

As illustrated in Table 6, SEARCH IV respondents reported ongoing contact within the SEARCH network. The most frequent type of contact reported by SEARCH IV participants occurred within their own cohort. More than half of the SEARCH IV survey respondents (n=10, 56%) reported monthly or weekly contact with fellow SEARCH IV participants.

The most common reasons for contacting members of the SEARCH network after the residential modules included requests for information, follow-up regarding SEARCH group projects, and provision of information (see Table 7).

Almost half of respondents **reported that the overall frequency of contact** within the network had decreased (n=5, 28%) or significantly decreased (n=3, 17%) since completing the program.

The remaining respondents reported that their level of contact had increased (n=2, 11%), significantly increased (n=1, 6%), or had not changed (n=4, 22%) since completing the program. Three participants (17%) did not respond to the question.

The majority of open-ended comments regarding the **quality of relationships** within the SEARCH network focused on the value, positive nature, and strength of these relationships despite decreased frequency.

Illustrative participant comments regarding the quality of relationships within the SEARCH network included the following:

- *I think there is a high quality to the relationships established within the SEARCH network. There is a sense of cohesiveness and willingness to share information and help a fellow SEARCHER with requests for information, contacts and advice.*
- *The SEARCH network is probably one of my most valuable tools. I always know that I can reach out to the whole group or individuals and get the assistance or direction that I may need myself or resources for others within my organization.*
- *The relationships I had within the SEARCH network were varied and of some depth. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with others from a variety of roles in the health care system.*
- *Very strong. Being a SEARCHer provides me with an automatic comfort level with those who I know have been through the program and visa versa. I do a lot of networking on a provincial level and those folks are my most reliable and willing source of information and support.*

However, not all respondents were satisfied with the quality of relationships within the SEARCH network after the residential modules. For example, comments regarding the quality of relationships among less satisfied respondents included the following:

- *In the two-year period that included modules, I would say the overall relational experiences were positive. In the two-year period following modules, the quality of relationship with some of the cohort has become strained yet civil. For the remainder, there really hasn't been any contact.*

- *Relationship with faculty members deteriorates over time, at the beginning found faculty to be very helpful, later on (especially after end of modules) have found it very difficult to work with certain faculty members. I realize that after the 2 years of the program participants "set out into the world on their own" but when faculty members have agreed to do something and then ignore participants for months it is very frustrating.*

Table 6. Frequency of Contact

Category	Not Stated	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
SEARCH faculty members	11% (2)	6% (1)	61% (11)	22% (4)	--	--
Research Development Advisors (RDAs) ¹	17% (3)	50% (9)	33% (6)	--	--	--
Other university faculty or staff	17% (3)	56% (10)	28% (5)	6% (1)	--	--
Fellow SEARCH IV participants	11% (2)	--	33% (6)	39% (7)	17% (3)	--
Participants from other SEARCH cohorts	22% (4)	28% (5)	33% (6)	6% (1)	11% (2)	--
SEARCH Program Staff	11% (2)	17% (3)	56% (10)	17% (3)	--	--

Table 7. Reasons for Contact

Reason for Contact	SEARCH Faculty	Other University Faculty	SEARCH IV Cohort	Other SEARCH Cohorts	SEARCH Program Staff	Research Development Advisors
To follow-up regarding individual projects	33% (6)	6% (1)	6% (1)	--	6% (1)	6% (1)
To follow-up regarding group projects	67% (12)	17% (3)	67% (12)	11% (2)	33% (6)	--
To request advice regarding research methods	28% (5)	6% (1)	17% (3)	17% (3)	11% (2)	17% (3)
To request other types of advice	22% (4)	6% (1)	22% (4)	17% (3)	22% (4)	6% (1)
To request information	39% (7)	11% (2)	50% (9)	44% (8)	50% (9)	11% (2)
To provide information	11% (2)	17% (3)	50% (9)	39% (7)	22% (4)	6% (1)
To discuss new research ideas/identify possible projects	11% (2)	6% (1)	17% (3)	11% (2)	17% (3)	11% (2)
To obtain new contacts	17% (3)	11% (2)	39% (7)	17% (3)	6% (1)	6% (1)
For social reasons	6% (1)	--	50% (9)	6% (1)	6% (1)	--
For other reasons	6% (1)	6% (1)	6% (1)	11% (2)	17% (3)	11% (2)

*Note: values do not total 100% because respondents reported multiple reasons for contact across categories.

¹ Research Development Advisors (RDAs) are "PhD prepared, working at college, university, or in private practice, and are seconded for part-time work" to support research or the application of research within Alberta health regions. (Source: Research Transfer Network of Alberta Water Cooler Presentation, Research Development Advisors (RDA's): Walking Sticks for the Health Regions, presented by Don Flaming, January 24, 2005).

Personal and Professional Development

The majority of SEARCH IV survey respondents (n=10, 55%) reported that participation in SEARCH had positively influenced the development of their career. The remaining respondents reported that SEARCH did not have an influence or did not respond to the question (see Table 8).

Table 8. Career Development after SEARCH

To what extent did your SEARCH involvement influence the development of your career after SEARCH?	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Major positive influence	4	22%
Positive influence	6	33%
Neutral/no influence	5	28%
Negative influence	--	--
Major negative influence	--	--
Not stated	3	17%
Total	18	100%

Note: 5 of the initial 18 survey respondents stopped completing the survey after the previous question regarding the influence of SEARCH on career development. Thus, all remaining percentages throughout the report were calculated based on the remaining 13 completed surveys.

More than 50% of survey respondents reported increased or significantly increased job satisfaction, leadership skills, ability to influence organizational decision-making, value to ones organization, respect and recognition from colleagues and employers, personal and professional networks, and ability to choose, use, and create evidence after completing the two-year SEARCH program (see Table 9).

Table 9. Individual Level Impact of Program Participation

To what extent have the following potential areas of impact decreased or increased since you completed the two-year SEARCH program?	Significantly Decreased	Decreased	Neutral/ No Change	Increased	Significantly Increased	Not Applicable
... job satisfaction	--	15% (2)	23% (3)	46% (6)	15% (2)	--
...leadership skills	--	8% (1)	31% (4)	38% (5)	23% (3)	--
...ability to influence organizational decision-making	--	15% (2)	23% (3)	38% (5)	23% (3)	--
...value to my organization	8% (1)	8% (1)	15% (2)	31% (4)	38% (5)	--
...respect and recognition from colleagues	--	--	46% (6)	46% (2)	8% (1)	--
...respect and recognition from employers	8% (1)	--	31% (4)	38% (5)	23% (3)	--
...personal networks	--	8% (1)	15% (2)	38% (5)	38% (5)	--
...professional networks	--	8% (1)	15% (2)	38% (5)	38% (5)	--
...ability to choose evidence	--	8% (1)	--	31% (4)	62% (8)	--
... ability to use evidence	--	8% (1)	15% (2)	15% (2)	62% (8)	--
...ability to create evidence	--	--	38% (5)	15% (2)	46% (6)	--

Self-Reported Positive Impacts of SEARCH Participation

Survey respondents were also asked to describe the most positive impact, at an individual level, that had resulted from participation in SEARCH thus far. Some of the identified impacts included increased networks and connections; increased access to resources such as the SEARCH Desktop; increased confidence; career development; and increased research skills and competencies. Illustrative participant quotations within each category are presented next.

NETWORKS AND CONNECTIONS

- *The access to SEARCH network of scholars and practitioners*
- *The networks and the people, the value of having a network to tap into is invaluable...From a small region...the SEARCH network gave me entrance to circles that may not have been there otherwise. SEARCH is well recognized and respected. However, the biggest benefit is the networks that have developed, first as a 'what do you do in your region', to 'lets get together and talk about this', and now we have other regions wanting to join our group, as they are recognizing the value of the network.*
- *The close friendships I've developed.*
- *For me it was the collegial network and both the professional and social contacts within.*

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- *The ability to continue to use the SEARCH Desktop.*

CONFIDENCE

- *The confidence to change job positions to one where the skills learned would be utilized.*
- *Increased confidence to be involved in research, to seek others who are experts to gain assistance, to feel confident in my ability to create, choose and use evidence in the work setting.*

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- *The way that it has re-engaged me professionally. It influenced my job choices, the decision to return to graduate school and my participation at a provincial level, not just local. SEARCH was an incredible experience and it is hard to measure the impact it has had on me professionally only to say that the skills that I learned are now an integral part of how I do the work I do.*

RESEARCH SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

- *Increased ability to choose, use and create evidence.*
- *The increased ability to critically appraise evidence to determine value for practice.*
- *Perhaps the most significant impact on me as an individual would be the way in which I approach research and the tripod of the evidence structure. I am able to discern more accurately what is of benefit to our organization and how to employ evidence in the ongoing development of programs and initiatives undertaken by the organization. I find also that there is a greater emphasis on my skills in decision making and my direct involvement. I have grown significantly throughout and following the process.*
- *I have been able to blend academic and clinical credibility. My suggestions for improvement are well documented and supported in literature, and I am able to debate and defend with numerous health care professionals.*

Adverse Outcomes of SEARCH Participation

Respondents were also asked to reflect on the extent to which participation in SEARCH had resulted in adverse outcomes during the two year program. All respondents (n=13, 100%) reported that SEARCH had either “somewhat” or “a great deal” resulted in increased demands on time and increased workload. Over half of respondents (n=7, 54%) reported some tension with colleagues although the majority (n=8, 62%) recalled no tension with their employer during the SEARCH program (see Table 10).

Table 10. Adverse Outcomes During the SEARCH Program

During the two year program, to what extent did you experience the following?	Not at all	Somewhat	A great deal
Increased demands on time	--	38% (5)	62% (8)
Increased workload	--	38% (5)	62% (8)
Tension with colleagues	38% (5)	54% (7)	8% (1)
Tension with employer	62% (8)	31% (4)	8% (1)

Some participants reported that demands on time and workloads had decreased upon completion of the two year program. For example:

- *Much less than during the two year period.*
- *The increased workload and demands on my time have decreased relative to when I was in the 2 year SEARCH program. My position at that time was not conducive to taking time from work to do SEARCH assignments so most was done on my own time. While my employer was supportive to an extent, much of my workload could not be assigned to others.*

Other participants reported that demands on time and workloads had continued to increase as a result of the skills developed through SEARCH. For example:

- *Because of the skills I have acquired I am often asked to assist with projects outside the scope of my position which does add to my workload.*
- *The increased workload is welcomed, as well as demand on time, shows the value placed on my skills*
- *The tension experienced during the program has subsided considerably in the past two years. However, the workload and demands on my time have increased with the expectation that my skills can now be employed to a greater extent throughout the organization. There is an expectation that the level of training, knowledge acquisition, and capacity to transfer knowledge to the organization somehow supersedes workload and time management. If it needs to happen, I feel it is expected that I will somehow make it happen.*

A few participants described ongoing tension with their employers and/or colleagues. For example:

- *Still some tension from employer as still haven't finished individual or group project.*
- *Organizational expectations were very high that a trained researcher would be available to all staff whenever they needed research to be done; we have full time jobs, and the*

additional load of these expectations has greatly reduced the feeling that the job is rewarding; SEARCH participation resulted in a lot more work, and reduced time to complete my own work. There has also been a great deal of backlash from colleagues who expected the SEARCHER to drop everything and do some work for them, and when they discovered this was not the job of the SEARCHER, they became very cynical about why people were sent to SEARCH when they were "basically useless" to them.

Finally, one participant described less tension with colleagues (now versus during the two-year program) as a result of changing positions.

- *I have changed positions, less tension with colleagues as the people I now work with have similar skills, ability and desire to use evidence in making decisions.*

In some cases, lack of time to use skills in practice was an ongoing challenge. For example, one respondent expressed frustration regarding lack of protected time at work and the subsequent need to allocate personal time to complete SEARCH assignments and projects.

- *Have skills that could be used but no time to use them - I wonder why I learned them if I'll never get the chance to use them - some days it feels like it was a pointless time consuming exercise. My time wasn't protected during the SEARCH program, until the last couple of months when I finally made a big enough fuss over it. Was too late to catch up. Had to do most of my SEARCH work on my own time during modules and now if I want to finish projects. I don't want to use my own personal time to do SEARCH, that wasn't the understanding (agreement?) when I signed up. Feel like then I'm perceived as lazy or not serious enough about the learning opportunity presented to me because I don't want SEARCH to take up my personal time.*

SEARCH Participant Organizational Contributions

Survey respondents reported a range of contributions to their organizations as a result of participating in the SEARCH program. Contributions attributed to SEARCH participation included increased organizational capacity to choose, use or create evidence; increased participation in group and committee work; and the development of new programs or initiatives. A few participants commented that it was difficult to determine and/or that they had not made specific contributions to their organizations as a result of participating in SEARCH. Illustrative participant quotations are presented below.

CONTRIBUTED TO ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO CHOOSE, USE, OR CREATE EVIDENCE

- *I was a project lead on a survey of all employees in the region on the perception of patient safety which was a replication of my group project.*
- *Ability to write briefing notes, my individual project dealt with rural urban differences, have used that information to help inform my region about the indicators used in various reports.*
- *I have been instrumental in developing evidence by either gathering or creating or using that is used in funding applications and providing direction in program implementation.*
- *I co-developed and presented information for managers on locating and discerning the quality of research in our daily work.*
- *Facilitating broad projects. Submission of research to Ethics Board.*
- *Have done a couple of lit searches to provide background for an information request.*
- *Colonoscopy established as safe and competently handled in our practice.*
- *Individual project provided information to inform the work we are doing*

CONTRIBUTED TO GROUP AND COMMITTEE WORK

- *Increased skills allowed me to work effectively on a number of different teams within the organization.*

CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PROGRAMS OR INITIATIVES

- *Assisting to establish a regional research support team.*

NO CONTRIBUTIONS

- *I can't think of any contribution or impact.*
- *None specifically.*

SEARCH Participant Contributions to the Health System

The majority of survey respondents (n=8, 62%) did not describe contributions to the health system. For example:

- *None specifically.*
- *I can't claim to have impacted the health system in any significant way to date.*

The remaining respondents (n=5, 38%) described general contributions to the health system. For example, some participants reported health system contributions as a result of participating in various groups and committees. For example:

- *I have been an active member of the ARECCI Phase II and now Phase III project.*
- *My expertise on indicators have led me to sit on an expert working group called by the Health Quality Council of Alberta, Alberta Provincial Stroke Strategy and Alberta Health and Wellness.*
- *I believe I am better able to serve on the provincial and national committees I am on with a more balanced perspective.*

One participant described ongoing improvement in patient safety and evidence based practice. Another participant anticipated that the group project, once completed, may contribute to the health system.

Status of Individual Projects

The majority of survey respondents (n=11, 85%) had completed either a draft or final report based on their individual project at the time of follow-up (September 2006). One participant completed a poster presentation instead of a written report and one participant did not proceed beyond the project proposal phase of the individual project (see Table 11).

Table 11. Individual Projects: Status of Completion

ID	Status of Individual Project At Program Completion	Status of Individual Project At Follow-up
	(June 2005)	(September 2006)
1	Literature review completed	Draft report prepared
2	Draft report prepared	Draft report prepared
3	Final project report submitted	Final project report submitted
4	Project proposal developed	Draft report prepared
5	Final project report submitted	Final project report submitted
6	Final project report submitted	Final project report submitted
7	Final project report submitted	Final project report submitted
8	Final project report submitted	Final project report submitted
9	Draft report prepared	Draft report prepared
10	Project proposal developed	Project proposal developed (no further explanation provided)
11	Other (poster presentation)	Other (poster presentation)
12	Final project report submitted	Final project report submitted
13	Literature review completed	Final project report submitted

Dissemination of Findings from Individual Projects

Other Written Reports, Publications or Abstracts

The majority of survey respondents (n=12, 92%) reported that they had not produced other reports, publications, or abstracts based on their individual project (in addition to the SEARCH project report). One respondent reported “yes” to this question but did not provide citations or additional information.

Oral Presentations

More than one half of respondents (n=7, 54%) had not delivered oral presentations based on their individual SEARCH project. The remaining 46% (n=6) had delivered a variety of oral presentations based on their individual project. Types of oral presentations are outlined in Table 12.

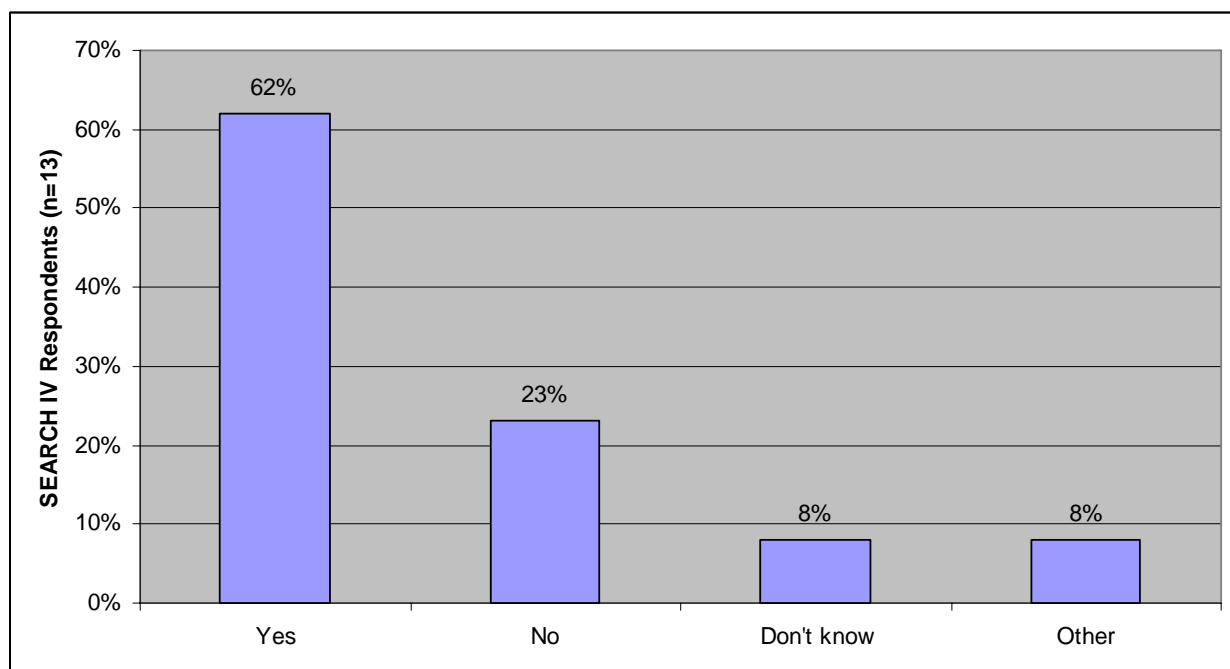
Table 12. Oral Presentations: Individual Projects

Type of Oral Presentation	Number	Description
Internal Presentations	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal presentations not further described
External Presentations	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Evaluation Network Annual Conference (2006) School of Nursing at local college Rural Research weekend (Canmore, October 2005)
Presentations to the Media	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations to the media not further described
Other Presentations	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations to policy makers

Perceived Impact of Individual Projects

The majority of SEARCH IV survey respondents (n=8, 62%) reported that findings from their individual projects were used in practice for decision making. The remaining respondents reported that findings were not used (n=3, 23%); that they did not know if findings were used (n=1, 8%); or “other” (n=1, 8%, project not completed). See Figure 1.

Figure 1. Use of Individual Project Findings for Decision Making



The following quotations illustrate how individual projects were used in practice for decision making:

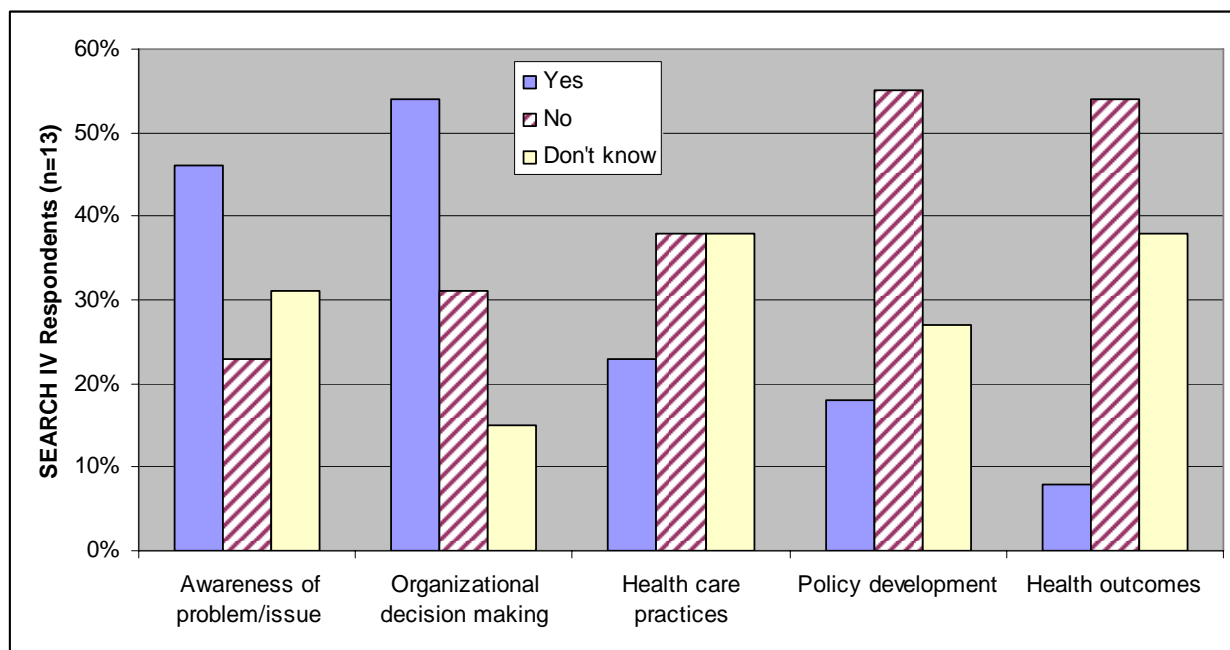
- *The project was presented to the public health nurses who used the information to examine their process of collecting consent. Information presented to parents was reviewed. The information was also used by the Policy and Procedure Coordinator when she was revising the regional policy on informed consent.*
- *My poster was up in our Strategic Planning days, in our Community Council forums.*
- *To support development of a research project.*
- *My project was used when an evaluation program was established in our health region.*
- *Though not completed, I have significantly changed how I do my work based on the findings of my literature review and subsequent readings.*
- *Safety and competency of colonoscopy established for our practice.*
- *Findings from individual project were used to inform work with population group, development of resources for target.*

Survey respondents were also asked to indicate whether or not individual projects had made an impact in any of the following areas:

- awareness of a problem/issue;
- organizational decision making;
- health care practices;
- policy development; and
- health outcomes.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the most commonly reported types of impact included “organizational decision making” (n=7, 54%) and “awareness of a problem/issue” (n=6, 46%).

Figure 2. Perceived Impact of Individual Projects



Reported examples within each category of impacts are provided below.

ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- *I find that my credibility as a participant in decision making has increased considerably and that deference is often given when I advocate on behalf of a particular program or organizational direction.*
- *Influenced the regional policy on informed consent.*
- *More support from the region for the (specific) procedure.*

AWARENESS OF A PROBLEM OR ISSUE

- *Quality indicators for colonoscopy*
- *(Increased awareness of the specific issue) based on the verbal feedback from people who attended the presentation*

HEALTH CARE PRACTICES

- *I don't feel that my work has a direct impact on health care practices, however, I feel that I am able on an individual level to be of greater assistance in enhancing individual capacity in considering their own health outcomes.*
- *Encouraged colonoscopy*

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- *On an organizational level, I have had opportunity to help in guiding policy in certain directions based on our increased knowledge of behaviour and its impact on individual health outcomes.*

HEALTH OUTCOMES

- *I feel that the skills gained in SEARCH and the knowledge gleaned from my literature review for my individual project has helped in making individual contacts/clients more aware of their own health outcomes.*

OTHER IMPACTS RELATED TO THE PROCESS OF COMPLETING THE INDIVIDUAL PROJECT

The majority of survey respondents (n=10, 77%) reported that the *process* of conducting an individual SEARCH project was beneficial even if the project was not completed as planned or when project findings were not used in practice.

Reported benefits attributed to the process of conducting the individual project included the following:

- *Learning how to do a lit search was more important than the content of the lit search. I recognize this and hope that my organization does too.*
- *Assisted me with doing a quick, organized literature review and assess 'state of the science' in many areas.*
- *The skills that I learned in completing the project have been used in my day to day work that benefits the organization.*

- *It was a solid example of a consistent and complete research process.*
- *The process was not important to the organization, doing it was helpful to me. The results were of benefit.*
- *For myself the information searching and critical appraisal of the evidence was an excellent learning experience.*

REASONS FOR IMPACT OR LACK OF IMPACT OF INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

Survey respondents were asked to comment on the key reasons individual projects did or did not make an impact. Reported barriers and facilitators are summarized in Table 13.

Table 13. Barriers and Facilitators to Individual Project Impact

Reasons for individual project impact	Reasons for lack of individual project impact
Relevant information (e.g., "my project was relevant to my daily work")	Organizational change (e.g., "the organization changed so much during the 2 years [amalgamation, departments moved in org chart, 3 or 4 different managers] that the organization was too busy trying to keep things going to be concerned with a project that no longer had relevance for my department given our new focus.")
Focused literature review (e.g., "the literature review was helpful")	Final report not yet provided / project not completed

Other Comments Regarding SEARCH Individual Projects

Very few survey respondents provided additional comments regarding their individual project. The following three additional comments were provided:

- *Faculty advisors contributions to the projects varied so much from faculty member to faculty member. I am quite jealous of those who had a faculty member who was very involved in their project (not the content, but the how to do a project part). I realize that it's a 2 way street, but some faculty were more helpful than others.*
- *It was a valuable exercise for me personally.*
- *It went well. I feel bad that I did not publish. I felt there were too many hurdles to jump through.*

Status of Group Projects

Of the five group projects listed on the SEARCH Desktop, three groups had prepared draft (1) or final (2) reports at the time of follow-up (see Table 14).

Table 14. SEARCH Group Projects: Status of Completion

Group Project	Number of Survey Respondents	Status of Group Project At Program Completion (June 2005)	Status of Group Project At Follow-up (September 2006)	Additional Comments / Explanation
Front Line Change Agents	0	Not reported	Not reported	None of the SIV survey respondents identified the "Front Line Change Agents" project as their group project.
Information Technology	2	Project proposal developed (1) and data collection underway (1)	Data collection underway (2)	--
Patient Safety	4	Unclear. Respondents provided different recollections regarding the status of the group project at program completion including "data analysis completed" (1); "draft report prepared" (2); and "final project report submitted" (1).	Respondents also provided different comments regarding the current status of the group project including "draft report prepared" (1); and "final project report submitted" (3).	--
Primary Care	1	Draft report prepared (1)	Draft report prepared (1)	--
RAVE Methods	5	Data analysis underway (4) or draft report prepared (1)	Final project report submitted (5)	--
Project Title Not Stated	1	--	--	--
Total	13			

One respondent expressed frustration regarding lack of clear direction regarding how to submit the final report.

Dissemination of Findings from Group Projects

Other Reports, Publications or Abstracts

The majority of survey respondents (n=10, 77%) reported that they had not produced other reports, publications, or abstracts based on their individual project (in addition to the SEARCH project report). Three respondents reported “yes” to this question although only one respondent provided additional information. An abstract and final paper was submitted to a peer reviewed journal for one of the group projects. The same group project report was also used to prepare an internal health region report.

Oral Presentations

The majority of survey respondents (n=8, 62%) had not delivered oral presentations based on the SEARCH group project. The remaining respondents (n=5, 38%) reported a variety of oral presentations as illustrated in Table 15 below.

Table 15. Oral Presentations: Group Projects

Type of Oral Presentation	Number of Presentations	Description
Internal Presentations	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some results presented at the interdepartmental communication session in conjunction with the results of the regional replication of the project.
External Presentations	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not stated
Presentations to the Media	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not applicable
Other Presentations	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not applicable

Perceived Impact of Group Projects

The majority of survey respondents reported that findings from group projects were either not used in practice for decision making (n=6, 46%) or they did not know if findings were used (n=3, 38%). One respondent reported “other” and further explained that the group project was not yet complete.

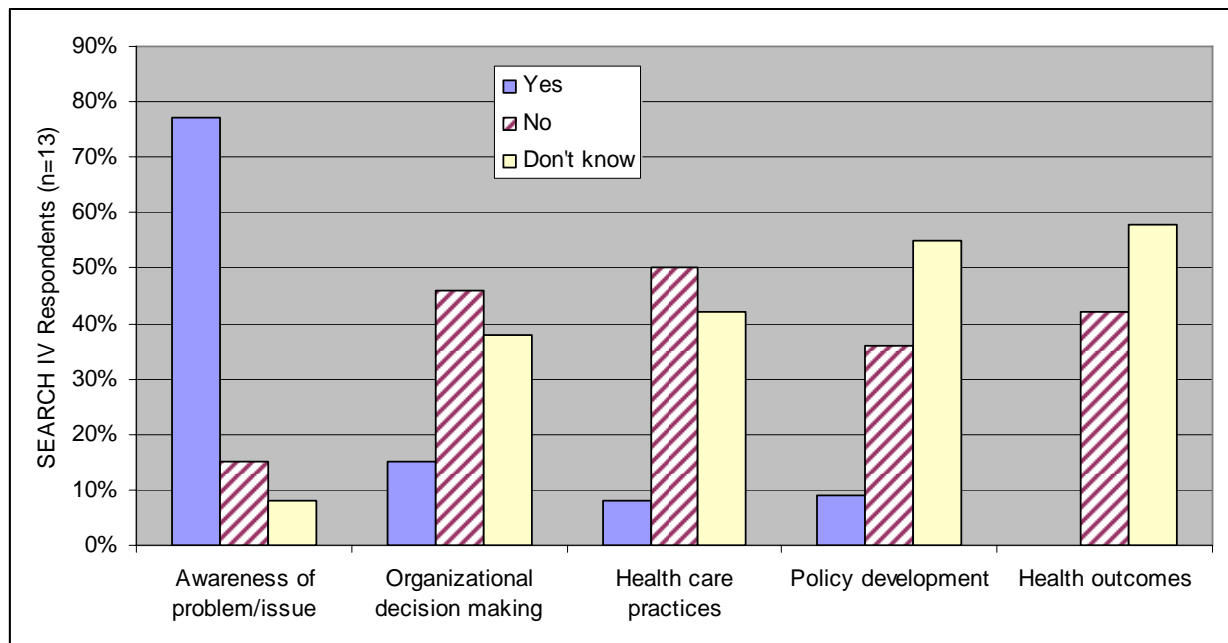
Only one respondent reported that findings from the group project were used in practice for decision making: *“We are using the material as we develop a meaningful community development process in our health region”.*

Survey respondents were also asked to indicate whether or not group projects had made an impact in any of the following areas:

- awareness of a problem/issue;
- organizational decision making;
- health care practices;
- policy development; and
- health outcomes.

As illustrated in Figure 3, the most common type of reported impact was increased awareness of a problem or issue. Ten respondents (77%) reported that their group project had increased awareness of a problem or issue. Very few respondents reported impacts in any of the other areas.

Figure 3. Perceived Impact of Group Project Findings



AWARENESS OF A PROBLEM/ISSUE

- *Highlighted the large volume of information related to program evaluation and the fact that there is more than one approach which might be considered.*

ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION MAKING

- *It affected the decision of the region to go ahead and support a regional replication of the project.*

HEALTH CARE PRACTICES

One respondent reported “yes”, the group project had influenced health care practices, but did not provide additional explanation.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- *Care over our electronic medical record that it is not encumbered with access issues.*

OTHER IMPACTS RELATED TO THE *PROCESS OF COMPLETING THE GROUP PROJECT*

The majority of survey respondents (n=9, 69%) reported that the *process* of conducting the SEARCH group project was beneficial even if the project was not completed as planned or when project findings were not used in practice. For example:

- *It was a key learning experience in group functioning and dynamics, the detailed process of obtaining ethics approval, and the intricacies and time involved in doing research and report writing.*
- *Learned more about group processes/group dynamics, working with others across the province. Have since been involved in provincial groups (both within discipline and multi-disciplinary) and the process provided input and experience in this regard*
- *Wonderful networking, positive experience*
- *There are 3 learnings from the group project: how to work in a group; how to do a project; the content of the project. I have learned things about all 3.*
- *It was a tremendous learning experience for me and it then allowed me to assume a leadership role in replicating the project. We were able to conduct the data collection and analysis independently due to the learning and guides (coding manual) that we had produced through the SEARCH project.*
- *It was a great learning experience in group dynamics*

However, not all respondents attributed benefits to the process of completing the group project. The remaining four participants (31%) did not report positive benefits as a result of the group process. One respondent described various challenges and tensions that created a difficult and less than beneficial group process. For example:

- *The dynamics of the large group were in continuous flux. In my view, it was difficult to establish leadership from within the group and there was some confusion as to what it was we were trying to accomplish with the project and what the final product (if any) would be. The deadlines and expectations of the final months of the project became very difficult to meet and I questioned the value of my contribution to the process. In the end, I am uncertain if the outcome of the project is of much use to our organization.*

Several additional comments regarding the group projects pertained to the challenges associated with group process, group size, struggling to complete projects after the end of the two year program, lack of geographical proximity among participants, and lack of clarity regarding project goals and intended outcomes. For example:

- *I found the group project to be a very difficult process. The participants were based in three distinct areas of the province and could only meet as a group in module or periodically in Calgary. There were several videoconferences to augment this shortcoming. However, in my view, there was not a lot of clarity around the outcome of the project and I had some difficulty wavering between unclear objectives. The faculty was a suitable fit for the project, however, some of our confusion may have rubbed off on them, prompting an analytical approach that didn't quite gel with my thinking.*
- *There were challenges in completing the project once the SEARCH conference was over. Everyone was so involved with their work that it was difficult to get the commitment to complete the final product. Some group members disengaged before others so the workload became unbalanced in a group that had originally worked very well together. It is very hard to find the motivation to complete when there are other priorities. Faculty weren't as available to comment due I'm sure to their commitments.*
- *Proximity of participants to each other was an issue for me. Also a slow start and lack of clarity presented issues.*
- *Group project size should be limited to 4-5. Our group was too large to work effectively together. Breaking into 2 smaller groups was beneficial, but these 2 groups were not always on the same page to process or understanding of what the other was doing. It was difficult to have advisors in different locations who often had different recommendations.*

Perceived Barriers to Group Project Impact

Reported **barriers** to group project impact are outlined in Table 16.

Table 16. Barriers to Group Project Impact

Category	Illustrative Quotation
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Timing such that our project was common-place information at conclusion.</i> ▪ <i>Was a bit lengthy in time, from start to finish, most organizations want the information a lot faster!</i>
Project Not Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Still not complete.</i>
Project Topic Not Relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Not key focus during the period.</i>
More Interest In Local Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>There has not been a lot of interest in the results of the aggregate information from the group project in the region. They were more interested in the local results.</i>
Lack of Sufficient Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>We did not collect enough data.</i>
Scope of Findings (Too Narrow/Basic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Findings really were too basic</i> ▪ <i>I think that the project had less impact than we originally envisioned primarily because the focus started broad and was narrowed considerably related to time constraints and resources (human).</i>
Group Process Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The group was large and that contributed to communication barriers and conflicts at times as well as impacting the ability to reach consensus on various aspects of the data collection, analysis and report writing.</i>

New Projects

The majority of respondents (n=9, 69%) had engaged in new project-based investigations (e.g., research, evaluation, or quality improvement projects) since the completion of the two-year SEARCH program (see Table 17).

Table 17. Types of New Projects

Type of New Project	Topic/Area of Investigation
Evaluation Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation of a tobacco policy ▪ Evaluation of postpartum resources ▪ Evaluation of injury prevention program ▪ Evaluation of specific programs with area of responsibility
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internal surveys of health region committees ▪ Various questionnaires/surveys
Other Projects and Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Patient database ▪ Major quality site improvement initiative ▪ Accreditation review ▪ Perception of Patient Safety ▪ Needs assessment of crystal methamphetamine users and risk of HIV transmission in a specific population ▪ Review of types of staffing and patient populations ▪ Healthy systems related projects ▪ Piloting and implementing the Continuing Care Desktop ▪ Focus groups

SEARCH IV respondents filled a variety of roles in new projects (see Table 18). The most commonly reported roles included leadership and facilitation roles.

Table 18. Roles of SEARCH Participants in New Projects

Role	#
Leader/lead investigator/project manager	7
Facilitator	3
Analyst	2
Literature review	1
Co-investigator	1
Advisory committee member	1

Many respondents attributed these roles to their participation in SEARCH. For example:

- *I became more involved in these endeavours in direct relationship to my SEARCH preparation.*
- *I have learned through experience all of the skills that I have used in these projects were acquired through the SEARCH program.*

Respondents reported that participation in SEARCH had prepared them for these roles through developing increased confidence and increased skills. For example:

- *Increased confidence. Leadership skills.*
- *Provided confidence, and skills*
- *I have gained the needed skills to move these projects forward in a scholarly, professional manner.*
- *Increased skill to choose evidence.*

However, some respondents reported that SEARCH participation had not prepared them, or had only minimally prepared them, for these roles. For example:

- *I am not certain that SEARCH actually prepared me for the role of project leader. Members of the advisory team would report that they felt out of the loop on the project and did not totally buy in.*
- *Minimally*

Respondent Demographic Information

All respondents (n=13, 100%) were **still in Alberta (12) or Saskatchewan (1)** and working in the **health sector** at the time of the follow-up survey.

All respondents reported employment with the **same organization** (n=13, 100%) from the time they started the SEARCH program. The majority of respondents were employed with health regions (n=11, 85%). The remaining two participants were employed with federal or provincial government (n=1, 8%) or not-for-profit agency (n=1, 8%).

Fifty-four percent of respondents (n=7) were from primarily urban geographic locations. One participant was from a primarily rural location. The remaining participants (n=5, 38%) were from regions described as “rural/urban mix”.

Forty-six percent of respondents (n=6) had **changed job positions** once or twice (including changes within the same organization) since the beginning of participation in SEARCH.

In comparison to the type of positions reported at the beginning of SEARCH IV, a slight increase in the number of “Information/Research” positions was reported at the time of follow-up (see Table 19).

Illustrative comments regarding the nature of position changes included the following:

- *Eclectic project needs from various stakeholders in senior management.*
- *Role has changed because of changes in the organization, not because of SEARCH. Now have more of a relationship with Senior Management providing information for them*
- *My position has become much more organizationally focused instead of client focused. I have become a support person for many departments in the organization. I have been given lots of latitude in becoming involved in projects locally and provincially which are not directly in the scope of my position.*
- *Given the experience gained through SEARCH, we created a position that would better fit the increase in skills.*
- *Within the same framework, however, more emphasis on analyzing, and now my role has moved from helping front line and front line managers to assisting the executive level with their decisions*
- *Change from management focus in Community Care to Health Analyst, primarily focusing on issues in Long Term Care.*
- *Emphasis now on evaluation, process versus specific content area.*

Table 19. Position Changes Reported by SEARCH IV Respondents

Role Category	Beginning of SEARCH IV (2003)	SEARCH IV follow-up (2006)
Information/Research	23% (3)	46% (6)
Management	31% (4)	31% (4)
Clinical/Front Line	23% (3)	15% (2)
Other	23% (3)	8% (1)
Total	100% (13)	100% (13)

Survey respondents reported a range of educational attainment including diploma (n=2, 17%), bachelors degree (n=5, 42%) and masters degree (n=5, 42%). Three respondents (23%) reported initiation of new degree programs (including two masters programs and one doctoral program). Academic institutions included the University of Alberta, Athabasca University, and the University of Phoenix. In addition, three respondents had completed additional course work in research and evaluation methods since completion of the SEARCH program.

Additional Comments

In closing, respondents were asked to provide any additional comments regarding the impact of SEARCH. Most responses positively described the SEARCH experience. For example:

- *My involvement in SEARCH had a tremendous impact on me as an individual and my organization. At the beginning of the SEARCH program in [my region], I was in awe of what was taking place and almost convinced that I had over-reached and perhaps would have to admit that I was not up to the task. However, as the modules came and went and the materials began to sink in and fit together, I found that the processes were weaving themselves into my job and the way in which I was contributing to our organization and to the movement surrounding the disease we specialize in. Evidence and the use of evidence has priority in all of my work and moving between broad theory and specific implication has become an intrinsic part of my analysis of community development and health.*
- *SEARCH has had a significant impact on my professional and my personal life. I have become more proficient and confident through my SEARCH education and have also made some great friends and met new colleagues that I interact with on a regular basis. I have sought other opportunities related to research in an applied setting and have recently pursued other job opportunities based on the interests I gained during SEARCH. Colleagues and faculty members have been a great encouragement, and are always there to provide further support and guidance. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to take part in this experience, which I consider to be on-going!*
- *It is hard to capture all of the benefits of SEARCH in this evaluation. It has impacted my life personally on so many levels including but not limited to socially and professionally. The confidence that I have in my ability to share some of the skills that I acquired and continue to practice has improved dramatically. I believe that I have been able to increase my value to the organization and therefore repay them for the opportunity...SEARCH was probably one of the highlights of my professional career. Although I have returned to university to further my education it will never measure up to the experience that SEARCH was. I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity.*

Summary of Key Findings

A summary of key findings for each evaluation question is presented next.

WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS THE PROGRAM MADE FOR PARTICIPANTS?

Participation in the SEARCH Classic program has been consistently rated as a beneficial experience by previous program participants. SEARCH IV respondents described a broad range of impacts including increased networks and connections; increased access to resources (such as the SEARCH Desktop, the expertise of faculty members and other SEARCH participants); increased confidence and leadership skills; ability to influence organization decision making; career development; and increased research skills and competencies.

HOW DO PARTICIPANTS USE THE INTERPERSONAL NETWORKS ESTABLISHED THROUGH SEARCH?

It has been well established that program participants from all cohorts continue to use the interpersonal networks established through SEARCH. The majority of SEARCH IV survey respondents reported ongoing contact within the SEARCH network. All respondents (100%) reported contact with at least one member of the network after completing the residential modules. The most frequent type of contact reported by SEARCH IV participants occurred within their own cohort. More than half of the SEARCH IV survey respondents reported monthly or weekly contact with fellow SEARCH IV participants.

The most common reasons for contacting members of the SEARCH network after the residential modules included requests for information, follow-up regarding SEARCH group projects, and provision of information.

The quality of relationships within the network was generally characterized as positive and enduring despite an overall decrease in frequency of contact upon completion of the residential modules.

While increased networks emerged as one of the most positive impacts of SEARCH participation overall, a few participants were much less satisfied with the quality of relationships after the end of the two-year program. Some participants described challenges with other participants and SEARCH faculty members and reported lesser quality relationships as a result. Challenges or tensions were often associated with the process of completing a group project after the end of the two-year program.

TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE SKILLS ACQUIRED THROUGH SEARCH BEEN APPLIED IN PRACTICE?

The majority of SEARCH IV survey respondents reported that they continued to use the skills acquired through SEARCH on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis. The most frequently applied skills included those related to collaborating and participating in groups and networks: 73% of respondents applied these skills on a weekly or daily basis. Other skills applied on a weekly or daily basis included those related to "being a scholar practitioner" (72%); information management and information technology (67%); being a change agent in ones current work environment (66%); using evidence (66%); and choosing evidence (56%).

A scholar practitioner was defined as "a person who, through their training and experience, combines two realms traditionally separated and often seen as opposites: scholar and practitioner. These individuals incorporate scientific approaches of knowledge making and

knowledge use, while being grounded in the everyday endeavor of service delivery or product manufacture."

The majority of respondents reported sufficient autonomy (72%) as well as support from colleagues (67%), supervisors (61%) and organizations (72%) to use the skills acquired through SEARCH.

However, lack of time has persisted as a commonly identified barrier to application of skills in practice. Less than half of respondents (39%) reported sufficient time to apply skills in practice. In contrast, however, some participants noted that SEARCH skills had become integrated in their day to day work.

TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE SEARCH PROJECT FINDINGS BEEN DISSEMINATED?

The majority of survey respondents (85%) had completed either a draft or final report based on their individual project at the time of follow-up. Almost half of respondents (46%) had further disseminated findings through a variety of oral presentations including both internal (e.g., departmental presentations) and external audiences (e.g., conference presentations, workshops).

Most respondents (92%) had not further disseminated the findings of their SEARCH project through journal publications, abstracts or other written reports.

Of the five SEARCH IV group projects listed on the SEARCH Desktop, three groups had prepared draft (1) or final reports (2) at the time of follow-up. The results from one group project were submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication. A few respondents (n=5) had further disseminated group project findings via oral presentations (primarily departmental or interdepartmental communications within organizations).

IN WHAT WAYS HAVE FINDINGS FROM SEARCH PROJECTS BEEN USED FOR DECISION-MAKING?

Findings from individual projects completed by SEARCH IV participants were more likely to be used for decision-making than findings from group projects. Sixty-two percent of respondents reported that findings from individual projects were used in practice for decision making. In contrast, only one survey respondent reported that findings from the group project were used in practice for decision making.

Individual project findings supported decisions related to informed consent, development of research and evaluation projects, strategic planning, clinical practice, and the development of resources for specific population groups.

Facilitators to the use of individual project findings included relevance of the project (to the organization or department) and focused nature of the literature review. Barriers to the use of individual project findings included incomplete projects and organizational changes that resulted in decreased relevance of the individual project.

The majority of survey respondents reported that the process of conducting both the individual and group SEARCH projects was beneficial even if the project was not completed as planned or when project findings were not used in practice. The skills developed through the process of completing projects were used extensively in practice (e.g. literature search skills, knowledge of the research process, and understanding of group dynamics).

However, not all respondents attributed benefits to the process of conducting the group project. Four respondents reported various challenges and tensions that created difficult group experiences. Challenges pertained to group dynamics, group size, struggling to complete projects after the end of the two year program, lack of geographical proximity among participants, and lack of clarity regarding project goals and intended outcomes.

Reported barriers to group project impact included timing, incomplete projects, lack of relevance of the project topic to the organization, lack of sufficient data, limited scope of findings, and group process challenges.

Recommendations to SEARCH Canada

1. Given that interpersonal connections established through the SEARCH network have been consistently reported among the most important impacts of SEARCH participation, continue to **support the growth and development of the SEARCH network**. Nurture and support opportunities for both formal and informal interactions.
2. Given that previous participants across all SEARCH cohorts have attributed increased confidence and leadership skills to SEARCH participation, **further explore the leadership development aspect of SEARCH Classic**. For example, encourage conscious reflection regarding SEARCH participants as current and/or future health system leaders recognizing that leadership can take many forms (e.g., leading by example from within ones department).
3. Given the challenges associated with completing group projects after the two-year program, **strongly encourage and/or require completion of SEARCH projects within the two-year time frame**. If projects are not completed at the time of the bi-annual SEARCH conference, a written status report should be requested from the group outlining the reasons for non-completion and any barriers experienced. Details regarding the current status of each group project (whether completed or not) should be updated in the Desktop to facilitate future follow-up and evaluation.
4. Given the identified barriers to using findings from group projects in practice (including timing, incomplete projects, lack of relevance of the project topic to the organization, lack of sufficient data, limited scope of findings, and group process challenges), **revisit the structure, process, and intended outcomes of the group project task within the SEARCH curriculum**. Continue to work with key stakeholders (including sponsoring organizations, supervisors, and SEARCH participants) to ensure that group projects are relevant, completed in a timely fashion, sufficient in scope (neither too broad nor too narrow). Consider maximum group sizes to reduce challenges associated with group dynamics in larger groups.
5. Given the high completion rate and use of findings from individual projects in practice, **continue with the current format for individual projects**. Build on identified success factors (e.g., relevance of topic, appropriate focus) to sustain the benefits of individual project completion.
6. Given the time, energy, and commitment required to complete individual and group projects, **continue to support SEARCH participants interested in further disseminating findings after completion of the two-year program**. Request dissemination plans (including

intended dissemination activities and supports required) from each participant at the end of the two-year time frame and document plans in the SEARCH Desktop.

7. Given that lack of time has persisted as a commonly identified barrier to application of skills in practice, **continue to address ways to integrate SEARCH skills in day-to-day work.**
8. Given the positive and constructive feedback provided by the majority of participants, **celebrate successes of the SEARCH program and continue to address challenges.**

Concluding Comments and Next Steps

The SEARCH Classic program continues to be rated highly by previous program participants. SEARCH participation has resulted in a range of individual-level impacts including increased personal and professional networks, increased confidence to participate in and lead knowledge generating projects, and increased skill development in choosing, using, and creating evidence. Survey findings also suggest a number of areas for program improvement, including increased support in finalizing projects and addressing challenges associated with group project completion and relevance of findings.

Note: Next steps in the finalization of this report include review of report by SEARCH Canada staff and SIV participants, followed by incorporation of any additional feedback and posting of the report on the SEARCH Desktop.

Appendix A: Survey Questions

SECTION A: Application of Skills in Current Work Environment

The SEARCH program is designed to develop competencies in choosing, using, and creating evidence and to build foundational skills in information management/information technology, collaborating and participating in groups and networks, and personal and professional development as a change agent and scholar practitioner. Please rate the extent to which you use these skills in your current work environment.

1. To what extent do you currently use skills related to....

	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
1a. ... choosing evidence (e.g., information searching and retrieval, critical appraisal, research syntheses, etc.) in your current work environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1b. ... using evidence (e.g., managing the interface of research and practice, organizational change and change management, etc.) in your current work environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1c. ... creating evidence (e.g., research design, data analysis, developing and funding research projects, etc.) in your current work environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1d. ... information management & information technology in your current work environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1e. ... collaborating and participating in groups and networks in your current work environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1f.being a change agent in your current work environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1g. ... being a scholar practitioner in your current work environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. To what extent has your responsibility for each of the following areas changed, if at all, from the time you started the two-year SEARCH program until now?

	Decreased Substantially	Decreased	Neutral/ Stayed Same	Increased	Increased Substantially	DOES NOT APPLY
2a. ...responsibility for choosing evidence (e.g., information searching and retrieval, critical appraisal, research syntheses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2b. ...responsibility for using evidence (e.g., managing the interface of research and practice, organizational change and change management)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2c. ... responsibility for creating evidence (e.g., research design, data analysis, developing and funding research projects)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2d. ...responsibility for information management & information technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2e. ...responsibility for collaborating and participating in groups and networks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For any question (above) where you answered "Increased" or "Increased Substantially" please describe how your responsibility increased. For example, what did you become responsible for? Please provide specific examples.

3. Please rate the extent to which you have organizational support and opportunity to use the skills acquired through SEARCH in your current work environment. (Support could include practical types of support such as time, resources, etc., as well as psychological support such as encouragement and recognition for use of skills.)

Currently.....	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ No Change	Agree	Strongly Agree
3a... I receive support from colleagues to use skills acquired during SEARCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3b... I receive support from my direct supervisor to use skills acquired during SEARCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3c... My organization is supportive of research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3d... I have sufficient autonomy to use the skills acquired through SEARCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3e... I have sufficient time to use the skills acquired through SEARCH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION B: Utilization of the SEARCH Network

Now we would like to ask a few questions about the use and development of the SEARCH network. SEARCH Canada would like to better understand the ways in which the overall SEARCH network is used and how it has developed over time. The SEARCH network is broadly defined as connections between health care professionals, researchers, policy-makers and decision-makers established directly or indirectly through SEARCH.

4. Do you currently use the **interpersonal networks** established through SEARCH?

- Yes
 No
 Other (please explain) _____

5. On average, over the past two years, how often have you contacted the following types of members of the SEARCH network?

Note: We recognize that it may be difficult to estimate frequency of contact over a two-year period. Responses will be considered rough approximations that may more accurately fluctuate over time. The question is important because it will enable comparisons with data collected from within your own cohort (SEARCH IV participants) at the midpoint of the two-year program and will help to further understand how the SEARCH network is used.

	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
5a. SEARCH faculty members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5b. Research Development Advisors (RDAs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5c. Other university faculty or staff (i.e., indirectly connected through SEARCH but not SEARCH faculty members)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5d. Fellow SEARCH IV participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5e. Participants from other SEARCH cohorts (i.e., SEARCH I, II, III, or V)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5f. SEARCH Program Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5g. Other individuals (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. For what reasons did you usually contact each of the above categories of members? Please check ALL that apply.

	To follow-up regarding SEARCH individual projects	To follow-up regarding SEARCH group projects	To request advice regarding research methods	To request other types of advice (please specify below)	To request information	To provide information	To discuss new research ideas/ identify possible projects	To obtain new contacts*	For social reasons	Other reasons (please specify below)
6a. SEARCH faculty members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6b. Research Development Advisors (RDAs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6c. Other university faculty or staff (i.e., indirectly connected through SEARCH but not SEARCH faculty members)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6d. Fellow SEARCH IV participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6e. Participants from other SEARCH cohorts (i.e., SEARCH I, II, or III, or V)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6f. SEARCH Program Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6g. Other individuals (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*For example: to request contact information for individuals or staff members with responsibility for a given content area by first contacting someone connected through SEARCH.

Please note: The next question pertains to your **overall experience** within the SEARCH network. While it is likely that your contact has increased with some individuals and decreased with others, the question pertains globally to your perceived contact within the network. Please think back to your level of contact within the network during the two-year program but **outside of the residential modules**. That is, do not include contact time during the residential modules.

7. In your experience, has your overall level of contact with individuals through the SEARCH network increased or decreased since completion of the two-year program? (not including contact time during the residential modules)
- Significantly decreased
 - Decreased
 - No change
 - Increased
 - Significantly increased
 - Other: please explain _____

8. In your overall experience, how would you describe the quality of relationships within the SEARCH network over time?

SECTION C: Personal and Professional Development

9. To what extent did your SEARCH involvement influence the development of your career after SEARCH?

- Major negative influence
 Negative influence
 Neutral/no influence
 Positive influence
 Major positive influence

10. Please explain your answer.

11. Please rate the extent to which the following areas of potential impact apply to you. Categories were derived from previous SEARCH participant surveys as well as published studies regarding the impact of continuing professional development programs.

	Significantly Decreased	Decreased	Neutral/ No Change	Increased	Significantly Increased	Not applicable
To what extent have the following potential areas of impact decreased or increased since you completed the two-year SEARCH program?						
a. ... job satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. ...leadership skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. ...ability to influence organizational decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. ...value to my organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.... respect and recognition from colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f... respect and recognition from employers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g... personal networks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h... professional networks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i ... ability to choose evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j... ability to use evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k... ability to create evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 11b. What has been the most positive impact for you *at an individual level* that has resulted from your participation in SEARCH thus far? This could include expected or unexpected impacts.

Some potential adverse outcomes of SEARCH participation have also been identified through surveys and focus group discussions conducted with other SEARCH cohorts. Participants have reported that participation in SEARCH sometimes resulted in tension with employers (e.g., regarding ongoing time commitments or lack of opportunity to use skills acquired through SEARCH); tension with colleagues (e.g., regarding time spent out of the office to participate in residential modules); increased workloads and increased demands on time (e.g., workloads may have increased as a result of the new skills acquired through SEARCH).

12. During the two-year program, to what extent did you experience the following?

Participation in the SEARCH program resulted in....	Not at all	Somewhat	A great deal
a. ... tension with my employer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. ...tension with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. ... increased workload	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. ... increased demands on my time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. a) To what extent do the above apply today?
b) Have you experienced any additional challenges or adverse outcomes as a result of SEARCH participation (beyond the examples such as tension or workload provided above)?
14. Please provide an example of a contribution or impact you have made to your organization that was facilitated by SEARCH.
15. Please provide an example of a contribution or impact you have made to your organization that was facilitated by SEARCH.

SECTION D: Dissemination and Application of Findings Emerging from SEARCH Projects

Individual Projects

The next several questions pertain **only** to your SEARCH individual project. Thus, please consider only your **individual project** for your responses. Questions regarding the SEARCH group projects are included in a separate section.

16. Please indicate the status of your **individual** SEARCH project (a) at the time of the June 2003 SEARCH conference, and (b) now.

XX update the response categories

	(a) June 2005 SEARCH Conference <i>(select one only)</i>	(b) now <i>(select one only)</i>
Topic identified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Question determined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project proposal developed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Literature review initiated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Literature review complete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Draft report prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Final report submitted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please explain)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Have you produced any **journal publications, abstracts, or other written reports** based on your individual SEARCH project?

- Yes (if yes, go to list of options - below)
 No (if no, go to next question)

If yes, please specify the number of reports for each of the following categories.

<input type="checkbox"/> # peer-reviewed journal publications	
<input type="checkbox"/> # non peer-reviewed journal publications	
<input type="checkbox"/> # abstracts	
<input type="checkbox"/> # other reports	

18. Have you delivered **oral presentations** based on your individual SEARCH project?

- Yes (if yes, go to list of options – below)
 No (if no, go to next question)

<input type="checkbox"/> # internal presentations (i.e., within your organization)	
<input type="checkbox"/> # external presentations (e.g., conference presentations, specify title/date)	
<input type="checkbox"/> # media presentations	
<input type="checkbox"/> # other presentations (please specify)	

19. Were findings from your individual SEARCH project used in practice for decision-making?

- Yes <If yes, please provide specific examples.>
 No <If no, what were the barriers to using your SEARCH project findings for decision-making?>
 Don't Know
 Other <Please explain>

20. Did your individual project make an impact in any of the following areas? PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Yes (please provide examples below)</i>
Health outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health care practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizational decision making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Awareness of a problem/issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. a) Previous participants have reported that the impact of SEARCH projects was not always associated with specific findings. Rather, it was often the process of conducting the project that made a difference for participants and organizations. With this in mind, in what ways – if any – did the process of conducting an individual SEARCH project impact you or your organization?

b) Please comment on the key reasons your project did or did not make an impact.

22. Do you have any additional comments regarding your SEARCH individual project?

Group Projects

The next several questions pertain only to your SEARCH group project. Thus, please consider only your group project for your responses.

23. Please select your group project.

- Front-Line Change Agents
- Information Technology
- Patient Safety
- Primary Care
- RAVE Methods

24. Please indicate the status of your SEARCH **group** project (a) at the time of the June 2005 SEARCH conference, and (b) now.

	(a) June 2005 SEARCH Conference <i>(select one only)</i>	(b) now <i>(select one only)</i>
Topic identified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Question determined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Literature review completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project proposal developed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethics review completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data collection underway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data collection completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data analysis underway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data analysis completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Draft report prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Final project report submitted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please explain)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

25. Have you produced any **journal publications, abstracts, or other written reports** based on your group project?

- Yes (if yes, go to list of options - below)
- No (if no, go to next question)

If yes, please specify the number of reports for each of the following categories.

▪ # peer-reviewed journal publications	
▪ # non peer-reviewed journal publications	
▪ # abstracts	
▪ # other reports	

26. Have you delivered **oral presentations** based on your group project?

- Yes (if yes, go to list of options – below)
 No (if no, go to next question)

▪ # internal presentations (i.e., within your organization)	
▪ # external presentations (e.g., conference presentations, specify title/date)	
▪ # media presentations	
▪ # other presentations (please specify)	

27. Were findings from your group project used in practice for decision-making?

- Yes <If yes, please provide specific examples.>
 No <If no, what were the barriers to using your SEARCH project findings for decision-making?>
 Don't Know
 Other <Please explain>

28. Did your group project make an impact in any of the following areas? PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Yes (please provide examples below)</i>
Health outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health care practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizational decision making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Awareness of a problem/issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. a) In what ways – if any – did the process of conducting your group project impact you or your organization?

b) Please comment on the key reasons your project did or did not make an impact.

30. Do you have any additional comments regarding your group project?

New Projects

31. Have you engaged in new projects since the completion of the two-year SEARCH program? This does not have to be "SEARCH project" but refers generally to involvement in new project-based investigations (e.g., research, evaluation, quality improvement, etc.). Yes No

32. If yes, please provide specific examples of the **types of new projects** within which you have been involved.

33. Please provide examples of the **types of roles** you have undertaken in the new projects (e.g., leadership, facilitator, analyst, participant, etc).

34. To what extent, if any, did your SEARCH participation prepare you for these roles?

SECTION E: Demographic Information

35. Thinking back to the beginning of your participation in the SEARCH program...			
a...are you still with the same organization (from the time you started SEARCH)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain)
b...are you still in Alberta?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain)
c...are you still working in the health sector?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain)

36. Also thinking back to the beginning of your participation in the SEARCH program....

a) Have you changed your job position (including changes within the same organization) since the beginning of your participation in SEARCH? Yes No

b) If yes, how many position changes have you had? Specify #: _____

37. Which if the following categories best describes the primary function of your job at the onset of the SEARCH program and now?

	<i>At the beginning of SEARCH IV (2003)</i>	<i>Now</i>
	<i>Select only one</i>	<i>Select only one</i>
Information/Research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clinical/Front Line	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

38. How would you characterize your position changes, if any, since the beginning of the SEARCH? (e.g., unique shifts in emphasis or responsibility not yet described.)

39. Which of the following categories best describes your place of employment at the onset of the SEARCH program and now?

	<i>At the beginning of SEARCH IV (2003)</i>	<i>Now</i>
	<i>Select only one</i>	<i>Select only one</i>
Health region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Municipality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal or provincial government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic institution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not-for-profit agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private/consulting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please explain)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

40. We know that there is debate regarding the classification of rural, urban, and combined rural/urban communities. For the purposes of survey analyses, please select one of the following categories that best describes the geographic location of your primary place of employment. If not employed, please select the geographic location of your primary place of residence.

- Primarily Rural
- Primarily Urban
- Rural/Urban Mix
- Other (please explain) _____

41. What was your **highest level of educational attainment** at the end of the two-year SEARCH program (June 2005)?

- Diploma
- Bachelors Degree
- Masters Degree
- Doctorate
- Other (please specify)

42. a) Have you initiated or completed a **degree program** since the end of the two-year SEARCH program?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please specify:

- Bachelors program initiated
- Bachelors program completed
- Masters program initiated
- Masters program completed
- Doctoral program initiated
- Doctoral program completed
- Other (please specify)

b) If degree program initiated, please specify academic institution.

43. Have you initiated or completed **additional coursework or training** (i.e., courses not part of a formal degree program) since the end of the two-year SEARCH program?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please specify:

- Computer/software
- Management/leadership
- Proposal writing
- Research/evaluation methods
- Other (please specify) _____