

BC Environmental and Occupational Health Research Network GIS Group

Informal minutes: August 24, 2007

Attendees:

Mieke Buller (BCCDC, GIS)

Sunny Mak (BCCDC, GIS)

Eleanor Setton (UVIC PhD student)

Anders Erickson (UNBC student)

Brendan Mather (VIHA)

Meghan Winters (UBC PhD student)

General discussion:

- A number of us will be attending the upcoming CPHA conference in Ottawa (Sept 16-19 – Sunny, Anders, Meghan, Christine, Brendan, Carlos, Dawn, Eleanor, others?). Items for action:
 - Christine suggested (via email prior to call) that we arrange a time to meet as a group – Tuesday Sept 18th for lunch or early evening seemed to be the best options. Eleanor will send email to group looking for best time and to provide details
 - For those attending, please keep an eye out for presentations that might be of interest to our group or the BCEOHRN network in general. We can ask the presenters if they would like to give a webinar for us.

- The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research has funded the “Population Health Data Access and Analysis Platform”, effective September 1/07 for two years, with an additional 3 years of funding conditional on performance in the first two years. The Platform intends to streamline researcher’s access to population health data, and to increase analytical capacity in BC through seminars, workshops, etc on methods and techniques. Geomatics for health research is the initial focus for analytical support/training. Over the next 6 months or so, the Platform will be developing strategic and operational plans, and there will be opportunities for our group to have input on what kinds of analytical support/training are needed. Eleanor will keep the group up to date.

- We talked briefly about the goals of this group. All agreed that there is value in maintaining a regular conference call, and to hold webinars, so we will continue in this format. Eleanor thought there might be the need for another group, ie GIS experts, that can be more actively ‘marketed’ to the overall BCEOHRN membership. Eleanor will talk to Pat Atherton about opportunities/ideas.

- There was interest in getting the group message board going. Eleanor will send out an informational email with instructions on use, then we can evaluate how it works and ask Pat Atherton for refinements if needed.

Updates:

- Meghan : working on data linking for the origin-destination survey data for the cycling project. Meghan could use a bit more support on technical issues – we will try to get the message board going quickly, so members can make better use of it.
- Anders: heading back to UNBC to complete a few courses and then on to his Masters research.
- Mieke: now a full time employee at BCCDC, lots of West Nile Virus in the future....
- Sunny: has been working on a project looking at the consumption of antimicrobials and relating to health status, also thinking about getting the latest census data (some now, or wait until it is all available).
- Brendan: working on a GeoConnections application for a GIS strategic plan for VIHA. A number of collaborators have been identified, including UVIC.
- Eleanor: still working on air quality in James Bay (may look for opportunities to apply for funding for some community based research in collaboration with VIHA), environmental exposures to carcinogens, and health data mapper for BC Stats/MoH.

Next dates:

September 28th – tentative webinar by Sunny Mak and Trisalyn Nelson

THANKS TO ALL!!!