

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the ICON (Improving Cognitive & Joint Health Network) Annual Meeting held on July 24 – 25, 2014, in Vancouver, British Columbia. The objective of this meeting was to create a 3-year work plan. The meeting was attended by 22 people, including researchers from health and computer science disciplines, patients/consumers, health professionals, and partners from the software industry.

The 1.5-day meeting included a mix of short presentations and discussions. The following topics were discussed:

- Opportunities for using digital technologies to promote healthy aging
- Opportunities for using digital technologies to improve prevention and treatment of cognitive impairment and chronic joint diseases
- Support for trainees

A number of ‘know-do’ gaps in brain and joint health were identified. In general, members would consider ICON as successful in 3 years if: 1) our knowledge translation (KT) activities demonstrate improvement in outcomes, 2) strong partnerships are developed, 3) a training program is established, and 4) the network is action-oriented and self-sustainable.

ICON members have brought a variety of resources, including connections with their own stakeholders, methodological expertise, established facilities/IT platforms, and financial support. Also, ideas for training opportunities were discussed.

The followings were recommended for the ICON work plan:

- Focus on improving physical activity, which was identified as a high priority area by ICON members. Despite the evidence that being active could improve brain and joint health, sedentary lifestyle was highly prevalent. Physical activity has been shown as one of the effective and inexpensive interventions for people with cognitive impairment and arthritis.
- The work plan should include 3 components: 1) co-development of digital media-enabled KT tools and implementation strategies, 2) rigorous evaluation, and 3) a marketing/physical activity promotion strategy, to be carried out simultaneously with the evaluation.
- ICON will promote physical activity across the health continuum, from healthy individuals to patients with dementia and arthritis.
- Development of KT tools will involve researchers, patients/the public, health professionals, and software industry partners.
- Trainees will be involved in ICON-funded projects in order to provide training opportunities.

A work plan is proposed based on the discussion. ICON members are encouraged to review and provide feedback.