

# A Program Evaluation *Tool Kit*

## A Blueprint for Public Health Management

### Background

In October 1994, the Ontario Ministry of Health assigned the task of studying program evaluation in Health Units to the Program Evaluation Work Group. The Work Group published its recommendations in the Public Health & Epidemiology Report Ontario (PHERO) on May 31, 1996 in the article entitled *An Agenda to Enhance Program Evaluation in Public Health*. One recommendation addressed the need for the development of guiding principles for the evaluation of public health programs and another focused on the need for a common educational resource for program evaluation.

In response to the first of these recommendations, the Guiding Principles for Program Evaluation in Ontario Public Health Units were developed. The Guiding Principles provide a framework for strengthening the evaluation of public health by outlining when, how, and why evaluations should be conducted and who should be involved. The Guiding Principles are presented in Appendix A.

The Program Evaluation Tool Kit was developed in response to the second of the Work Group's recommendations mentioned above. It is based on the ideals represented in the Guiding Principles.

### Intended Users

The *Program Evaluation Tool Kit* is tailored specifically to the information and decision-making needs of managers of public health programs. It will also be useful for front-line field staff, medical officers of health and other senior managers, plus anyone assisting with evaluation, such as health unit program evaluation specialists, epidemiologists, community nurse specialists, health planners, information analysts or outside consultants.

### Format

The *Tool Kit* is a practical, five-step guide to planning, doing, and using evaluation. It is presented in a series of short modules with simple explanations and specific tools. It is presented in a three-ring binder so that it can be easily updated and expanded.

### Purpose

The *Tool Kit* presents a decision-oriented model of program evaluation. With tools from the *Tool Kit*, it is hoped that managers will find it easier to integrate more evaluation activity into the management of their programs. The *Tool Kit* should also help set a standard for evaluation and enhance communication across health units.

### Focus

The *Tool Kit* is a guide to small-scale, in-house evaluation of programs focusing on process and short-term outcomes.

