

ACOTUP Researcher Profile

Name of researcher: Joyce Magill-Evans, University of Alberta

Degrees and professional qualifications (including fellowships):

PhD, MSc, BOT

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Area of research: My research program focuses on children/youth and their families with concurrent interests in research utilization by service providers and the role of theory in practice. My goal has always been to do research that matters to practice. I have used both qualitative and quantitative methods and have done a number of longitudinal studies.

Research related awards and honors:

- J. Warren Perry Distinguished Author Award for article “Effects of profession and facility type on research utilization by rehabilitation professionals”
- CAOT Fellowship award
- Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine Mentoring award

Grants/funding history (examples):

- Family life experiences: Transitions with adolescents with disabilities (A collaboration with a physical therapist, parent, and psychologists based in a rehabilitation hospital. Results were disseminated throughout the province to caregivers, policy makers, & service providers.). [SSHRC](#).
- Longitudinal evaluation of the stability of preschool gross motor, fine motor and speech development and prediction of children’s performance at seven years of age. (A collaboration with a physical therapist, occupational therapy and speech language therapists that changed our understanding of development with implications for assessment). [CIHR](#).
- Transition to Adulthood: the journey of persons with developmental motor disabilities. (A collaboration with a physical therapist, occupational therapist and psychologist that built on the earlier SSHRC grant and has led to my inclusion on the research team below). [CIHR](#).
- The CHAPTER II Study: Congenital Heart Adolescents Participating in Transition Evaluation Research (Led by relatively junior researchers, this RCT study includes researchers in Ontario and Alberta from medicine, nursing, psychology, and occupational therapy). [Heart and Stroke Foundation](#).
- Maternal-Fetal-Newborn Health Strategic Training Program Grant (A multi-year collaboration with nursing, medicine and rehabilitation that mentored the next generation of researchers who ranged from bench scientists to front-line clinicians). [CIHR](#).

Research collaboration: I have been strongly committed to research collaborations my entire career. Each member of the team brings expertise and a unique body of knowledge to the project which strengthens the quality of research and increases research uptake during dissemination. My commitment is reflected in that I am rarely sole author or sole investigator and have published a guest editorial and made presentations on collaboration. My collaborations are at the end of the collaboration continuum where research team members participate in the design, implementation, and dissemination of the project. These collaborations are within and across disciplines, including faculty members, practising clinicians, and consumers (e.g., parents, person with disability). Choice of journals for publications is influenced by where they will have the greatest impact and where the information will be available to team members' colleagues as well. These collaborations have been invaluable to my research career in that team members carry projects forward despite a member having to take a lesser role due to personal circumstances (e.g., parental leave, serious illness, caregiving during the end of life of a parent). I have learned to appreciate the contribution of basic bench research to clinical practice and the importance of learning what words like "function" mean within other disciplines. Developing strong collaborations takes time to nurture and can begin intentionally or through conversations in hallways or at conferences, clinicians/other researchers reading my publications, and students.

What is the most important thing in mentoring graduate students? One of the most important things is that this collaboration will leave both you and the student stronger, wiser, and better than each of us were before the shared journey. As a result of partnering to address the important clinical research questions that students bring, the lives of clients will be changed.

Most significant publications:

- Koning, C., Magill-Evans, J., Volden, J., & Dick, B. (2013). Efficacy of cognitive behavior therapy-based social skills intervention for school-aged boys with autism spectrum disorders. Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders, 7(10), 1282-1290, DOI: 10.1016/j.rasd.2011.07.011.
This paper represents the results of a long term collaboration with Cyndie Koning, a clinician scientist, that resulted in an evaluation of an intervention used in occupational therapy practice. It lays the basis for future intervention studies.
- Magill-Evans, J., Harrison, M. J., Benzies, K., Gierl, M., & Kimak, C. (2007). Effects of parenting education on first-time fathers' skills in interactions with their infants. Fathering, 5(1), 41-56.
This paper built on years of considering father's role in child development for term and preterm infants and is again a multi-disciplinary team including a front-line clinician/manager.
- Magill-Evans, J., Darrah, J., Pain, K., Adkins, R., & Kratochvil, M. (2001). Families with adolescents and young adults with cerebral palsy- the same as other families? Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology, 43, 466-472.
This paper challenged perceptions of the negative impact of having a child with a disability on families and emphasized the need to determine the experiences of individual families.

Tips would you give for new investigators: Build on your areas of passion because it will be easier to argue persuasively for their relevance and importance to funders, consumers, and colleagues. Carefully select collaborators and nurture those relationships both within and

outside the work environment. Persist despite disappointing results- learn from each disappointment. Having a post-doctoral position is important as this allows you to establish an independent research program with a strong mentor. Attend conferences that are outside your discipline but focused on your research interests in order to find like-minded researchers. Identify mentors for each stage of your career.