



Ottawa Paramedic Service Ottawa Police Service Workshop Report

September 23 to October 3, 2025





MicroResearch

MicroResearch (www.microresearch.ca) is an innovative strategy aimed at building the capacity of local health care professionals to better address community health care problems by finding local solutions for local problems. The program began in 2008 as a collaboration between faculty at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (Jerome Kabakyenga) and Dalhousie University (Robert Bortolussi and Noni MacDonald). Since then, as of October 2025, 77 research capacity building workshops have been held in 11 countries, including Canada with 1,756 participants trained. As of October 2025, 203 locally driven research projects have been funded and launched with 52 completed, with results published in peer reviewed journals.

MicroResearch was brought to Canada in 2016, first being piloted in Nova Scotia. Since then, it has expanded to other provinces, with as of October 2025, 16 workshops in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, British Columbia, and Ontario, training 221 participants. A total of 33 team projects were developed, with 14 either completed or currently underway.

Rationale for MicroResearch Canada

Health, wellbeing and public safety are not equitable across all provinces and territories. Even in “have” provinces there are pockets of inequity. Health care funding and funding for paramedics and public safety are becoming increasing issues with needs outstripping resources, making improvements in community management critical, especially for the best use of acute health care and public safety resources. Public safety in Canada has lagged behind healthcare in applying evidence-informed approaches. Not all public safety and community agencies or organizations are funded equally. Additionally, many do not have formal research units or individuals with the skills and competencies honed through MicroResearch that help shape decisions based upon evidence. The gaps in knowledge translation, adaptation, and implementation at the community level are widening and there is a need to better align local resources to improve the situation. Building on this need, MicroResearch Canada aims to develop local community focused research capacity to find solutions to local health and public safety problems deemed important by local participants.

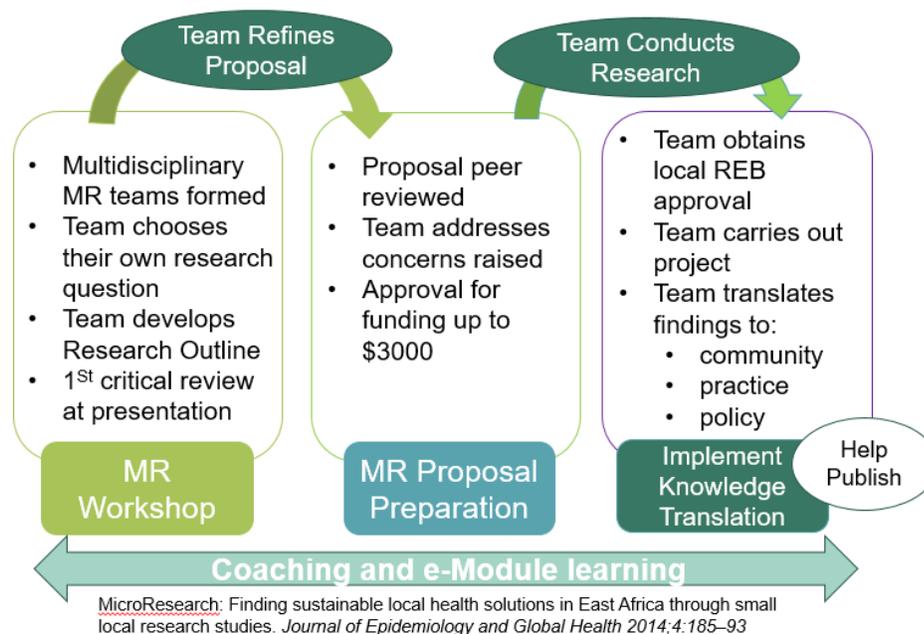
“The goal of MicroResearch is to improve health outcomes with innovative community-based research that assures quality and integration of research into the fabric of the local health and public safety systems and the community”.

MicroResearch Process

The MicroResearch process advances in three phases: (i) Training Workshops are the first phase in the process. (ii) Teams formed during the workshops are then able refine and improve their research



ideas for a grant submission to MicroResearch and review by an international panel of research experts from Canada and Africa. Once the research teams have responded to the reviewer recommendations with changes to their proposal, approval is given on scientific merit. (iii) Teams are then able to submit their proposal to their local Research Ethics Board (REB) for approval and carry out their research. They are also encouraged to bring their findings back to the community through a Knowledge Translation plan. This report outlines the Research Training Workshop held at the Ottawa Paramedic Head Quarters September 22 to October 3, 2025 for teams from the Ottawa Paramedic Service and the Ottawa Police Service.



Workshop Objectives and Organizers

The class comprised of 12 participants from the Ottawa Paramedics Service and 10 participants from the Ottawa Police Service.

This workshop involved 4 teams – two from each service. Participants were recruited from the services themselves.

The key objectives for the participants of the MR Workshop:

- to develop skills needed for community focused research,
- to develop skills to work in a multidisciplinary group and to become a team, and to write a successful community focused research proposal overview



Organizers

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Facilitators, Guest Lecturers, and Coaches

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Workshop Partners

This workshops and projects emerging as a result are supported by partners including:

- Dalhousie University
- IWK Health
- MicroResearch private donors
- Ottawa Paramedic Service
- Ottawa Police Service

Workshop Planning and Recruitment

Participants were recruited through word-of-mouth and personal invitation by the two services. The 22 participants -12 from the paramedic service (with one more paramedic participating from Renfrew Paramedics) and 10 from the police service. These included a range of disciplines and ranks within the services.

The pre-workshop assessment was completed by 18 of the 22 participants (82%). 3 participants had previous research experience, with all 3 having been study participants as well as research assistants. Participants indicated the top things they wanted to get out of the workshop were to learn about



research skills/methodology, to create change/apply research to community, and to help advance their career.

Workshop

The ten-day foundational workshop recast as nine days due to the national holiday for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30, 2025. The workshop included all the usual lectures but was delivered in 9 days. The lectures were combined with daily small group interdisciplinary, interactive working sessions. Many of the lectures, support materials and tool kits were recently updated and refreshed in 2025 to include new slides on using the internet, principles in clinical research challenges in research, ethics, knowledge translation, budget, research to policy, and how to get published. Use of artificial intelligence in research was also included – the good and the bad. Session lectures began at 8:30 am EDT. Session lectures were followed by group work sessions with the coaches. The lectures, exercises, and group work over the eight days led the participants step-by-step through the development of a research proposal overview. Participants moved from formulating an idea to the development of the research question, to the selection of methods to fit the questions considering the budget available and the formulation of the overview of a knowledge translation plan and determination of what communities to engage, when and how. Daily workshop attendance was 100% - with only one participant away for one day that had been noted in advance.

Team Research Proposals

As in previous workshops, the major educational component was centred on the proposal overview development in the interdisciplinary groups. There was a significant amount of content on Day 1 to orientate and allow participants to develop their own ideas into a research question based on their own experiences. On Day 2, the collaboration began when participants were divided into five groups. Working in breakout rooms, the groups then discussed each member's question and applied the FINER criteria (discussed during the lecture on Day 2) and selected the "best" one to develop into a research proposal throughout the rest of the workshop. On Day 3, a spokesperson for each group presented the topics to the class and noted the question selected by the group and the rationale for its selection. The questions selected on Day 3 were:

Group 1 - Among patients in the City of Ottawa transported by ambulance with a final primary problem code of neurological or cardiac (MOH ACR codes 40-50), what proportion are subsequently transferred to another hospital? Of those, what are the documented reasons for transfer by hospital?

Group 2- What motivates or deters paramedics from being preceptors in the Ottawa Paramedic Service?

Group 3 - In what ways can the adoption of a police mascot contribute to strengthening relationships between the community and law enforcement?



Group 4 - What factors discourage rural residents from reporting to police?

A discussion followed each group's presentation, with emphasis on importance of narrowing and refining each question.

The series of lectures that followed provided knowledge and skills needed to develop these questions into research proposal overviews. All the lectures included core elements to the MR concept, which were essential in preparation for the presentation on the final day.

Throughout the workshop, each group became a team, working together on their proposals, guided by their coach.





Final Day of the Workshop

On the final day of the workshop, each team presented the overview of their proposal in a ten-minute presentation to a panel of four local experts. The review panel, along with the two Canadian facilitators, adjudicated each team's presentation and suggested how the proposals might be further strengthened.

The local review panel included:

- Jeff LeBlanc, Inspector, Ottawa Police Service
- Ken Bryden, Superintendent, Ottawa Police Service
- Genevieve LeBlanc, Senior Policy Advisor, Public Safety Canada
- Dr. Jason Berman, Professor of Pediatrics and Cellular Molecular Medicine, CEO and Scientific Director, CHEO Research Institute, Vice President Research, CHEO.

Final Team Questions:

1. What are the characteristics of transports by the Ottawa Paramedic Service to Ottawa adult hospitals resulting in interfacility transfer to another Ottawa adult hospital?
2. What are the perceived motivators and barriers to precepting primary care paramedic (PCP) students within the Ottawa Paramedic Service?
3. Can a police mascot improve community trust with the Ottawa Police Service?
4. What factors discourage Ottawa rural residents from contacting the police?

Review Panels General Comments

The local experts noted that all teams had clearly worked hard and presented their proposal overviews well. The reviewers were impressed by the professional presentations of the PowerPoints.

The expert panel members felt that all four teams showed that they worked well together, with each member contributing to the final proposal presentation. The teams made great progress in refining their research topic and plan over the two-week workshop. The KT plans and budgets were well done. Select research proposal will need some refinement before they will be ready to be submitted for a MicroResearch grant. Teams showed why their project question was well-justified in ways that are easily understood by a reviewer from outside the services or even Ottawa. All of the projects will contribute to betterment of citizens of Ottawa and the Ottawa Police or Paramedic Service and are worthy to proceed for a formal application for a MicroResearch Grant proposal.



Workshop Evaluation

An assessment of the workshop by participants as well as how well their team functioned was obtained using structured evaluation forms submitted with 19/22 (86%) of participants completing the form.

Overall, the workshop was highly regarded by participants, however some noted that it could be geared less towards publishing research:

“I hope to continue to pursue micro research in my place of work to continue to make small change with big impacts. As frontline staff I hear everyday the small issues affecting our workplace and hope to improve work life through evidence based suggestions.”

Lectures that participants indicated were particularly helpful included Qualitative & Quantitative Methods, Knowledge Translation and Defining a Research Question. Overall, respondents indicated that the lectures and workshop content helped to “demystify” research and provided participants with the tools needed to help create positive changes in their communities:

“I really enjoyed the workshop. Noni and Rose are great presenters that are clearly passionate about work. Their enthusiasm made me excited about research.”

Most participants responded in their evaluation that working as a team enhanced their research and the workshop experience stimulated their interest in research. Several indicated potential challenges in continuing to work as a team, including time constraints and work schedules however, support from supervisors and commitment to a timeline could help overcome these issues.





Recommendations and Comments

1. Logistics & Materials

- **Participant Materials**
 - Provide USBs with all required workshop files (easier access than web links, avoids firewall issues).
 - MR to prepare certificates for all participants, coaches, and judges (get names in advance).
 - Ensure name tags are printed and available.
 - Supply large paper, markers, and supplies for mind maps or group work.
- **Technology**
 - Test compatibility of laptops and site IT systems (especially for external facilitators).
 - Confirm Wi-Fi reliability and tech readiness prior to workshop start.
 - Ensure USB materials are up to date and tested on local computers.
- **Audio/Visual**
 - Check acoustics in all rooms.
 - Provide microphones for final day presentations and discussions.
- **Venue Setup**
 - Choose a space that supports both teaching and networking.
 - Have tea/coffee breaks in external areas (outside classroom) to encourage mingling.

2. Site Coordination & Oversight

- **Assign a dedicated site coordinator (or external overseer) to:**
 - MR to send formal invitations to at least 6 potential judges.
 - Ensure site readiness- technology, materials, breaks, and room setup.
 - Collect participant and coach names in advance (for certificates and attendance).
 - Confirm daily schedules and expected end times (avoid unnecessary long days).
 - MR to follow up regularly with site leads before, during, and after the event.
 - Clarify expectations for workshop delivery and judging day.

3. Workshop Content & Delivery

- **Adapting to Audience Needs**
 - Simplify or adapt slides for participants with less research background (especially in non-university settings)
 - Maintain reasonable content load to avoid overwhelming participants.
 - Provide more generic slides when needed.
- **Use of AI**
 - Caution teams about limitations of AI tools for methods development.
 - Collect examples of where AI failed to use as teaching points.
- **Team and Judge Structure**
 - Have mixed judge panels- at least two per discipline/sector when relevant (e.g., 2 paramedics, 2 police).
 - Include one or two judges knowledgeable in research.
 - Continue inviting senior professionals as judges (adds insight and presence).



4. Timing & Flow

- Keep daily schedules realistic- teams do not need to stay until 4 p.m. if finished.
- Ensure breaks are built in and facilitate social interaction.
- Encourage mingling and informal networking during coffee/tea times.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our thanks to the local site for providing administrative and organizational support. As well to the local volunteer coaches and co-teachers for their continued involvement in MicroResearch. Thank you to the panelists for their valuable feedback and constructive critiques on the final day of the workshop. Finally, we thank the participants for their engagement throughout the ten days.

Respectfully submitted,

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