

# Connecting the Dots to Take Action on Chronic Disease

**Beth Ward**  
**Subha Sankaran**  
**Suzanne Schwenger**

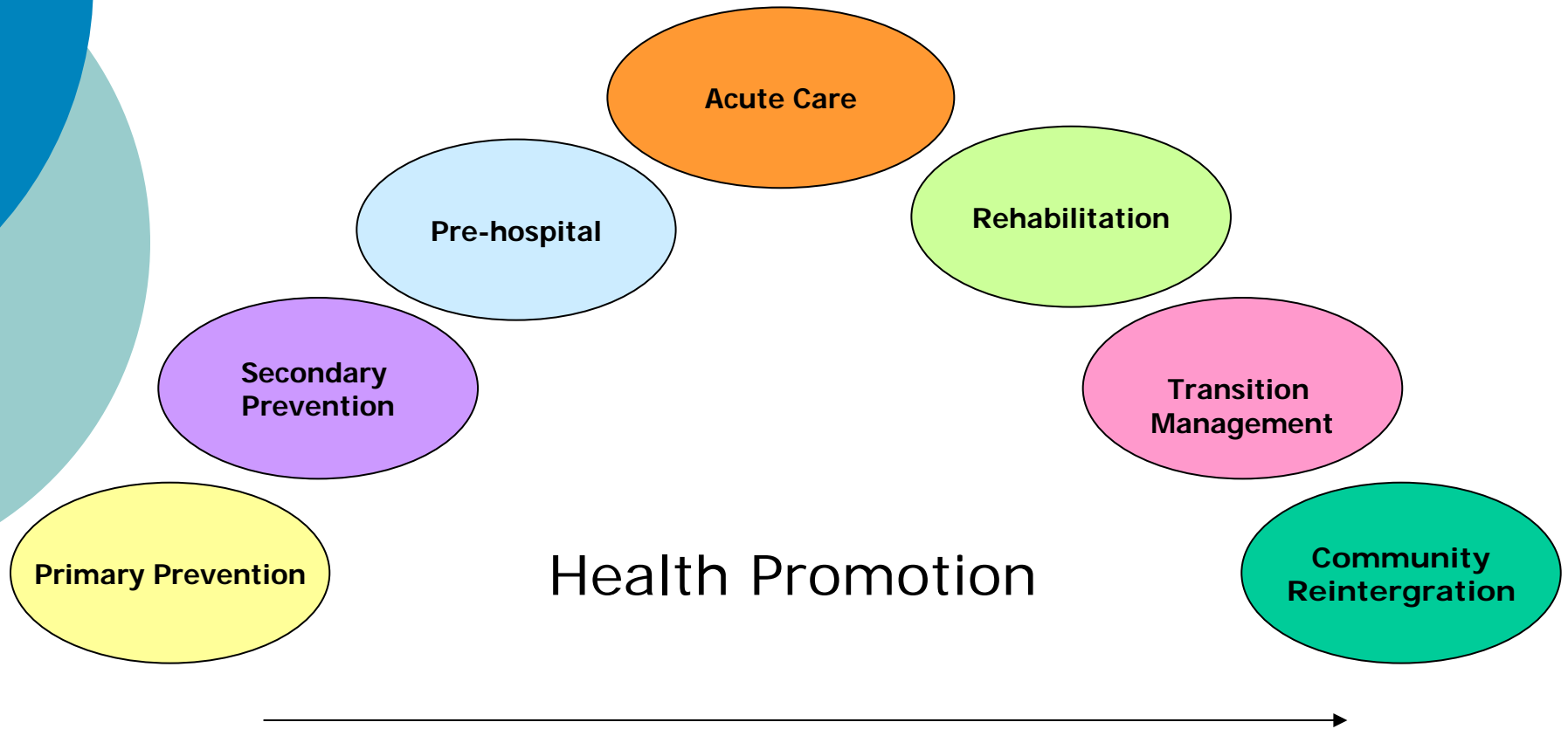
CDPAC National Conference  
Ottawa  
November 24, 2008



**Prevent Stroke**  
**Prévention des AVC**

by/par health **nexus** santé

# Opportunities of Continuum of Care Approach





# Prevent Stroke

- Key program of Health Nexus- builds capacity for health promotion
- Bilingual
- *Connecting the Dots* process to help people talk together about how to work together differently across the *continuum* of chronic disease
- *Prescribing Prevention*
- Health promotion resource and database:
  - [www.preventstroke.ca](http://www.preventstroke.ca)
  - [www.preventionavc.ca](http://www.preventionavc.ca)



# Community engagement as health promotion

- Social, economic and environmental causes of health and illness
- Assets and strengths of individuals and communities
- Participatory approaches that build the capacity of individuals and communities to address their health concerns



# Connecting the Dots (CTD)

- Highly successful community capacity building and community engagement process
- Fosters and strengthens networks and partnerships
- Developed & implemented over the past 5 years in more than 10 communities
- Links *physical risk* factors and *social risk* conditions for chronic disease

# *The Causes of the Causes*

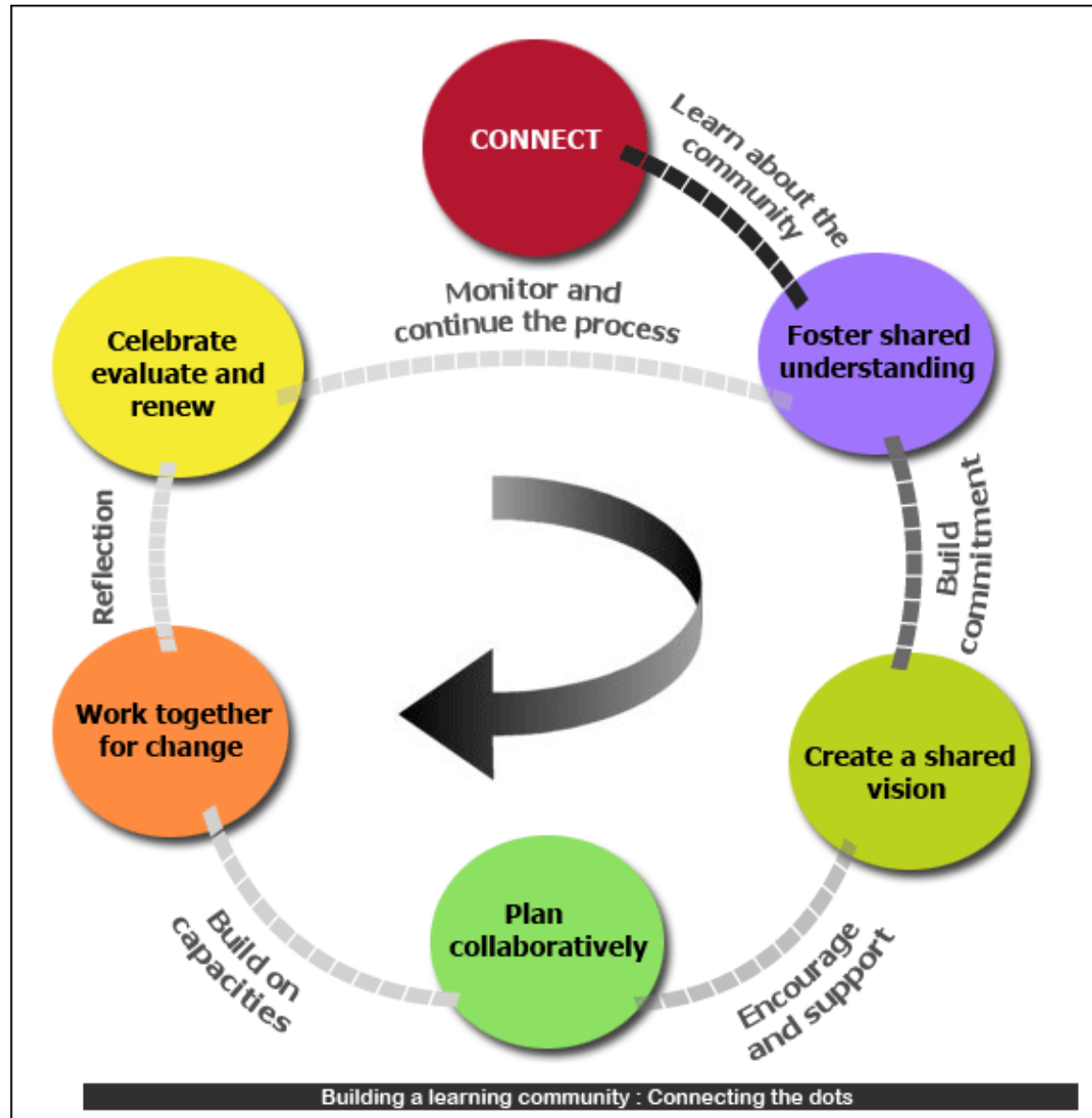


# It takes a whole community to prevent chronic disease

- o Draw upon the assets, resources and capacity within each community
- o Take a multi-sectoral, multi-faceted approach across the continuum.
- o Connect the dots in our own communities and beyond!

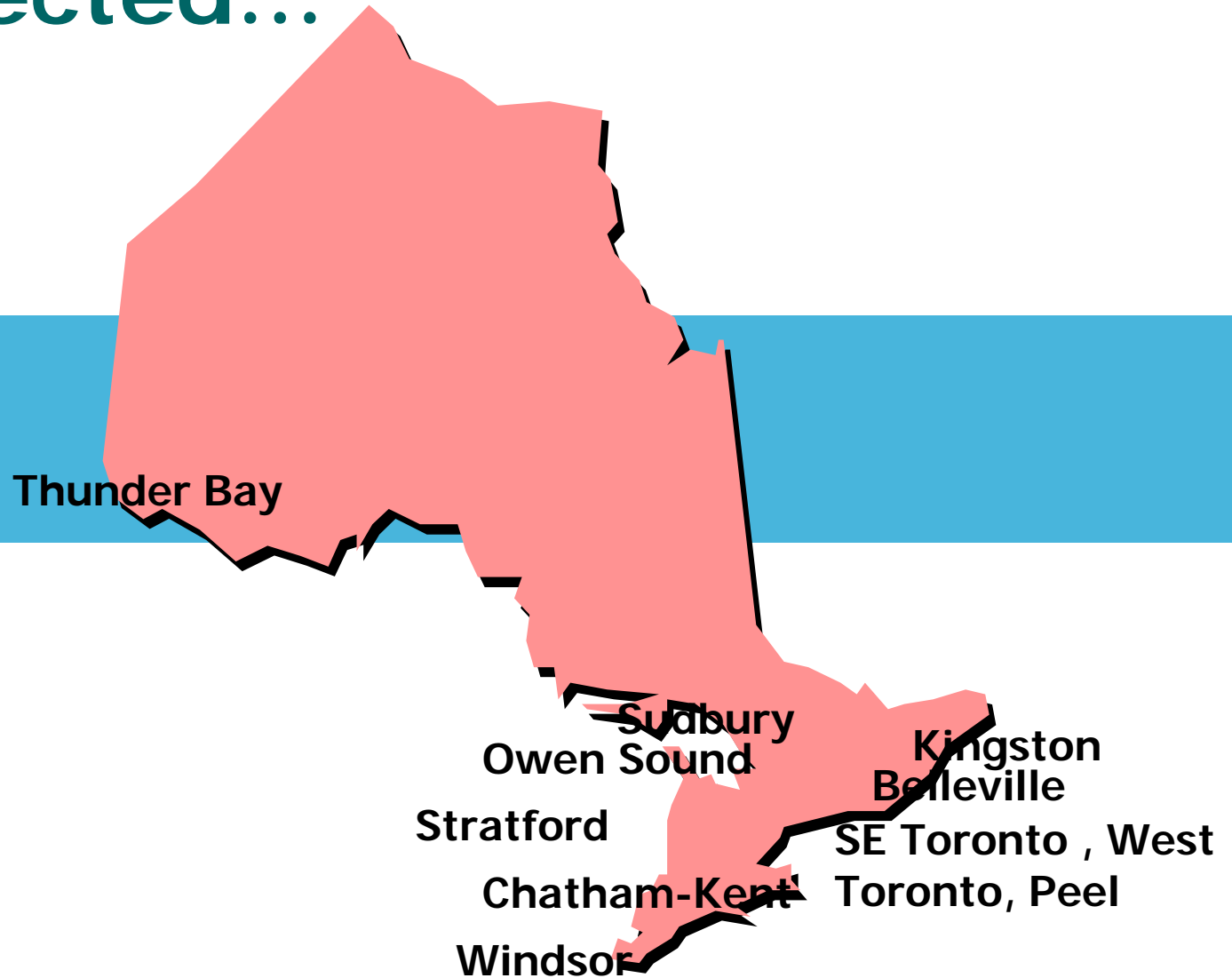


# Building a learning community





# Some dots that have been connected...





# How does the CTD process work?

**Begins with a dialogue to determine a cross-sectoral planning group:**

- Who is our community?
- Where is our community at?
- Who are/should be our key partners?



# Who is our *Community*?

- Stroke Centre district and region
- Stroke survivors
- General public
- Schools
- Seniors
- Community service providers
- Political and government leaders
- Media
- *Communities* within the community



# CTD process begins with the first meeting

- Over several months, cross-sectoral planning groups *connect-the-dots* as they learn together about their work and how they engage in the same community.
- Different modalities to achieve this, including formal presentations, informal networking and speed-dating activities!



# Lessons learned so far

1. One size does *not* fit all (Electronic engagement, peer support, town hall)
2. Communities are at different levels of readiness for collaborative action.
3. Sustainability of action can take many forms.
4. Ongoing impact evaluation is a challenge.

# Moving Forward...

## **Broader themes**

- Children and Stroke
- Obesity

## **CTDs focused on high-risk populations**

- Marginalized Women, Inclusion and Stroke (OWHN)
- Aboriginal Health and Chronic Disease
- South Asian

## **CTD *Learning Community***

- Connecting CTD communities to share experiences and knowledge on chronic disease

# Who are potential partners outside the stroke system?

- Family Health Teams
- Community Health Centres
- Public Health- Heart Health Coalitions
- Heart & Stroke - Community Mission Specialists
- Seniors groups and services
- Community Care Access Centres
- Healthy food groups
- Housing groups
- Self-help groups