



Dre Karine Boily, DC, MBA

Dre Boily, a chiropractor from Quebec have been awarded a prestigious three year fellowship to support her doctoral studies in epidemiology by *l'Institut de recherche en santé et sécurité du Travail*. During the last year, she has also been supported by the *Fondation Chiropratique du Québec* (FCQ) and by the GIROST a multidisciplinary group of researchers focused on the organization of health at work.

Dre Boily graduated from l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières in 1999 and pursued graduate studies while practicing chiropractic in Québec City. She ob-

tained an MBA specializing in the management of occupational health and safety from Laval University in 2003. Now, she is currently pursuing her PhD degree in epidemiology also at Laval University under the supervision of Dre Chantal Brisson. Dr Brisson, is a full professor at Laval University and is a member of the *Unité de Recherche en Santé des Populations* of the St-Sacrement hospital in Quebec City. Dr Brisson possesses an international expertise for her work in epidemiology and is specialized in the psychosocial determinants of musculoskeletal disorders, cardiovascular diseases and mental disorders.

During her masters degree, Dre Boily concentrated her studies in the management of occupational health and safety and of work organization. She then gained the skills necessary to understand the basics of the impact of management and work environment on the workers health. Also during her masters degree, she had to undertake an intervention project in a workplace. She had the privilege to execute this project at the public health department in Quebec City, in the health habits and chronic diseases section, where she developed her interest for social research. Her project was to elaborate and implement a chronic disease prevention and health promotion program for the workplace. This program combined the three major modifiable health determinants which are physical activity, eating and smoking habits. Her project was part of a larger program which had the objective to implement a health promotion program in various workplaces in the province of Quebec. She retains from this experience a particular interest for the modifiable health habits and will certainly use these habits in her future work.

Dre Boily's main doctoral project is to evaluate the impact of a prevention program on musculoskeletal disorders. This program have been implemented in a public workplace in Quebec City and is part of a major project supported by the NIOSH Institute. The aim of this pro-

gram is to improve four major psychosocial constraints of the work environment. Studies suggest that the organization constraints of the work environment contribute the occurrence of musculoskeletal disorders. Referring to available data, the relative risk of incurring a musculoskeletal problem of those exposed to this kind of environment is twice as high as the one of the non-exposed workers. This level of risk is comparable to the risk associated with workers that are exposed to biomechanical constraints. This is why musculoskeletal prevention programs can no consider only biomechanical aspects of the work environment in order to be efficient. Dre Boily will examine if this program had a positive impact on the diminution of the numbers of claims and on the duration of the sick days taken related to musculoskeletal disorders in this workplace. This program also takes into account the biomechanical aspects of the environment of the workers which will also be analysed by Dre Boily.

Aside from her main project, Dre Boily is currently working on a research project related to the incidence of fibromyalgia syndrome in a cohort of 9000 workers from the region of Quebec. Since the natural course and the aetiological factors of this syndrome are still unclear, this research will try to improve scientific knowledge on the determinants of such a syndrome by identifying demographic and psychosocial factors that are associated with and increase risk of developing fibromyalgia.

Her general scientific interests are related to the determinants of musculoskeletal disorders. More specifically, she is interested in their prevention by the bias of the modification of health habits and of the psychosocial environment of work. Finally, during her PhD, Dre Boily would like to develop a particular expertise in the methodological aspect of health research so she would contribute to improve research in chiropractic and hopefully become an independent researcher.

Spinal Disorders Training Program

The Common Spinal Disorders Research Group at the University of Alberta is now recruiting graduate students (Master's and PhD) interested in research related to the spine. The CSDRG conducts internationally recognized research focusing on the etiology of spinal disorders including low back pain, sciatica and other common problems. General areas of investigation include:

- The etiology and pathogenesis of common spinal disorders (low back pain, sciatica, disc degeneration, herniation, and spinal stenosis)
- The reliability and validity of associated assessment methods
- Development of new, non-invasive methods of assessing spinal function
- Prognosis
- Clinical trials of treatment efficacy/outcomes research
- Industrial injury claims
- Disability management
- Workplace interventions

The CSDRG is made up of Drs. Michele Crites Battié (Canada Research Chair), Tapio Videman (Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research Population Health Scientist), Greg Kawchuk (Canada Research Chair), Doug Gross and Alyson Jones. Research profiles for each member can be found at <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/rehabmed/ptstaff.cfm>.

Applicants should have a Bachelor's degree recognized by the University of Alberta. For applicants who qualify, financial support may be available. The University of Alberta was founded in 1908 as is consistently ranked as one of Canada's foremost research-intensive universities. Located in Edmonton, the vibrant cosmopolitan capital of the province of Alberta, the University serves nearly 34,000 students in more than 170 graduate programs. Students enjoy an exceptional quality of life on a friendly campus in the midst of beautiful river-valley in a city with unparalleled jazz and fringe festivals. Interested applicants should contact Greg Kawchuk or any of the other research group members through their email addresses available on the webpage above.

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