

Title: Engaging in Clinical-Research Partnerships: A Perceptual Mapping Activity

Research Questions: The research-practice gap is well known and experienced by many fields (Green et al., 2009). Researchers and clinicians have been encouraged to adopt approaches and to minimize this gap, including engaging stakeholders in the research process. In practice-based research, an active partnership between researchers and clinicians is required throughout the research endeavour (Epstein, 2001). One factor that supports the maintenance and continued success of the partnership is the evaluation of the project and the partnership (Frisby, Thibault, & Kikulis, 2004). Partnership evaluation promotes the discussion of facilitators and barriers that partners may be experiencing. Perceptual mapping is one technique that can be used to determine the experience of those involved in a partnership. This technique develops a visual representation of elements that each member believed influenced the partnership. In the current project, school board speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and researchers engaged in a clinical-research partnership aimed at validating a kindergarten assessment tool participated in a perceptual mapping activity to evaluate their ongoing partnership.

Method: The aim of the study was to evaluate a practice-based research partnership established for 2 years at a point when new direction was being considered. Six SLPs and two researchers participated in a meeting involving review of the shared goals of the partnership and the perceptual mapping activity. The perceptual mapping activity was introduced as a way to

