Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Building a Better Health Service
CARE COMPASSION TRUST LEARNING

Knowledge Translation, Dissemination, and Impact
A Practical Guide for Researchers

Find

Use

Research Knowledge

Create

Share

Guide No 2

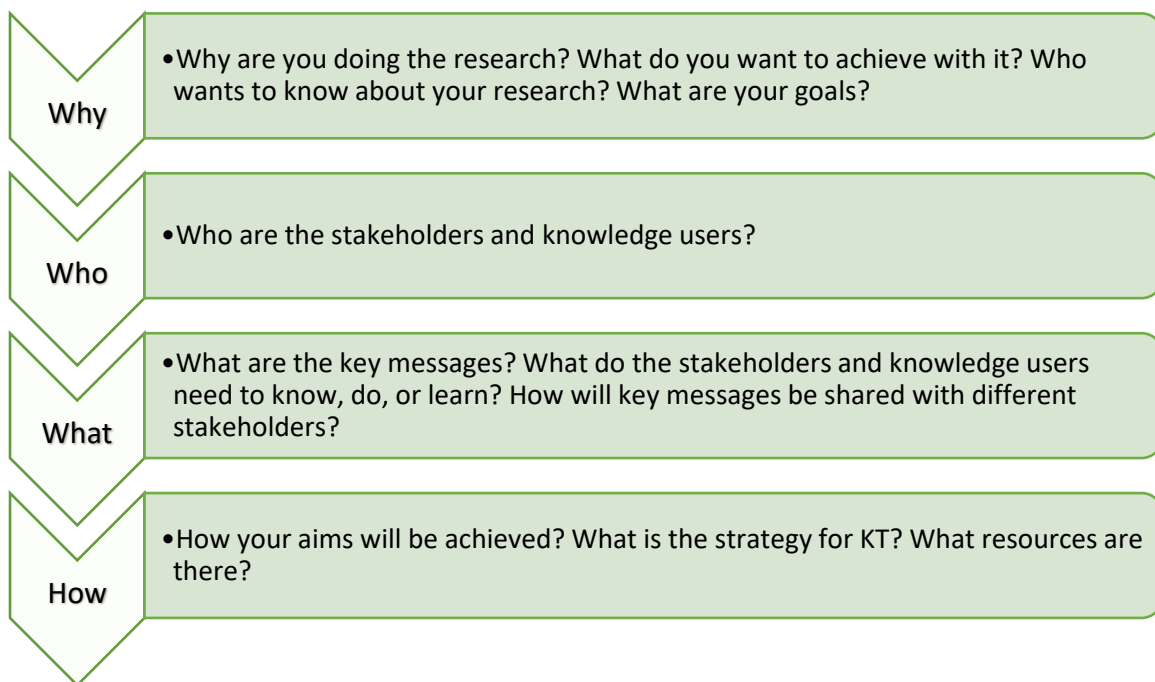# Planning your Knowledge Translation activity

1. Planning and resourcing knowledge translation

Planning for knowledge translation (KT) is vital to its success and it is a good idea, if possible, to set up a steering group to guide the process. Specific issues for consideration are:

- Whether the organisation or service where the research is taking place is ready for change.
- The time and resources available for KT and the time scales to be achieved.
- Who needs to be involved in the KT and whether any support or training is needed in dissemination, KT or implementation?
- How organisational leadership can be engaged in the change process/implementation process.
- The facilitators and barriers to KT.
- Which elements of the KT process will be used and how?
- How the success and efficacy of the KT will be measured.

2. The stages of planning knowledge translation

In planning your KT, a starting point is to consider:

Why
- Why are you doing the research? What do you want to achieve with it? Who wants to know about your research? What are your goals?

Who
- Who are the stakeholders and knowledge users?

What
- What are the key messages? What do the stakeholders and knowledge users need to know, do, or learn? How will key messages be shared with different stakeholders?

How
- How your aims will be achieved? What is the strategy for KT? What resources are there?

Planning can be broken down into 8 stages.

i. Identify the project team		ii. Identifying what KT expertise is needed
• Identify the people who will need to be part of the team leading the KT based on the skills and expertise that are needed.		• Consider whether the project team need to draw on people with specific expertise or experience of KT e.g. knowledge brokers, academics, implementation specialists. • Are there people within your organisation or within other organisations?

iii. Identifying and engaging with stakeholders and knowledge users	iv. Setting the KT goals and mapping outcomes

• Undertake a stakeholder mapping exercise (see *Guide number 4 Stakeholder engagement*).
 • Consider who would be affected by or benefit from the KT.
 • Consider who might influence your research and KT activity.
 • When will stakeholder engagement take place? Will it be integrated from the beginning of the study, during the study, or at the end of the study, post study?
 • What can different stakeholders bring to the project?
 • How can different stakeholders assist with developing the KT plan?
 • How can different stakeholders assist with the KT activity and who may have some resources to contribute?
 • Have you considered how and when to involve patients and/or the public in your KT activities?
	• Consider what you want to achieve through your KT activity.
	 • What are your goals?
	 • What are your goals for each stakeholder or knowledge user group?
	 • Is your intention to:
	     o Share knowledge
	     o Raise awareness
	     o Add to research evidence and knowledge
	     o Inform or change policy
	     o Change practice or service delivery
	     o Change behaviour
	 • Use an outcomes map to set out your inputs, activities, and outcomes.
	 • Decide which stakeholders can help you with the activities and outcomes and at which point in your study.

v. Decide on the KT strategy to meet the goals and outcomes	vi. Identify the resources and budget needed for KT

• Your KT strategy should align to the goals you have set out at stage 4.
 • Strategies for sharing knowledge could involve the following:
 Information or education
     o Reports, summaries
     o Publications
     o Conferences, workshops, seminars, webinars
     o Training materials
     o Videos and other social media material
     o Websites
 Policy change:
     o Policy brief and briefings
     o Evidence synthesis
     o Advice and recommendations
     o Highlighting gaps in policy
	• Decide on the resources needed including people, funding, materials.
	 • Who is needed to lead or manage the KT activity?
	 • What funding is required for activities such as:
	     o Reports, other publications
	     o Videos, webinars, and other media material
	     o Printing
	     o Website development
	     o Travel to conferences, presentations
	     o Knowledge brokering
	     o Administration costs

Service or practice change:
- o Engage in an information sharing strategy and engage stakeholders first.
- o Follow guidance on implementation e.g. the Implementation Guide and Toolkit for National Clinical Guidelines (Department of Health 2018) or use the PRISM KT framework detailed in *Guide number 3*.

vii. Select the KT framework	viii. Plan the evaluation of the KT activity
- HSE recommends the use of one or more of the following frameworks (see *Guide number 3 Knowledge translation frameworks: what are they, how and when to use them)*: - o Knowledge to Action - o Evidence based Model for the Transfer and Exchange of Research Knowledge (EMTReK) model - o The Practical Robust Implementation and Sustainability Model (PRISM) model - Follow the guidance in *Guide number 3 Knowledge translation frameworks: what are they, how and when to use them.* - The model you choose will help you decide on how to disseminate your research, your key messages, how to adapt your knowledge to the local context, and the type of intervention you will use.	- See *Guide number 6 Evaluating your Knowledge Translation and Dissemination* for a full outline of how to plan an evaluation. - The purpose of evaluating your KT activity is measure your success at achieving your goals. - Follow the five steps to planning an evaluation outlined in the guide: - o Stakeholder mapping - o Outcomes mapping - o Deciding on your KT indicators - o Data collection methods - o An evaluation plan.

Researchers may also find the Knowledge Translation Planning Template (Barwick 2008, 2013) helpful as a first step in planning their knowledge translation activity. The template can be found at: http://melaniebarwick.com/knowledge-translation-tools/

The tool can be used free of charge by researchers from 'not for profit' organisations but usage must be registered and must be acknowledged using the following citation: *Barwick, M.A. (2008, 2013, 2019). Knowledge Translation Planning Template. Ontario: The Hospital for Sick Children*.

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The Barwick planning template includes 13 core steps:
1. Identifying project partners
2. Degree of engagement
3. Roles of partners in KT planning
4. KT expertise on the team
5. Targeted knowledge users
6. Research findings main messages
7. KT goals e.g. awareness building, informing policy, practice change
8. KT strategies to use to meet the KT goals
9. KT process
10. Indicators of KT impact and evaluation metrics
11. Resources needed
12. Budget considerations (include in funding proposals)
13. How the KT strategy will be implemented
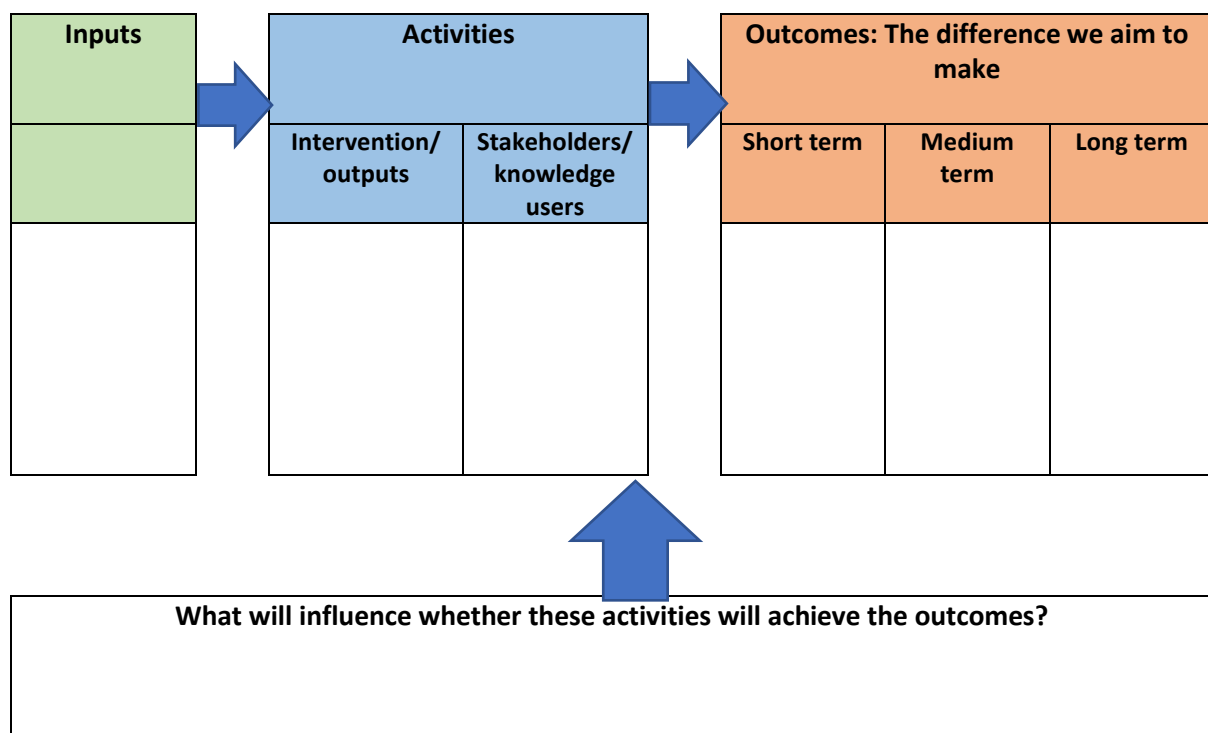
3. Mapping the outcomes from KT activities

An outcomes map is a useful tool in planning what you and your stakeholders want to achieve through your KT activities and measurable outcomes. Outcomes mapping involves setting out planned:

Inputs – what you need to do and what support you need for your KT activity.
Activities – identify the tasks and outputs. Which stakeholders/knowledge users should the KT activities reach?
Outcomes – what do you want to achieve in the short term, medium term, and long term e.g. raise awareness, influence policy or guidelines, change the way a service is delivered or inform practice.

Outcomes mapping

Inputs	Activities		Outcomes: The difference we aim to make		
	Intervention/ outputs	Stakeholders/ knowledge users	Short term	Medium term	Long term

What will influence whether these activities will achieve the outcomes?

4. Enablers and barriers to knowledge translation

There are a number of factors which increase the likelihood of successful KT and barriers which may need to be addressed.

Enablers	Barriers
• Understanding the process of KT. • A KT plan. • Time and resources. • Considering KT at the beginning of the research process and at the planning stage. • Stakeholder engagement throughout the project. • Readiness for change, innovation, or new knowledge. • Having a relevant research question and research that is an organisational priority. • Leadership and organisational support.	• Insufficient time or resources for KT and dissemination. • Not engaging with stakeholders or knowledge users. • Lack of engagement by knowledge users/adopters. • Not considering KT activity early enough. • Organisational culture not being supportive of research or innovation. • Resistance to change.

Overcoming barriers to knowledge translation

The following are suggestions to address potential barriers:

➤ Insufficient time or resources for KT and dissemination:
  • Ensure that this stage of the research study is properly costed and included in any application for research funding.
  • Engage with stakeholders and discuss the possibility of identifying additional resources.

➤ Not engaging with stakeholders or knowledge users:
  • Develop a stakeholder map at the planning stage and engage with stakeholders as early as possible in the research process. (see *Guide number 4 Stakeholder engagement*).
  • If early engagement has not been possible, engage as soon as it is possible explaining the benefits and value of their engagement.

➤ Lack of engagement by stakeholders or knowledge users:
  • Mapping your stakeholders and knowledge users at the beginning of your project and engaging with them can prevent many of the problems of lack of engagement at a later stage. Early engagement means that you can find out whether your research question is one that is of interest to stakeholders. You can involve them in the design of the project and gain their interest in the results and commitment to act on them if the results indicate change is needed.
  • If you have not had early engagement, and experience resistance, explain the value and benefits of your research findings, seek opportunities to share your findings. You may also want to revisit your stakeholder mapping to see if there are others who may be interested in

your findings. You could also consider linking with others who have undertaken research in the same topic area and explore the potential for sharing knowledge.

➢ Not considering KT early enough:
- Researchers might only think about sharing and disseminating their knowledge when their research is completed but it is good practice to set out how you will share knowledge when you write your study plan. Even if you have not thought about dissemination at an early stage of your research, it is still a good idea to develop a KT and dissemination plan. This can help to identify the right stakeholders and knowledge users and target KT activity. Following the guidance in this document will assist in planning. Using one of the KT frameworks outlined in *Guide number 3* will also help to translate the knowledge into the most relevant area.

➢ Organisational culture not being supportive of research:
- It is important to consult as widely as possible when thinking of undertaking research to ensure the topic fits with the organisation's priorities and that the potential knowledge users are supportive of the research taking place. If this is not the case, the topic or research question may not be the right one. Having management approval and sign off is important if your research is to be implemented.
- Map your stakeholders and knowledge users and obtain their support for your research so that you can demonstrate that it is relevant and will have value.

➢ Resistance to change:
- If you have identified any area of practice or policy that may need improving but are experiencing a barrier to change, engaging with the relevant stakeholders at an early stage is helpful. In doing so, you may be able to agree a research question that can be taken forward. It also ensures that there is engagement from the beginning. Regular feedback from the study can also help to break down resistance as small changes can be introduced throughout the project rather than being asked to make major changes at the end.