best evidence: Promising KTE evaluation tools

Research organizations world-wide are committing more time and resources to knowledge transfer and exchange (KTE) – the practice of putting relevant research into the hands of key decision-makers and stakeholders in a timely, accessible and useful manner. The effectiveness of current KTE practices, however, has not been routinely or consistently evaluated. One reason for this may be the lack of valid and reliable tools for assessing the implementation and impact of KTE applications. The Institute for Work & Health (IWH) conducted a systematic review that sought to fill this gap. It asked the question: Are there reliable, valid and/or useful instruments to apply in the assessment of KTE implementation and its impact?

The systematic review concluded that few well-developed instruments are available to evaluate the implementation and impact of knowledge transfer and exchange practices. However, it did find 16 articles describing instruments that showed promise as useful tools in the evaluation of KTE activities. They were considered promising because they demonstrated some signs of validity and reliability, as well as the potential to assess change.

Because these instruments are not well-established or widely known by name, the best way to learn more about them is to read the articles in which they are described. The references for these articles, as well as brief descriptions of the evaluation instruments, are included here. The full report on the systematic review’s findings is available at: www.iwh.on.ca/sys-reviews/kte-evaluation-tools.

References describing KTE evaluation tools


Describes a brief mailed survey to assess the use of X-rays for acute low-back pain.


Describes a planning team survey to assess the degree to which participation in curriculum and plan development affects team members' perceptions of their capacity to engage in data-driven prevention planning.


Describes a registration form for physiotherapy patients to capture treatment goals, content of the treatment, number of treatment sessions and more.


Describes a tool to measure clinician referrals for X-ray according to evidence.


Describes instruments used to measure changes in nurses' pain-assessment practices, research-use competency and attitudes toward research.
- Describes a three-instrument survey that explores nurses' knowledge, attitudes and practices related to evidence-based fever management.

- Describes a self-report questionnaire for general practitioners on post-natal care, as well as a simulated patient evaluator rating scale.

- Describes a survey to assess application of knowledge about cancer pain management.

- Describes a decision questionnaire and conflict scale on the use of antibiotics for respiratory infections according to clinical practice guidelines.

- Describes a survey measuring knowledge and attitudes regarding pain.

- Describes a survey to assess physicians' knowledge and attitudes with respect to end-of-life care.

- Describes a survey for nurses to assess their knowledge and use of infant care practices.

- Describes a self-report questionnaire on pressure-ulcer prevention.

- Describes the evaluation of an educational intervention on the management of depressive disorders and its impact on readiness to change.

- Describes the evaluation of an implementation program designed to improve nursing staff knowledge of, and adherence to, a music protocol for people with dementia in long-term care settings.

- Describes an interdisciplinary and multi-faceted KTE practice designed to promote use of evidence-based pain-management practices by physicians and nurses to decrease pain intensity among older, hospitalized adults.