The Approach to Knowledge Transfer and Exchange at the Institute for Work & Health

Ron Saunders
(on behalf of the extended KTE family at IWH)

Prevention Knowledge Exchange Group
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IWH Definition of KTE (and goal)

A process of exchange between researchers and stakeholders/knowledge-users designed to make relevant research information available and accessible to stakeholders for use in practice, planning and policy-making
Who are the users of IWH research?

Health and safety associations
Health and safety practitioners: ergonomists, consultants
Workplaces (including managers and worker representatives)
Government
Workers’ compensation boards
Employers and employer associations
Unions
Workers and injured worker associations
Clinical practitioners: physiotherapists, kinesiologists, chiropractors, occupational therapists, nurses
Disability management professionals
Health and safety system partners

**Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB)**

**Ministry of Labour (MOL)**

**Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW)**

**Workers Health & Safety Centre (WHSC)**

**Other agencies:** e.g. Office of the Worker Advisor, Employer Advisor, etc.

**Centres for Research Expertise**
- Prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders (CRE-MSD)
- Occupational Disease (CREOD)
- Occupational Cancer Research Centre (OCRC)

**Sector-based Health & Safety Associations**
- Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS)
- Public Services Health & Safety Association (PSHSA)
- Infrastructure Safety Association (IHSA)
- Workplace Safety North (WSN)

**Institute for Work & Health (IWH)**
KTE Structure at IWH
How do we achieve our goal

1. Build stakeholder networks and relationships

2. Build stakeholder/knowledge user engagement into research process

3. Enhance capacity in our audiences to better understand and make use of evidence

4. Develop tools, communication technologies and techniques that facilitate the dissemination and application of research evidence
Integrated KTE strategies and activities

- Networks and relationships
- Build capacity to use research
- Communicate findings
- Engage KU in research process
Networks and relationships

• Regular meetings with:
  - health and safety system partners
  - policy officials
  - influential practitioners
Engage KU in research process

• Regular consultations on emerging issues
• Pre-grant focus groups/consultations
• Stakeholder participation in advisory committees or as research team members
• Follow ups to identify how research is used
Communicate findings

• Evidence-based tools/guidelines
• Newsletters (At Work, IWH News)
• Research summaries
• Summaries of systematic reviews (Sharing Best Evidence)
• Briefings on policy issues (Issue Briefing)
• Via our website, social media, e-alerts
Build capacity to use research

- “What Researchers Mean By” column
- Workshops on how to conduct systematic reviews
- Consultations with knowledge users
Stakeholder engagement spectrum

Focus on dissemination

Network members
Provide feedback on relevance; give advice on new projects
(ep-KTE/i-KTE)

Advisory committee
Gives advice at key stages of the project
(i-KTE)

Research team participant/collaborator
Helps with: intervention planning and implementation, data collection, general feedback
(i-KTE)

Co-investigator
(Full member of the research team)
Collaborates/helps in: forming the research question, planning the project, executing the project, making sense of the outcomes, framing the messages, writing final papers and presentations
(i-KTE)

+Uptake, use, and impact
Integrating KTE into the research process

- Identifying emerging issues
- Developing research plans
- Supporting grant applications
- Fine tuning research strategies
- Reviewing draft findings
- Disseminating results

Build Networks

Build capacity to use research
Measuring reach and impact
Tracking reach

• Numbers tracked
  ◦ Grants received, journal articles published
  ◦ Subscribers to newsletters and other products
  ◦ Website visitors, page views and downloads
  ◦ Media mentions
  ◦ Presentations to stakeholders
  ◦ Stakeholder meetings
  ◦ Network meetings
Measuring impact

- Tracking use of our work and documenting impact on policies, practices and health and safety outcomes

- Difficult to do quantitatively. We rely mainly on testimonials and case studies

- Case studies tell stories of use and/or impact of our work

- We identify case study candidates through testimonials, advisory committees, research collaborations, and by monitoring reports of WSIB and MOL. (Our integrated approach to KTE helps us identify impact.)
Research Impact Model

Type 1 case study: Evidence of the diffusion of research
Evidence that IWH research is referred to by external stakeholders

Type 2: Evidence of research informing decision-making
Evidence that IWH research affects legislation, policies, programs, workplace practice or clinical practice

Type 3: Evidence of societal impact
Evidence that IWH research contributes to changes in outcomes, e.g. work injury/illness rates, disability duration (Attribution a challenge—but occasionally a policy official is explicit)
Research impact case study categories

**Type 1:**
Evidence of diffusion of research evidence

**Type 2:**
Evidence of research informing decision-making

**Type 3:**
Evidence of societal impact: Health benefits, Economic benefits

- Common, simple to document
- Less common, moderate effort to document
- Attribution and benefits difficult to estimate
And hot off the press...
Integrated Knowledge Transfer and Exchange: An Organizational Approach for Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

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Abstract

Background Knowledge transfer and exchange (KTE) is a process of making relevant research information available and accessible for use in practice or policy. Integrated KTE, where knowledge users are engaged in the research process, is considered to better facilitate uptake and use. The objective of this article is to describe a fully integrated KTE approach developed over the past 20 years.

Analysis A case study approach describes knowledge user engagement, as well as the integration of communications within KTE.

Conclusion and implications The organizational KTE approach described is flexible and can be adapted to a variety of research areas.

Keywords Integrated knowledge transfer and exchange; Stakeholder engagement; Communications; Knowledge transfer and exchange practitioner

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