A framework for international dissemination of physical activity evidence

A summary of

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Relevance For Public Health
International dissemination of physical activity and public health initiatives is important for sharing evidence-based approaches with organizations around the world. In addition, understanding the processes of diffusion and dissemination in an international context will support the effective replication and extension of future initiatives across countries and regions. The paper presents four dissemination case studies: (1) tobacco control, (2) physical activity measurement and surveillance systems, (3) physical activity in South America and (4) dissemination of a World Health Organization (WHO) initiative.

Description
This article provides a framework for approaches to the international diffusion and dissemination of physical activity evidence-based initiatives.

The framework includes a six-step approach for the dissemination of physical activity and public health work. The steps are described using relevant international examples related to the rationale and evidence base of the intervention, target audience, communication, key stakeholders, barriers and facilitators, and evaluation.

Implementing the Tool
Who is Involved?
Public health practitioners and researchers involved in dissemination of physical activity evidence and initiatives are involved in this framework.

Steps for Using Tool
Dissemination is defined as “a systematic process through which information messages are distributed, and by which intended audiences receive, accept, and utilize the information.” Dissemination includes the following steps:

- communication of information
- use of defined channels and media to promulgate messages
- intended reach of various desired target groups

Dissemination is one aspect of the diffusion process, where diffusion for innovations is defined much more broadly as “innovation development and testing, innovation dissemination, its adoption by a population, implementation into that population, and maintenance or sustainability of the innovation.” In an international context, diffusion and dissemination efforts tend to follow the “S-shaped” adoption curve.

The six steps of the framework for international physical activity dissemination include:

1. Describe the innovation, its rationale and evidence base, and its relevance in an international context.
2. Describe the target audience for dissemination and the sequence, timing and format of dissemination strategies.
3. Define the international communication channels for the innovation.
4. Determine the role of key policymakers and sustainable partnerships that are needed to implement the innovation at different levels.
5. Identify the barriers and facilitators of the innovation in the international context.
6. Conduct research and evaluation to understand the dissemination process.

Evaluation and Measurement Characteristics

Evaluation
Information not available

Validity
Not applicable

Reliability
Not applicable

Methodological Rating
Not applicable

Tool Development

Developers
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Method of Development

The framework is based on expert opinion and experiences. Notably, the authors recognize that the field of dissemination in terms of “what works” is still growing.

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These summaries are written by the NCCMT to condense and to provide an overview of the resources listed in the Registry of Methods and Tools and to give suggestions for their use in a public health context. For more information on individual methods and tools included in the review, please consult the authors/developers of the original resources.
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