

# Equity-focused knowledge translation toolkit

## A summary of

Bowen, S., Botting, I., & Roy, J. (2011). Promoting action on equity issues: a knowledge-to-action handbook. Edmonton, AB: School of Public Health, University of Alberta.



National Collaborating Centre  
for Methods and Tools

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## Categories:

Tool, Synthesize, Adapt, Implement, Evaluate, KT plan, Organizational change, Partnership development and maintenance, Program planning, Stakeholder analysis and engagement

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## Tool

## Relevance For Public Health

This toolkit has specific relevance to public health, and discusses some common barriers to moving evidence into practice that the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) faced with their Language Access service. Inclusion of qualitative evidence is discussed, as well as the necessity of developing a business case for interventions. This toolkit would be useful to any public health professional working to implement evidence in practice in other health equity contexts.

## Description

This toolkit provides guidance on evidence-informed decision making to address health equity issues. Drawing on the results of a Knowledge to Action research project, funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, this resource provides a framework and worksheets that can be used to develop an [equity-focused knowledge translation](#) strategy.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health equity as "the absence of unfair and avoidable or remediable differences in health among population groups defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically" (WHO 2007, p. 7). As such, health inequities are health differences that are unfair and socially produced. For more equity resources, see [NCCDH's Resource Library](#).

This toolkit provides case examples and worksheets to guide the user in addressing health inequities. There are four major sections:

- Section 1: Knowledge Translation 101 (an overview of knowledge translation)
- Section 2: Getting ready (practical guidance to frame a knowledge translation strategy)
- Section 3: Starting in the right place (a six-step process to plan an equity-focused knowledge translation strategy based on organizational readiness)
- Section 4: Developing a comprehensive strategy (concrete examples of strategies for using evidence to address health inequities)

## Implementing the Tool

### Who is Involved?

Numerous individuals will be involved throughout the planning and implementation of an equity-focused knowledge translation strategy. On pg. 24, examples of different roles involved are provided for two different equity initiatives, a Language Access Initiative and a Language and Ethnicity Indicators Initiative. Worksheet One also helps the user to clarify who is affected by the issue at hand and who is in a position to use the knowledge to create change.

### Steps for Using Tool

The following steps, which may be used in an iterative manner, provide guidance for using evidence to address health inequities. These steps are outlined in Section Two of the toolkit, with Knowledge Translation phases 1-6 detailed in Section Three.

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## **Step 1: Build a coalition of partners**

- Identify stakeholder groups who will be involved.
- Determine the format for working group meetings.
- Select individuals who best represent the perspectives of your stakeholder groups, including organizational champions to support your knowledge translation strategy.

## **Step 2: Determine the current challenge**

- Planning your equity-focused knowledge translation strategy is delineated in a six-step process:

### Phase 1: Understand and frame the issue

- Determine what is known about the issue.
- Determine barriers to use of evidence.
- *Worksheet 2: Framing the Problem*

### Phase 2: Get an issue on the agenda

- Determine the nature and extent of the problem and its impact in order to get the issue on the policy/planning agenda.
- *Worksheet 3: Getting an Issue on the Agenda*

### Phase 3: Inform a response

- When the issue is already on the agenda, develop a policy/program response to your issue.
- Interpret evidence in context.
- Identify the specific dimensions of the issue around which decisions will be made.
- Develop a business case for your solution.
- *Worksheet 4: Informing the Response*

### Phase 4: Inform implementation

- Assess evidence to inform how your proposed solution will address the issue through an implementation strategy.
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of your initiative.
- *Worksheet 5: Informing Implementation*

### Phase 5: Change practice

- Engage program managers and staff to gain their support to change practice.
- Assess barriers and motivators to change.
- Ensure the new practice is more efficient and satisfying than the previous practice.
- *Worksheet 6: Changing Practice*

### Phase 6: Maintain support

- Keep the issue on the policy/program agenda.
- Support continual learning and development.
- Identify principles or characteristics associated with success to support transferring initiatives to other contexts (transferability vs. replicability).
- *Worksheet 7: Maintaining Support*

## **Step 3: Clarify your intended audience**

- Differentiate between stakeholders (interested and affected parties) and knowledge users.
- Understand that intended users will be different at different stages of your KT stage.
- *Worksheet 1: Interested and Affected Parties vs. Knowledge Users*

After these steps are used to create the plan and set up the intervention, Section Four, "Go," provides concrete examples of strategies to use to put the plan into action and tips for documenting and communicating the implementation process.

## **Evaluation and Measurement Characteristics**

### **Evaluation**

Information not available

### **Validity**

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Not applicable

### Reliability

Not applicable

### Methodological Rating



Not applicable

## Tool Development

### Developers

Sarah Bowen  
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### Method of Development

This toolkit seeks to provide practical guidance to those working to address health inequities. It is based on the results of a research project funded by a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Knowledge-to-Action grant. The research project assessed effective strategies to implement evidence into health care planning and decision making within the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority to address health inequities on five diversity issues. The strategies presented in this toolkit are based on the evaluation of effective strategies for five different projects, though many of the examples presented are from a language access initiative. The five projects are:

- providing trained health interpreter services
- integrating language and ethnicity indicators into an electronic hospital information system
- adopting an organization diversity framework
- developing a coordinated health response for newly arrived immigrants and refugees
- developing a community health assessment report to inform planning for ethno-cultural communities.

### Release Date

2011

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## Resources

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Title of Primary Resource</b> | Promoting action on equity issues: a knowledge-to-action handbook.   |
| <b>File Attachment</b>           | None   |
| <b>Web-link</b>                  | <a href="http://www.wrha.mb.ca/professionals/language/files/EquityIssues-Handbook.pdf">http://www.wrha.mb.ca/professionals/language/files/EquityIssues-Handbook.pdf</a>            |
| <b>Reference</b>                 | Bowen, S., Botting, I., & Roy, J. (2011). <i>Promoting action on equity issues: a knowledge-to-action handbook</i> . Edmonton. AB: School of Public Health, University of Alberta. |
| <b>Type of Material</b>          | Toolkit  |
| <b>Format</b>                    | On-line Access   |
| <b>Cost to Access</b>            | None.  |
| <b>Language</b>                  | English  |
| <b>Conditions for Use</b>        | Not specified  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Title of Supplementary Resource</b> | A Conceptual Framework for Action on the Social Determinants of Health  |
| <b>File Attachment</b>                 | None  |
| <b>Web-link</b>                        | <a href="http://www.who.int/social_determinants/resources/csdh_framework_action_05_07.pdf">http://www.who.int/social_determinants/resources/csdh_framework_action_05_07.pdf</a>   |
| <b>Reference</b>                       | World Health Organization. (2007). <i>A Conceptual Framework for Action on the Social Determinants of Health</i> . Geneva: Commission on Social Determinants of Health. Retrieved from: <a href="http://www.who.int/social_determinants/resources/csdh_framework_action_05_07.pdf">http://www.who.int/social_determinants/resources/csdh_framework_action_05_07.pdf</a> |
| <b>Type of Material</b>                | Discussion paper  |
| <b>Format</b>                          | On-line Access  |
| <b>Cost to Access</b>                  | None.   |
| <b>Language</b>                        | English   |
| <b>Conditions for Use</b>              | Not specified   |

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