Tool: Is research working for you?

A summary of
Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement. (2014). Is research working for you? A self-assessment tool and discussion guide for health services management and policy organizations. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement.

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Categories: Tool, Implement, Organizational capacity and management **Tool**	Date posted: May 27, 2009	Date updated: October 3, 2017

Relevance For Public Health

The tool was developed for use in health service organizations, including policy environments (e.g. provincial/territorial ministries of health), hospitals, professional practices, long-term care, and community health. This tool can be used for any public health context. For example, a public health organization could use this tool to evaluate an organization's capacity to use evidence for decision-making and offer ideas for application of evidence for organizational decision-making.

Description

This tool aims to help an organization evaluate its strengths and gaps related to research application, and to incorporate research in its plans. Public health organizations must make structural, service and financial decisions in a rapidly changing, complex environment (CHSRF, 2005). In a political climate that emphasizes governance and accountability structures, using research to complement decision making is essential. The "Is research working for you?" tool assesses the organization's capacity to use research evidence, including the availability of evidence; the ability to assess evidence quality; and the capability to disseminate evidence for decision-making (Thornhill, Judd, & Clements, 2009). This tool emphasizes the organization's capacity to plan and evaluate research use, not the individual practitioner's capacity to apply evidence to practice. While this tool was not created originally for public health, it can be used by decision-makers to identify how a public health organization looks for evidence, the ability of its staff to assess the quality and relevance of that evidence, and the ability of the organization to create user-friendly methods to disseminate that evidence.

Implementing the Tool

Who is Involved?

This tool for planning and evaluating an application is completed through discussion by decision-makers and interested individuals within the organization (known as cross-organizational discussion).

Steps for Using Tool

Complete the tool's four categories to assess the organization's capacity to use research:

1. Acquire: Can your organization find and obtain the research findings it needs?
2. Assess: Can your organization assess research findings to ensure they are reliable, relevant and applicable to you?
3. Adapt: Does your organization present the research to decision-makers in a useful way?
4. Apply: Are there skills, structures, processes and a culture in your organization to promote and use research findings in decision-making? Each question in each category is rated from 1 to 5; 1 indicating that an organization has a low capacity to assess and use research evidence, and 5 indicating that an organization is well-equipped to assess and use research evidence.

The cross-organizational discussion can be more valuable than the actual answer reached.

Evaluation and Measurement Characteristics

Evaluation

Has been evaluated.

An evaluation of this tool was completed which involved 32 focus groups across Canada with a variety of health service organizations. The evaluation tested the "user friendliness" of the tool, the ability of the tool to identify resources for research, and group consensus (Thornhill et al., 2009). The results of this evaluation show that the tool has good usability and strong response variability in long-term care, non-governmental and community-based organizations (Kothari, Edwards, Hamel & Judd, 2009). This means that the tool is valuable in assessing the skills and resources needed for research use. However, the tool was less useful in the government sector, suggesting that additional tailoring of the instrument may be needed (Kothari, Edwards, Hamel & Judd, 2009). Furthermore, this tool can distinguish between organizations that frequently use research relative to lower-use organizations. This was evident in differences in their scores, suggesting the tool has adequate discriminant validity.

Validity

Validity properties meet accepted standards.

Face and content validity were completed using 32 focus groups across four sectors of Canadian health care organizations (Thornhill, et al., 2009). The scale was modified based on results. The tool was re-launched for use after this evaluation (CHSRF, 2005). Further discussion of the tool's validation process will be released in an upcoming peer-reviewed publication (Thornhill et al., 2009).

Reliability

Information not available

Methodological Rating

Unknown/No evidence

Tool Development

Developers

Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement
Website: http://www.cfhi-fcass.ca/Home.aspx

Method of Development

Information not available.

Release Date

2005

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Resources

Title of Primary Resource	Is research working for you? A self-assessment tool and discussion guide for health services management and policy organizations
File Attachment	None
Web-link	http://www.cfhi-fcass.ca/Libraries/Documents/SAT-Self-Assessment-Tool.sflb.ashx
Reference	Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement. (2014). *Is research working for you? A self-assessment tool and discussion guide for health services management and policy organizations.* Ottawa, ON: Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement.
Type of Material	Instruction manual
Format	On-line Access
Cost to Access	None.
Language	English, French
Conditions for Use	© 2014, Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement

Title of Supplementary Resource	(Re)Introducing the self assessment tool that is helping decision-makers assess their organizations capacity to use research
File Attachment	None
Web-link	http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19142059
Reference	Thornhill, J., Judd, M., & Clements, D. (2009). (Re)Introducing the self assessment tool that is helping decision-makers assess their organization's capacity to use research. *Healthcare Quarterly, 12*(1), 22-24.
Type of Material	Journal article
Format	Periodical
Cost to Access	Must purchase periodical
Language	English
Conditions for Use	

Title of Supplementary Resource	Is research working for you? validating a tool to examine the capacity of health organizations to use research
File Attachment	None
Web-link	http://www.implementationscience.com/content/4/1/46/abstract
Reference	Kothari, A., Edwards, N., Hamel, N., & Judd, M. (2009). Is research working for you? validating a tool to examine the capacity of health organizations to use research. *Implementation Science, 4,* 46.
Type of Material	Journal article
Format	Periodical
Cost to Access	None.
Language	English
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