Dissemination planning tool

**A summary of**
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD.

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**Relevance For Public Health**
The guidelines provided in this tool can be used to support the dissemination of public health innovations (e.g., a mental health program for adults living in the community). The tool is designed to help users think about the processes they would use to disseminate findings or products so that they have "real world" impact in practice.

**Description**
The six-step tool guides the reader through the creation of a dissemination plan. With prompting questions and tables, this easy-to-use handbook helps identify relevant issues needed to develop a comprehensive dissemination workplan.

The planning tool questions prompt the reader to consider the following six issues when developing a dissemination plan:

- Specify your research product.
- Identify end users.
- Work with dissemination partners.
- Communicate your message.
- Evaluate success.
- Articulate the dissemination work plan.

The conceptual framework used for this tool is the Framework for Knowledge Transfer of Patient Safety Research. The Framework is based on several theories and models, as well as a literature review. Models include Rogers' theory of innovation diffusion and Lavis' organizing framework for knowledge transfer. A synthesis of all sources identified key aspects of dissemination planning.

The tool consists of the following elements, which specifically draw from Lavis' organizing framework for knowledge transfer:

- **The message**: Transfer actionable messages based on a summary of the evidence to decision makers and potential users (rather than the results of a single study or a report).

- **The target audience**: Specify potential users of a research product and identify the types of decisions they encounter. Define the decision-making environments for each potential user (what constraints and barriers are present).

- **The messenger**: Use credible messengers, such as opinion leaders or knowledge brokers, who are respected and trusted by potential users and who can influence behaviours of the target audiences.

- **Communication strategies**: Use interactive strategies, such as academic detailing, where potential users and researchers can interact to enhance learning. These strategies are more effective than passive communication strategies.

- **Evaluation of evidence use**: Define outcome measures to assess if research evidence is used and how it
Implementing the Tool

Who is Involved?

Primarily program directors and managers would be involved in using this tool to guide dissemination of an innovation in conjunction with ongoing activities.

Steps for Using Tool

This six-step tool includes questions and worksheets in the following areas.

1) Specify your research product.
   - Define your research product by drawing a boundary around your findings (to distinguish this product from other research findings).
   - How does your research address a relevant public health issue?
   - How is your product distinct from existing approaches?

2) Identify end users.
   - List end users (organizations, roles, professionals).
   - Specify how the research product is relevant for each end user.
   - List facilitators and barriers for end users applying this product in practice.
   - Identify how end users have been involved in research development or how they can be involved.

3) Work with dissemination partners.
   - Identify opinion leaders, organizations and informal networks to test your research product and to access end users.
   - Identify how your dissemination partners benefit from working with you and your research product.
   - Build ongoing relationships with your dissemination partners to facilitate communication of your research product through their channels.

4) Communicate your message.
   - Identify end users' information-seeking practices.
   - Select relevant methods of communication to reach end users.
   - Select methods that facilitate your dissemination partners' efforts to communicate research products.
   - Identify barriers end users may encounter with communication methods.
   - Plan for accommodations for barriers to communication methods.

5) Evaluate success.
   - Develop an evaluation plan for the dissemination strategy.
   - Identify dissemination goals and indicators.
   - Obtain feedback from end users.
   - Involve dissemination partners in evaluating dissemination activities.

6) Articulate dissemination work plan.
   - After considering the first five steps, develop a summary and workplan of the dissemination strategy.

Evaluation and Measurement Characteristics

Evaluation
Information not available

Validity
Information not available

Reliability
Information not available

Methodological Rating

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.
Unknown/No evidence

Tool Development

Developers
Deborah Carpenter
Veronica Nieva
Tarek Albaghal
Joann Sorra Westat

Method of Development
This planning tool was developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), a division of the Department of Health and Human Services. The AHRQ's Patient Safety Research Coordinating Center (AHRQ-PSRCC) developed this planning tool to help patient safety researchers spread research findings in a clinical context.

Release Date
2005

Contact Person
Deborah Carpenter
1650 Research Boulevard
Rockville, USA 20850
Phone: (301) 314-2475
Email: deborahcarpenter@westat.com

Resources
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<td>Type of Material</td>
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