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How to use the KT Planning Primer presented by three advisors from the Public Health Agency of Canada

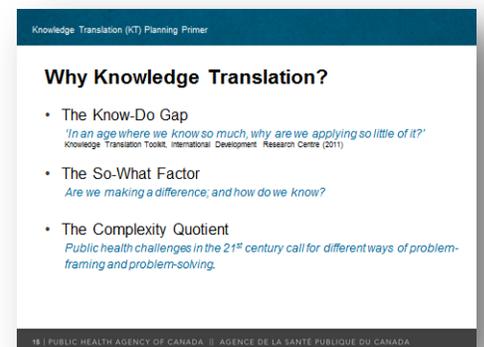
featuring a story of implementation from the regional health authorities of Annapolis Valley Health, South Shore Health, and South West Health, Nova Scotia

Introduction

Welcome to the 11th installment in the Spotlight on KT Methods and Tools series by CHNET-Work! and the NCCMT. This episode will focus on the KT Planning Primer, and features three advisors on tap: Nira Lalji and Andrea Simpson are analysts with the Public Health Agency of Canada, and Ann Coombs is a public health officer/epidemiologist within the Public Health Agency of Canada in Western Nova Scotia. Today's Fireside Chat will delve into the applied side of Knowledge Translation, by looking at the design of the KT Planning Primer, and a story from the field on using the KT Planning Primer in practice.

Why is Knowledge Translation important?

Ms. Simpson explains that, at its most basic, Knowledge Translation converts knowledge into action. She identifies three reasons why KT so essential in public health: One reason is that it addresses the *Know-Do Gap* (i.e. the gap between knowing something works and actually doing it). Another reason is our lack of knowledge around whether our actions are having a desired impact, known as the *So What Factor*. The final reason KT is so critical -- the *Complexity Quotient* -- reflects the 21st-century public health practitioners' need for a multitude of ways to frame and solve problems.



A resource from the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools www.nccmt.ca

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Guiding Principles for Knowledge Translation

In KT, considering who is going to use the knowledge is as important as the knowledge itself. Ms. Simpson stresses that KT relies on relationships -- collaboration and personal contact between knowledge producers and users -- to allow evidence to inspire and motivate. Ideally, knowledge producers should consider the goal of sharing knowledge before engaging in KT. Remember, knowledge created in isolation is less likely to be used; knowledge that is perceived as relevant by others is more likely to be passed along and used.

The KT Planning Primer

The KT Planning Primer began with a comprehensive search for KT planning tools that uncovered a gap in easy-to-use KT resources. The available tools were geared primarily toward academics, and were generally inaccessible for widespread public use. At the same time, funders were requesting that applicants develop KT plans as part of their application process. From this, the KT Planning Primer was developed as a way to make the KT process less intimidating.

The resulting tool breaks the KT process down into steps (see diagram to the right). The tool developers intentionally avoided arranging components in a straight line to illustrate that the steps are more interdependent than sequential. Users are prompted to think about who the knowledge is intended for at the very start of the project, before data collection begins. To use the tool, users complete a worksheet for each audience. Worksheets can be completed both in prospective planning and retrospective evaluation, though prospective use is always ideal. A user guide featuring a series of questions and tips is available for each worksheet, leading to a much more manageable KT Planning Primer experience. Ms. Lalji strongly advises users not to jump into the worksheets immediately but rather to first read the accompanying user guide.

Steps of the KT Planning Primer

The KT Planning Primer is split into three sections, which are reflected in the colours of the diagram. The tool's design builds from general to specific, making it as accessible as

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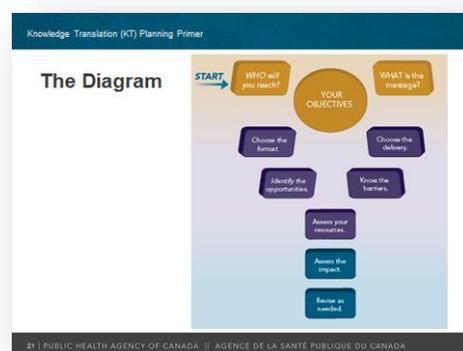
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Knowledge Translation (KT) Planning Primer

Two Guiding Ideas

- 1) The decision to create knowledge should be based on a plan to inform, engage or influence others.
- 2) The process of creating knowledge should not be separate from the process of disseminating knowledge.

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Knowledge Translation (KT) Planning Primer

The User Guide – Who?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	TIPS
Which audience do you want to reach? E.g. Front-line workers, supervisors, researchers, community organisations, special interest groups, policy makers, etc.	✓ Involve key people from the start to improve your impact. For example, invite members of the audience to sit on the project advisory committee. This will go a long way to helping you shape your message(s) and share knowledge effectively.
What are the most important characteristics of your audience when it comes to sharing knowledge with them? E.g. Education level, expertise, time available, organisational priorities, readiness for change, etc.	✓ Information is shared in different ways by different cultures. Consider the culture of the population or organisation that you want to reach when communicating.
Who should deliver the message?	✓ Some audiences may have a natural go-between. Identify a trusted and credible messenger.

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possible to users of all levels. In the first section -- *Who?* -- users identify their target audience(s) and consider the objectives or goals of the KT efforts. Although those engaged in KT often focus on the message, users should remember to first specify their target audience and goals.

The second section -- *How?* -- asks users to consider the delivery method for the message, and includes an appendix with helpful details. Users are prompted to reflect on the available opportunities, as well as the existing barriers and obstacles, for knowledge sharing and to assess available resources. This focuses attention on necessary human and financial resources, and provides an opportunity to engage members of the target audience to ask whether the knowledge being produced will be relevant to them.

The third section of the KT Planning Primer relates to *Impact*. Specifically, users first consider how they will evaluate the reach and use of the knowledge they disseminate. Often overlooked, this step in the KT process is extremely important for sustained success. The last step of the process is *Revision as Needed*. KT efforts should be updated based on feedback and the most recently available knowledge to maintain currency and relevance.

The KT Planning Primer in Practice

As an epidemiologist, Ms. Coombs was charged with developing a Community Health Profile (CHP) for the regional health authorities of Annapolis Valley Health, South Shore Health, and South West Health, representing approximately 200,000 residents in western Nova Scotia. From the inception of the project, the team hoped the knowledge they gained from developing the CHPs would be used by people working in public health in the area. They adopted the KT Planning Primer to ensure a structured, deliberate KT plan was in place from the beginning.

As directed by the tool, the team first considered who they wanted to reach. They identified potential champions who could further the reach of their report, including key frontline Public Health staff and many District Health Authority (DHA) decision-making teams from among their extensive list of

Knowledge Translation (KT) Planning Primer

The User Guide – How?

HOW – CHOOSE THE DELIVERY.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	TIPS
What are the most appropriate ways to share this knowledge with your audience? E.g. Mail-out, website, social media, email, ceremony of practice, discussion forum, conference presentation, training session, sharing circle, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Share your message repeatedly using a variety of ways to communicate. This usually leads to a greater impact. ✓ Dissemination is a passive form of sharing. While it may be easier to reach a broad audience, dissemination is a less effective form of KT. ✓ Exchange is an interactive form of sharing, leading to better uptake and application and—sometimes—a better KT product/activity.

Δ See Appendix 2.

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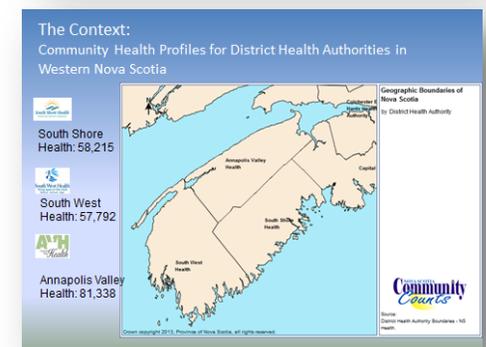
Knowledge Translation (KT) Planning Primer

The User Guide – Impact

IMPACT – ASSESS THE IMPACT.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	TIPS
How will you monitor/evaluate the reach and use of this knowledge? E.g. Questionnaires, website visits, interviews, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider which indicators you could use. ✓ Consider who should monitor/evaluate. ✓ Invite feedback from your audience.
How you reached your audience? How you met your objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ E.g. How to improve the KT product/activity and ideas for follow-up.

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WHO do we want to reach?

- Public Health Staff
- DHA Leadership Teams, Quality Teams, Community Portfolios, Board, Community Health Boards/Coordinators
- Key staff who will be Champions for the report

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audiences. The next step was to clarify the objectives of the KT efforts. Two of the many goals of the project were ensuring awareness of the CHPs and increasing frontline staff's understanding of their communities. The third step of this section was to develop the message. The team decided to produce a "snapshot" and a detailed document for each CHP, both of which would provide demographic, health status, and health indicator information.

At the *How?* step, the team considered the format for delivering the message. Hard copies of the CHPs were already planned, but the team decided on a few added options to increase reach: Powerpoint presentations, interactive workshops, and a newly-invented "Bingo" game based on the CHP data. The team then identified potential barriers: their diverse audiences required tailored messages; and they needed to ensure their data were presented clearly and with the necessary context. Conversely, the team was also able to identify several resources, including an experienced advisory group, a writing team with content expertise, and communications support.

In the final section of the tool, the team discussed the intended impact of the CHPs beyond the increased awareness of content. In order to optimize impact of the KT efforts, future plans include the long-term evaluation and integration of CHPs and collection of user feedback.

Drawing on her experience with the KT Planning Primer, Ms. Coombs emphasizes the value of planning ahead as a team. She strongly recommends understanding your intended audience and tailoring the information you share so it is relevant to them.

HOW?

Potential Barriers:

- Diverse audience
- "Technical jargon"
- Excessive focus on data

Resources :

- Advisory Group
- Writing Team
- External & internal communications support

IMPACT?

- Some objectives already met
- Longer term evaluation of integration into practice
- KT tool even more helpful for topic-specific reports

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