

Putting Research to Work

Guidelines for Getting Implementable Recommendations from Syntheses

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Objectives

- Brief introduction to the Foundation
- Provide an overview of CHSRF's Decision Support Synthesis (DSS) process
- Identify the questions to be addressed in contextualizing the DSS – to develop implementable recommendations
- Questions/discussion

About us

- Independent, not-for-profit organization
- Registered charity under the Canadian Corporations Act (1997)
- \$151.1M endowment; less than \$90M now
- \$15.6M operating budget (2009)
- Board of Trustees – nationally representative body; researchers and decision makers

Our Vision

Timely, appropriate and high-quality services
that improve the health of all Canadians.

Our Strategic Priorities (3)

2009-2014

Engaging and supporting citizens
Accelerating evidence-informed change
Promoting policy dialogue

Knowledge Brokering



Decision Support Syntheses

- *Decision support* syntheses are distinct from *knowledge support* syntheses.
- Knowledge support syntheses summarize the research evidence and aim for greater general applicability and contribution to the knowledge pool. Cochrane-style systematic reviews are examples of high quality knowledge support syntheses.
- Decision support syntheses, on the other hand, summarize evidence and aim to produce recommendations in support of decision-making in a particular context, such as determining action on policy and practice, considering factors relevant to implementing change.

Characteristics of a DSS

- answers a **system-driven** question translated into a feasible scope of work through collaborative discussions between relevant decision makers and researchers;
- recognizes **multiple types of evidence**;
- includes **four major phases** of work that build on each other: defining the scope of review, summarizing the research, drawing out implications from the research, and creating recommendations for management or policy; and
- creates feasible and **implementable recommendations** by using a deliberative process that allows decision-makers and researchers to pool their judgments in interpreting and synthesizing both the research and other forms of evidence

System Driven

Creating a decision support synthesis is a **team effort** where different people participate with varying degrees of intensity, depending on the stage of the process.

- **Decision makers** lead in identifying the issue to be addressed, to ensure relevance and impact.
- **Researchers** are in charge of conducting the investigation in a way which ensures scientific rigour and should identify the implications for policy and practice from the research. The latter is done with some support from the decision makers to help contextualize the evidence.
- **Decision makers** and other **stakeholders** lead in articulating recommendations for policy and management or practice because of their knowledge of the decision-making context. This is done with some guidance from the researchers.

Multiple Types of Evidence

- A synthesis may include different types of evidence which can be clustered around scientific evidence from the clinical and social sciences and other relevant disciplines (including context-free and context-sensitive) and colloquial evidence, such as professional expertise or values.
- What makes evidence scientific is the manner of study.
- In the Decision Support Synthesis program, the commissioned investigative team collects the scientific evidence (grey and published literature) for scientific review and synthesis.
- If relevant, the team scientifically collects input from other sources - such as local or international key informants or experts to fill gaps from the literature, identify key contextual factors, such as cost and benefits.
- With this evidence in hand, the team considers and presents implications for policy and practice from their research.
- A deliberative process involving both the research team and decision makers is used to determine recommendations for action.

Deliberation

- **Deliberation** is a way of eliciting and combining different inputs to inform a decision.
- A deliberative process is undertaken at two stages of a Decision Support Synthesis project.
- specific core elements are recognized for the successful combination of evidence through any deliberative process
 - the presence of a strong chairperson (usually an independent facilitator),
 - the engagement of the researcher and decision-maker communities
 - and face-to-face discussions
- The optimal method for ranking and combining these different types of evidence is an issue yet to be resolved and is the **focus of research commissioned by the Foundation.**

Four Major Phases



Implementable Recommendations

- Developed by and for decision makers (policy makers, managers and practitioners) through dialogue with researchers and other stakeholders
- That provide practical directions for health service improvements
- Based upon the evidence

Key messages really help

CHSRF's 1:3:25 Format

- 1 page of key messages, including recommendations
- 3 pages of executive summary
- 25 pages of the synthesis research report



Dissemination strategy

Developed as part of the discussion with stakeholders, includes publication of the final report and may include:

- peer reviewed publications
- communications products tailored to specific audiences
- follow up exchanges with key informants to facilitate health service advancements

Examples of Completed Syntheses

- Inter-professional Collaboration and Quality Primary Healthcare
- Teamwork in Healthcare: Promoting Effective Teamwork in Healthcare in Canada
- Choices for Change: The Path for Restructuring Primary Healthcare Services in Canada
- Staffing for Safety: A Synthesis of the Evidence on Nurse Staffing and Patient Safety
- Commitment and Care: The benefits of a healthy workplace for nurses, their patients and the system
- Integrated Health Systems in Canada: Three Policy Syntheses: Questions and Answers

Thank you/merci

Stay tuned for the DSS Guide

For more information please visit our website:

http://www.chsrf.ca/dss/index_e.php

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