Integrating Evidence Into Health Policy: Navigating Cross-sectoral and Interdisciplinary Collaboration

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Integrating Evidence Into Health Policy: Navigating Cross-sectoral and Interdisciplinary Collaboration

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Abstract

The results of this review are specific to the health policy and public health literature in Europe, and cannot be generalized to settings outside of Europe.

Study participants

Of the 30 studies examined in this review, the majority (n=17) reported analysis based on interviews and surveys which gathered input from diverse perspectives, including:

- Policy-makers
- Researchers
- Public health experts
- Community members
- Healthcare professionals

Results

Factors that Facilitate Evidence-based Policy

- Awareness of and access to research
- Unrestricted by fees or subscription requirements

Barriers to Generating Evidence-based Policy

- A lack of motivation stemmed from perceptions that evidence is useless and irrelevant to policy decisions

A lack of skills and familiarity with research makes interpreting manuscripts difficult and the process of identifying evidence overwhelming.

Generalizability

The results of this review are specific to the health policy and public health literature in Europe, and cannot be generalized to settings outside of Europe.

Exclusion criteria

The search methodology and parameters of the research and conclusions of this review.

Methods

Two reviewers used terms including evidence-based, public health, policymaking, and Europe to search for articles across seven databases:

- PubMed
- Embase
- Cochrane Library
- Scopus
- Web of Science
- ClinicalKey
- Health and Safety Europe

Records identified through database searching (n = 22)

Abstracts screened (n = 2525)

Removed (n = 30)

Remaining after duplicate removal (n = 41)

Full text screened (n = 37)

Records included (n = 22)

Records excluded (n = 14)

- No English
- Published prior to 2004
- Academic source
- or
- Not peer-reviewed

Full text articles included for analysis (n = 22)

The absence of this facilitator was also reported as a barrier.

Implications

Researchers can build relationships with policymakers by including stakeholders throughout the research process, securing funding from reputable sources, publicly releasing outcomes, and gaining experience in politics to better understand application context and advance research literacy.

Research organizations can dedicate resources to investigating pertinent topics and repositioning negative perceptions about evidence. Existing influencers, such as political pressure (e.g. campaign donors, lobbies, advocacy groups, established parties) can be harnessed to amplify demand for policies based in evidence.

Researchers can increase the viability of evidence-based policy by streamlining reports for general audiences, publicizing findings outside academic circles, and storing research in databases that are publicly accessible and searchable.

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