

April 16, 2018

Mobilizing Evidence in Policy to Improve Lifetime Health Through Action on the Social Determinants of Health

The knowledge translation literature widely recommends that practitioners aim to maximize alignment between their research and the practices and priorities of knowledge users. This approach has proven a poor fit for mobilizing evidence about social determinants of health in policy. The well-documented social gradient is core knowledge in population health yet intimately coupled with the structuring of society such that those who would benefit most from equity-oriented policy are seldom well positioned to draft or enact it.

My doctoral research asks: which knowledge translation theories of change can lead to meaningful policy action to reduce the negative impact of social determinants on population health.

The study setting is an organization that works with evidence to improve child developmental outcomes that are strongly associated with social structures and inequities. I'm applying qualitative, comparative, case-study methodology and template analysis. The study builds on Weiss (1979) who describes distinct ways research influences policy. Analysis is informed by three dimensions of context (Contandriopoulos et al, 2010) that may help predict which form of influence is likely to be realized: (1) structuring and stability of institutions and social networks, (2) potential for polarization about knowledge use between potential users or groups (3) achievement of cost sharing in the work of KT.

I hope to contribute to understanding about knowledge mobilization in what I am operationalizing as "contested" policy contexts. At a practical level, I hope to identify principles or theories of change that might apply or might generalize to other applications. I am interested in feedback about how I describe and present the methodology and early findings of my work.

Contandriopoulos, D., Lemire, M., Denis, J., & Tremblay, É. (2010). Knowledge exchange processes in organizations and policy arenas: A narrative systematic review of the literature. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 88(4), 444-483. doi:10.1111/j.1468-0009.2010.00608.

Weiss, C. H. (1979). The many meanings of research utilization. *Public Administration Review*, 39(5), 426-431.

Graham Shaw

Bachelor Social Science, PhD candidate

School of Population and Public Health, Centre for Clinical Epidemiology and Evaluation

Rounds are held weekly on Mondays from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm in the VGH Research Pavilion, Room 700, 7th Floor, 828 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, BC.

Visit www.C2E2.ca for information about previous and upcoming rounds. If you are interested in presenting or attending remotely please email pamela.lee@ubc.ca.