Making the Most of the Best Evidence to Improve Outcomes for Children and Young People

Knowledge Translation and Implementation Coordinating Group

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Systematic reviews sum up the best available research on a specific question by synthesizing the results of several primary studies. They are in other words a reliable, high quality source of knowledge to professionals in human services and tools that should be integrated in the development of services in education, social care, health and other areas of human services.

However, around the world, social service systems often fail to use research evidence optimally to improve outcomes across the range of human services. This gap results in negative effects, such as a reduction in both quantity and quality of life and inefficient use of limited social services resources. As political and societal pressures to use research evidence in decision making continue to rise, there has been increased interest in the science and practice of Knowledge Translation and Implementation (KTI).

KTI, in a social service context, can be defined as "the planned and intentional use of strategies including synthesis, dissemination, exchange and implementation designed to put into practice a known activity, practices or program, which aims to provide more effective social services and products and strengthen the social care system" (adapted from Canadian Institutes of Health Research (ref) and Fixsen et al 2005). KTI strategies are used in social services to support evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM). EIDM refers to incorporating the best available research evidence into social services policy and program decision-making. The rationale for engaging in EIDM is the belief that optimal human service outcomes will result.

Translating and implementing best available research evidence into programmatic change is a complex process. Multiple barriers to EIDM exist at different levels. Examples of these include but are not limited to: the complexity of policy processes (conflicting and continuously changing political agendas, the challenge of communicating and integrating scientific knowledge into
policy development), the social care system itself (output focused rather then outcome focused service contracts, lack of financial incentives); and organisations, leaders of organisations and practitioners (limited access to research evidence, lack of knowledge, attitudes and skills in critically appraising and using evidence from the literature, lack of time and resistance to change).

**How can systematic reviews better play a part in supporting EIDM?**

The purpose of this facilitated workshop is:

1. To bring together practitioners, policy makers, decision makers and other social services professionals together with intermediary organisations that produce and/or use KTI focused systematic reviews,
2. To discuss components in developing an effective knowledge translation plan for systematic reviews
3. To discuss approaches to systematic review that promote KTI outcomes
4. To share and discuss current best practice in planning for high quality implementation from knowledge produced by systematic reviews

This workshop will be delivered by:

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