



# Deliberative Dialogues as a Knowledge Translation Strategy for System Level Decision-Making

**Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation**

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# Overview

- Context
  - Challenges in linking research to policy
  - Deliberative dialogues one promising knowledge translation (KT) strategy
  
- McMaster Health Forum
  - Building on Canada's reputation
  - Addressing pressing health challenges



## Overview (2)

- Evaluating deliberative dialogues
  - Formative and summative evaluations
  
- Case study
  - Chronic pain management in Canada
  
- Future



# Challenges in Linking Research to Policy

- Challenges to managers and policymakers using research evidence in and about health systems have been identified
  1. Research isn't valued as an information input
  2. Research isn't relevant
  3. Research isn't easy to use



## Challenges in linking research to policy (2)

3. Research isn't easy to use
  - research isn't communicated effectively
  - research isn't available when policymakers need it and in a form that they can use
  - policymakers lack mechanisms to prompt them to use research in policy-making
  - policymakers lack fora where policy challenges can be discussed with stakeholders and researchers



# Deliberative Dialogues One Promising KT Strategy

- KT strategies can facilitate decision-making at the system level by helping to overcome these barriers and ensure research is available and meaningful to decision makers
- But it is not clear what KT strategies are effective in specific policy contexts
- One promising KT strategy for use at the system level is deliberative dialogues



# Deliberative Dialogues One Promising KT Strategy (2)

- Factors that increase the use of research evidence in public policy-making
  - interactions between researchers and policymakers particularly when the interactions are based on informal (as opposed to prescribed, official or customary) relationships
  - timeliness
  - accordance between research evidence and the beliefs, values, interests or political goals and strategies of politicians, civil servants and stakeholders



# Deliberative Dialogues One Promising KT Strategy (3)

- Characteristics of deliberative dialogues that increase the prospects of research use in policy-making:
  - opportunities for researchers and policymakers to interact are created by bringing together those involved in an issue
  - timeliness is addressed by equipping policymakers with decision-relevant knowledge for when they need it and in a form they can use
  - help to identify accordances between the research evidence and the beliefs, values, interests or political goals and strategies of politicians, civil servants and stakeholders



# Questions

- How else might deliberative dialogues facilitate evidence-based decision-making at the system level?
- How else might deliberative dialogues help to overcome the barriers to research use by decision makers?

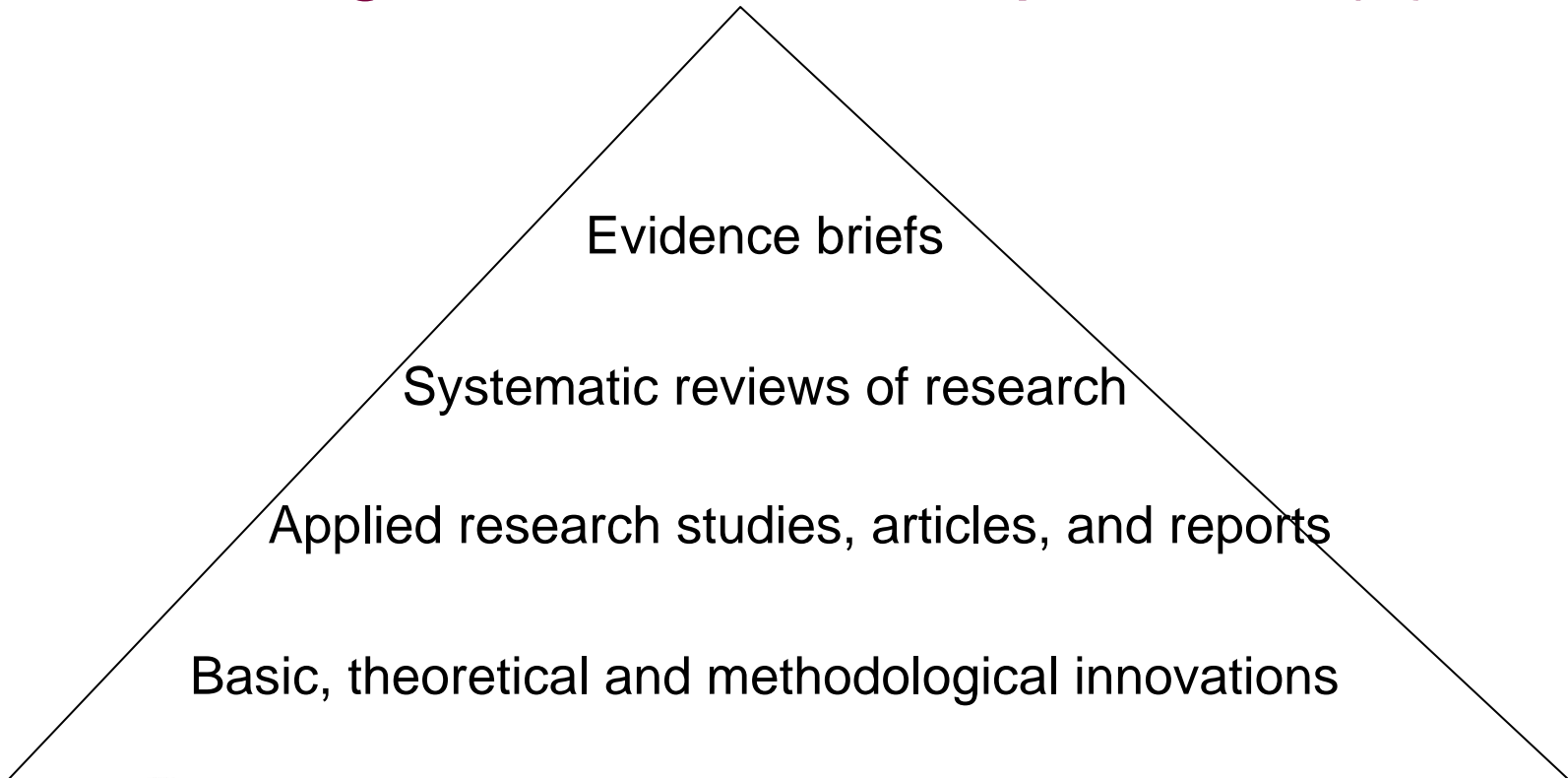


# Building on Canada's Reputation

- Evidence-based medicine → Evidence informed health systems
  - Developing and maintaining the world's most powerful databases of synthesized research evidence
  - Providing training to UN/government officials and stakeholders about how to mobilize synthesized research evidence to set agendas, take well-considered actions, and communicate the rationale for actions effectively
  - Pioneering in the preparation and evaluation of 'evidence briefs' that begin with a pressing health challenge and mobilize synthesized evidence about it



# Building on Canada's Reputation (2)





## Building on Canada's Reputation (3)

- Problem-based learning → Collective problem solving
  - Pioneering in the organization and evaluation of 'deliberative dialogues' at which pre-circulated evidence briefs serve as the starting point for off-the-record deliberations involving those who will be involved in or affected by a decision, with the goal of sparking insights about and generating action on the pressing health challenge
    - HIV prevention in 3 East African countries
    - Malaria treatment in 10 African countries
    - Access to primary healthcare in 4 Asian countries



## Building on Canada's Reputation (4)

- McMaster Health Forum provides the chance to
  - Bring the impacts 'closer to home' (Ontario and Canada)
  - Create a 'laboratory' for research into evidence briefs and stakeholder dialogues, among other innovations
  - Attract students who want to become action-oriented leaders



# Addressing Pressing Health Challenges

- Stakeholder dialogues (examples)
  - Addressing the access and quality gaps in cancer care delivery in the Hamilton region
  - Improving the management of diabetes in Ontario
  - Supporting chronic disease management in Ontario
  - Improving access to primary healthcare in Canada
  - Supporting chronic pain management in Canada



## Addressing Pressing Health Challenges (2)

- Faculty-led dialogues and debates
  - Enhancing value for money in both the Canadian and US healthcare systems
  - Engaging civil society in shaping health systems in order to achieve the health-related Millenium Development Goals
  
- Preparation of action-oriented leaders
  - Simulations of hospital Board, federal cabinet and World Health Organization (WHO) Executive Board meetings
  - Fellowships that culminate in internships at the WHO



## Addressing Pressing Health Challenges (3)

- Stakeholder dialogues, the Forum's signature program, share seven features that make them unique in the world
  - Consulting with event partners and (roughly 20) stakeholders to frame the terms of reference for the evidence brief
  - Preparing and circulating an evidence brief that mobilizes both global and local research evidence about the problem, three options for addressing the problem, and key implementation considerations (but no recommendations)
  - Convening 15-18 individuals for an off-the-record stakeholder dialogue chaired by a skilled, neutral facilitator (but no goal of consensus)



## Addressing Pressing Health Challenges (4)

- Stakeholder dialogues share seven features (2)
  - Preparing and circulating a high-level summary of the dialogue and video interviews with select dialogue participants
  - Preparing and delivering personalized briefings to key stakeholders
  - Providing a year-long literature service that will bring to attention newly published research evidence
  - Evaluating the key features of both the evidence brief and the deliberative dialogue



## Addressing Pressing Health Challenges (5)

- Dialogues require us
  - To see/predict and take advantage of windows of opportunity for making an impact by compressing this life cycle for some topics and expanding it for others
  - To engage stakeholders able to
    - Bring unique views and experiences to bear on a challenge and learn from the research evidence and from others' views and experiences
    - Champion within their respective constituencies the actions that will address the challenge creatively



## Addressing Pressing Health Challenges (6)

- Practical design features of stakeholder dialogues
  - ❑ consultation with all parties affected by the outcome
  - ❑ fair representation of scientists and stakeholders
  - ❑ high-quality syntheses of the scientific evidence
  - ❑ skillful chairing
  - ❑ pre-circulated evidence summaries
  - ❑ skilled facilitation
  - ❑ a Chatham House rule
  - ❑ a lack of emphasis on achieving consensus



# Questions

- What do you see as the potential advantages and disadvantages of deliberative dialogues as described here?
- What conditions might optimize the impact of a deliberative dialogue?



# Formative and Summative Evaluations

- Formative evaluations can begin to help us match key design features of deliberative dialogues to particular issues and contexts
  
- For each key design feature, we will ask
  - How useful did they find this approach (on a scale from 1=not at all useful to 7=useful)?
  - How could the stakeholder dialogue be improved in this regard?



## Formative and Summative Evaluations (2)

- We will also ask
  - How well did the deliberative dialogue achieve its purpose (on a scale from 1=failed to 7=achieved)?
  - What features of the dialogue should be retained?
  - What features of the dialogue should be changed?
  - What can others do better or differently to address the health-related challenge and what can you personally or your organization do better or differently?
  - Role and background



## Formative and Summative Evaluations (3)

- Summative evaluation after six months to assess what if any actions have been taken since the dialogue



## Question

- What do you see as the potential advantages and disadvantages of our planned formative evaluations?



# Case Study

- Stakeholder dialogue about chronic pain management across health systems in Canada
  - Consulting
  - Evidence brief
  - Dialogue
  - Summary of the dialogue and video interviews
  - Personalized briefings
  - Literature service
  - Evaluation



## Case Study (2)

- Consulting
  - Steering committee
  - Stakeholder interviews



## Case Study (3)

- Evidence brief
  - Definition of chronic pain
  - Groups that should be the focus for the equity analysis embedded in the evidence brief
  - Nature of the underlying problem
    - comparative data
  - Three viable policy or program options
    - systematic reviews



## Case Study (4)

- Dialogue
  - Representation of scientists and stakeholders
  - Pre-circulated evidence summary
  - Skilled facilitation
  - A Chatham House rule
  - A lack of emphasis on achieving consensus



## Case Study (5)

- Summary of the dialogue and video interviews
- Personalized briefings
- Literature service
- Evaluation



# Questions

- What system level issues are you involved in that might be addressed through a deliberative dialogue?
  - Who might you consult with?
  - What is the nature of the underlying problem?
  - What are three viable policy or programmatic options?
  - Who should attend the dialogue event?



# Future

- ❑ McMaster Health Forum
- ❑ Evaluation & research
  - Conduct summative evaluations of a concerted effort to match key design elements to particular contexts
  - Develop a model that describes deliberative dialogues as a KT strategy
  - Qualitative research to explore what a successful dialogue might look like
  - Testing a survey instrument designed to measure one possible outcome - behaviour intention



## Conclusion

- Making a difference in the lives of citizens and patients requires a dynamic process of meeting pressing challenges creatively
- Meeting pressing health challenges creatively requires evidence, insight, and action
- Deliberative dialogues can help to translate the necessary evidence into insight and action