

## **Measuring 'user-pull' research uptake by policy makers and stakeholders**

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In order to understand the way evidence is, or is not, implemented in policy, it is important to consider the range of strategies and mechanisms that can be used to facilitate the process of transfer or translation. John Lavis and colleagues have identified that the process of translating research into the policy context can involve both 'producer-push' and 'user-pull' strategies. User-pull strategies refer to efforts initiated by end-users of research, such as policy-makers, to gather and use research evidence in their decision making. This paper describes an approach to measuring user-pull uptake of research by the Centre for Research Excellence in Medical Workforce Dynamics.

The Centre's research efforts are focused on the MABEL (Medicine in Australia – Balancing Employment and Life) study, which explores medical workforce participation and its determinants. Our approach to knowledge exchange incorporates a range of strategies including: generating knowledge based on user needs; effective dissemination of research for non-academic audiences; building end-users' capacity to use research; and tracking the uptake of knowledge generated by the Centre.

The Centre is using a pro-active approach to document and measure uptake of our research by end-users. We have developed a template for routine collection of information from members of the research team about end-user-initiated uptake of our research, and have been collecting data on this since November 2012.

The template used to collect research use information will be presented. Data on research uptake to date will also be presented, including a profile by the category of end-user (government organisation, other stakeholders, etc), and type of use (request for information; invitation to speak; invitation to provide expert advice; and other). Illustrative examples of use will be presented.

It is important to recognise that tracking the uptake of research in policy requires both quantitative and qualitative approaches to fully capture the many ways in which research evidence can be used to inform policy. This presentation will demonstrate a feasible approach to simple quantitative measures of user-pull research uptake which can be adopted by others engaged in policy-relevant research.