Models of Knowledge Mobilisation in Social Care Settings: A rapid review

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is a Rapid Review?

Our rapid reviews (RR) use a variation of the systematic review approach, abbreviating or omitting some components to generate the evidence to inform stakeholders promptly whilst maintaining attention to bias.

Who is this Rapid Review for?

This Rapid Review was conducted on request from Social Care Wales to understand what forms of knowledge mobilisation have been implemented in social care settings. Findings will be used to shape their knowledge mobilisation approach and support the social care workforce in implementing these strategies.

Background / Aim of Rapid Review

In 2018, Social Care Wales (SCW) published the 'Social Care Research and Development Strategy for Wales 2018-2023' to embed research evidence into practice, planning, and policy. SCW developed an evidence offer to help social care providers, leaders, and designers use research evidence. This rapid review's findings were analysed against SCW's current knowledge mobilisation approach to consider potential adaptations for alignment with global practices.

Results of the Rapid Review

Recency of the evidence base

- The review included evidence available up until 16 May 2024.

Extent of the evidence base

- Five descriptive studies were identified. One case study, two scoping reviews with one having an evidence map, a description of online evidence resources and one service evaluation. The study findings were from the UK, USA, Australia, Canada, Netherlands, Sweden, China, and other European and Asian countries.
- Social care settings covered include child welfare and protection, dementia care, substance abuse and addiction treatment, child and family care, mental and physical disability care, elderly care, social assistance/income support, and violence prevention.

Key findings

- The knowledge mobilisation approaches described in the included studies include digital and multimedia resources, knowledge exchange seminars and formal gatherings, physical tools and educational resources, comprehensive knowledge transfer strategies, web-based portals and clearinghouses, and direct practitioner support and research summaries.

- The five studies included in the review align with one or more areas of the Social Care Wales (SCW) frameworks of knowledge mobilisation: three align with dissemination, three with exchange, two with brokering, one with co-creation, and one with capability and skills building.
- The review did not assess the quality and methodological rigour of the included studies due to their inherent descriptive nature of the evidence, which comprised of scoping reviews, descriptions of online evidence resources, case studies, and service evaluations.

Research Implications and Evidence Gaps

- Future research is needed to understand the most effective knowledge mobilisation strategies in social care settings.
- Planning and evaluation should be included as part of any knowledge mobilisation strategy and improvement intervention.

Policy and Practice Implications

Findings from this review support the following:

- Integration of **Knowledge Platforms**: Policy frameworks should encourage the integration of web-based clearinghouses and other digital platforms that disseminate evidence-based practices across social care sectors. This integration can facilitate greater accessibility and transparency of information for professionals, decision-makers, and the public. This aligns with the **dissemination** area of the SCW's framework.

- Promotion of **Interdisciplinary Collaboration**: Policies should promote interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers, practitioners, service users, and policymakers. This collaboration can foster innovation, enhance the relevance of research findings to practice and support comprehensive knowledge mobilisation strategies. This aligns with the **brokering** area of the SCW's framework.

- Adoption of **Varied Knowledge Mobilisation Strategies**: Practitioners should adopt diverse knowledge mobilisation strategies such as digital resources, knowledge exchange seminars, and comprehensive knowledge transfer approaches. This approach ensures that interventions are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of different social care settings. This aligns with the **exchange and co-creation areas** of the SCW's framework.

- **Capacity Building**: The need for ongoing professional development and capacity building among practitioners to enhance their skills in accessing, interpreting, and applying research evidence in practice. Training programmes, workshops, and mentoring opportunities should be prioritised to support evidence-informed decision-making. This aligns with both **exchange and capability and skills-building** areas of the SCW's framework.

- **Evaluation and Feedback**: Practitioners should implement robust evaluation frameworks to assess the impact of knowledge mobilisation interventions over time. Feedback loops between researchers and practitioners can inform iterative improvements to strategies and enhance their effectiveness in real-world settings.This is **not explicitly captured** within the areas of the SCW's framework and could be considered as an additional area into their framework.