Completing a Stakeholder-Centred Systematic Review of Systematic Reviews: A Step-by-Step Process

Growth in interest from funders and researchers to stakeholders in research processes to enhance internal validity, research relevance, and improve the likelihood that research results will be utilized to inform decision-making. Academic-community partnerships (ACPs) have been utilized with varying degrees of success as a mechanism to facilitate knowledge-to-action. A weakness noted in ACPs is the lack of clarity, understanding and agreement on roles and responsibilities.

Introduction

To describe the process, roles, responsibilities and workflows used to create a stakeholder-centered systematic review.

Methods

Community stakeholders (two occupational health safety organizations and one non-profit health benefit organization) were invited to participate in a proposed research project under WorkSafeBC Innovation at Work competition (convenience sample) with researchers from different faculties and universities. Formative and summary evaluation forms developed in collaboration with stakeholders were used to inform processes and consider project successes and weaknesses. Surveys and iterative group discussions, minute taking, continuous feedback loops, to identify and clarify high priority information needs common across different stakeholders. (see Figure 1.) All systematic review processes were discussed to consider roles and responsibilities, pilot-tests were performed to discuss and refine procedures, and to consider changes to roles and responsibilities.

Results

Creating Successful Academic Community Partnerships

Predisposing factors

• High motivation of both academic and stakeholder partners
• Effective listening skills of all players exhibiting mutual interest and reflectivity

Enabling factors

• Defining general framework of roles and responsibilities
• Openness to consider input at all levels of activity
• Demonstrable genuine interest and open transparent reflection and consensus
• Engagement in instrument development, pilot-testing instruments
• Refinement as a result of a feedback

Reinforcing factors

• Reporting preliminary results
• Explicating new knowledge and understanding throughout knowledge exchange
• Reinforcing the need to translate results to best meet the organizational maker needs of stakeholders

Key Messages

• Take adequate time to clarify research question
• Pilot test using 3 or more sample articles consider research question, inclusion/exclusion criteria
• Engage stakeholders in creation of abstraction table through highlighting categories of information of interest
• Create stakeholder-centered evidence tables based on categories relevant to stakeholders

Conclusions

• There are many roles that stakeholders felt comfortable participating in the creation of a synthesis of systematic reviews.
• Such participation was valued by academic researchers learning more about stakeholder needs, and stakeholders learning more about the creation of research synthesis.
• A stakeholder-centered systematic review of systematic reviews can be effectively completed given a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, set of outlined action items, tasks, and deliverables required by the project.
• Compilation of a synthesis of systematic reviews requires a strong, competent project leadership competent to keep the team engaged, on task and on time and motivate team members who are results oriented.

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Table 1. ACP Valued Stakeholder Participatory Activities

| Metrics for project success and baseline | ✓ |
| Collaboration (genuine mutual interest/open reflection/willingness to change) | ✓ |
| Project management | ✓ |
| Facilitate knowledge-to-action | ✓ |
| Predisposing factors | ✓ |
| Enabling factors | ✓ |
| Key Messages | ✓ |
| Conclusions | ✓ |

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