



## Knowledge translation (KT) interventions to increase the uptake of trial evidence in policy decision-making: a rapid scoping review

Date prepared: January 29, 2026

### Summary

This rapid scoping review aimed to help the World Health Organization (WHO), understand what kinds of knowledge translation (KT) interventions existed to help policy makers make better use of findings from clinical trials. The review included 14 studies. Most interventions focused on “pushing” information to decision-makers, usually through written materials such as emailed documents and online repositories. Other interactive strategies, such as workshops or knowledge brokers, were used less often. Overall, evidence is limited on what interventions truly work to increase the use of trial findings in policy decisions, because few studies measured whether policies changed.

### What does this mean?

Sharing information may not be enough to promote the use of trial findings in policy. Future KT work should involve policy-makers, combine written materials with conversations and relationship building, and be evaluated using clear outcomes (such as whether evidence actually appears in policy documents or decision records). Robust studies are needed to test what works.

**Citation:** Wang X, Lai Y, Hsieh S, Hou L, Yang Y, Guo K, Nahar N, Skidmore B, Kelly S, Tricco AC, Wells G. Scoping review of knowledge translation interventions to increase the uptake of trials for policy decision-making. A review for the WHO/HQ Evidence to Policy and Impact – Research for Health Department – Science Division. March 31, 2023.

**For more information, please contact Dr. Andrea Tricco**  
([Andrea.Tricco@unityhealth.to](mailto:Andrea.Tricco@unityhealth.to)).

### What is the current situation?

Policy decisions should be based on the best available research, but findings from randomized trials are not always used. KT strategies aim to close this gap by making it easier for research to inform policy.

### What questions did we aim to answer in our research?

- What KT interventions have been used to help policy-makers make better use of findings from clinical trials?
- Is there any information on whether these interventions actually work?

### How did we approach these questions?

- We conducted a rapid scoping review. We searched MEDLINE for any relevant material made available before March 6, 2023. We included studies describing or testing KT interventions aimed at increasing the use of trial evidence in policy decision-making.
- We charted the data and summarized descriptively. As suggested by scoping review methodology guidance, we did not conduct any risk of bias or methodological quality assessment.

### What answers did we find from our research?

We included 14 studies (19 different KT interventions). Most KT approaches were ‘push’ strategies that mainly involved sharing written materials such as summaries, emails and links to online resources. Of the 19 interventions, 10 used one approach and 9 used several approaches together. Push-only strategies were the most common (8 out of 19; 42.1%). Written materials were used in most interventions (13 out of 19; 68.4%). Workshops/meetings and knowledge brokers were less reported. Only half of the studies reported a theory or framework behind their intervention. Few studies tested whether the KT activities changed policy decisions, and thus information on how effective these strategies are is limited.

### How confident are we in these findings?

Our confidence in the findings is limited because there were few studies and the studies used different study designs and outcomes. Many studies also did not measure whether the KT work impacted policy decisions. This scoping review did not assess the quality of the studies. More research is needed on this topic.