

Equity Lens in Public Health

Reducing Health Inequities: The Contribution of Public Health Services in BC

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CPHFRI

Core Public Health Functions Research Initiative



CPHFRI: Program of Research Population Health Interventions

- **Population health interventions** are policies or programs within the health sector or between sectors that have the potential to impact health at the population level.
- The defining characteristic is population health impact.



Purpose of ELPH

The purpose of this program of research is to guide and inform learning about the integration of an equity lens in public health to contribute knowledge about health inequities reduction.

We will examine the integration of an equity lens into two exemplar core PH programs: Mental health promotion and preventing the harms of substance use.



Population Health Interventions in ELPH Program of Research

- Core Public Health Functions Framework which incorporates an equity lens
- Healthy Minds, Healthy People: BC Ten Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance Use in BC.

ELPH Grant Goals

- Identify and understand the **contextual influences** that promote uptake of health equity as a priority in the health system;
- Explore the **engagement** of public health with other sectors in health inequities reduction in mental health promotion and prevention of harms of substance use;
- Critically analyze the theoretical and practical utility of existing **equity tools**;
- Develop a theoretical understanding of the **ethical issues** encountered by public health practitioners in their efforts to reduce health inequities for those impacted by social disadvantages.

Partners

BC Health Authorities

- Fraser Health
- Interior Health
- Northern Health
- Provincial Health Services Authority
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Vancouver Island Health Authority

BC Provincial Government

- BC Ministry of Health

Universities

- University of British Columbia
- University of British Columbia Okanagan
- University of Victoria

Provincial Organizations

- PHABC

National Organizations

- National Collaborating Centre on the Determinants of Health
- Public Health Agency of Canada



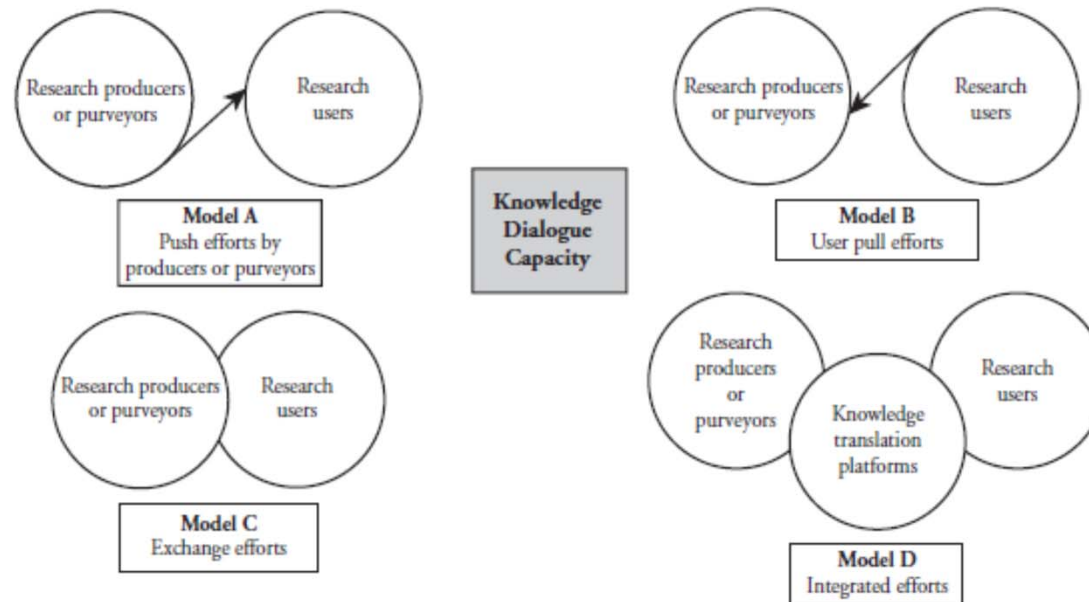
Four Inter-Related Studies over 5 Years

1. Assessing health equity priorities and strategies
2. Intersectoral collaboration for health inequities reduction
3. Assessing the theoretical relevance and practical utility of health equity tools
4. Power and ethics in public health practice

ELPH: Integrated KTE

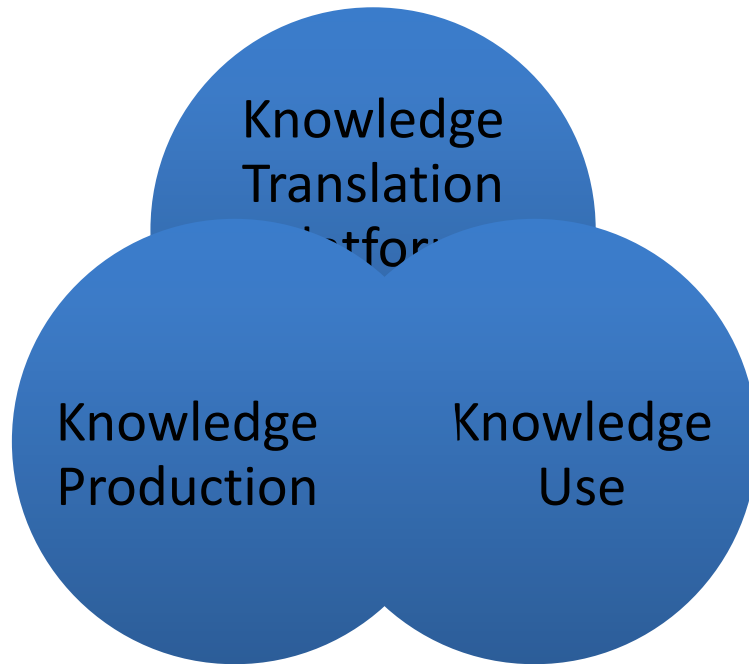
- “The objective of the KTE Plan is to engage in an innovative knowledge translation and exchange (KTE) process to strengthen and improve health sector innovation for reducing health inequities”
- **KTE objectives:**
- To enhance the capacity of Health Authority (HA) partners to integrate an equity lens into Public Health (PH) policy and program development
- To enhance integration of an equity lens in promotion of mental health and prevention of harms of substance use.
- To enhance the contributions of PH in reducing health inequities in BC

FIGURE 1.1
Models of Knowledge Translation



Source: Adapted from Lavis, J., J. Lomas, M. Hamid and N. Sewankambo. 2006. "Assessing Country-level Efforts to Link Research to Action." *Bulletin of the World Health Organisation*, 84: 620–628.

Integrated KTE



- All team members are Knowledge Users and Knowledge Producers at different points in time

Adapted from Lavis et al., 2006



KTE Strategies

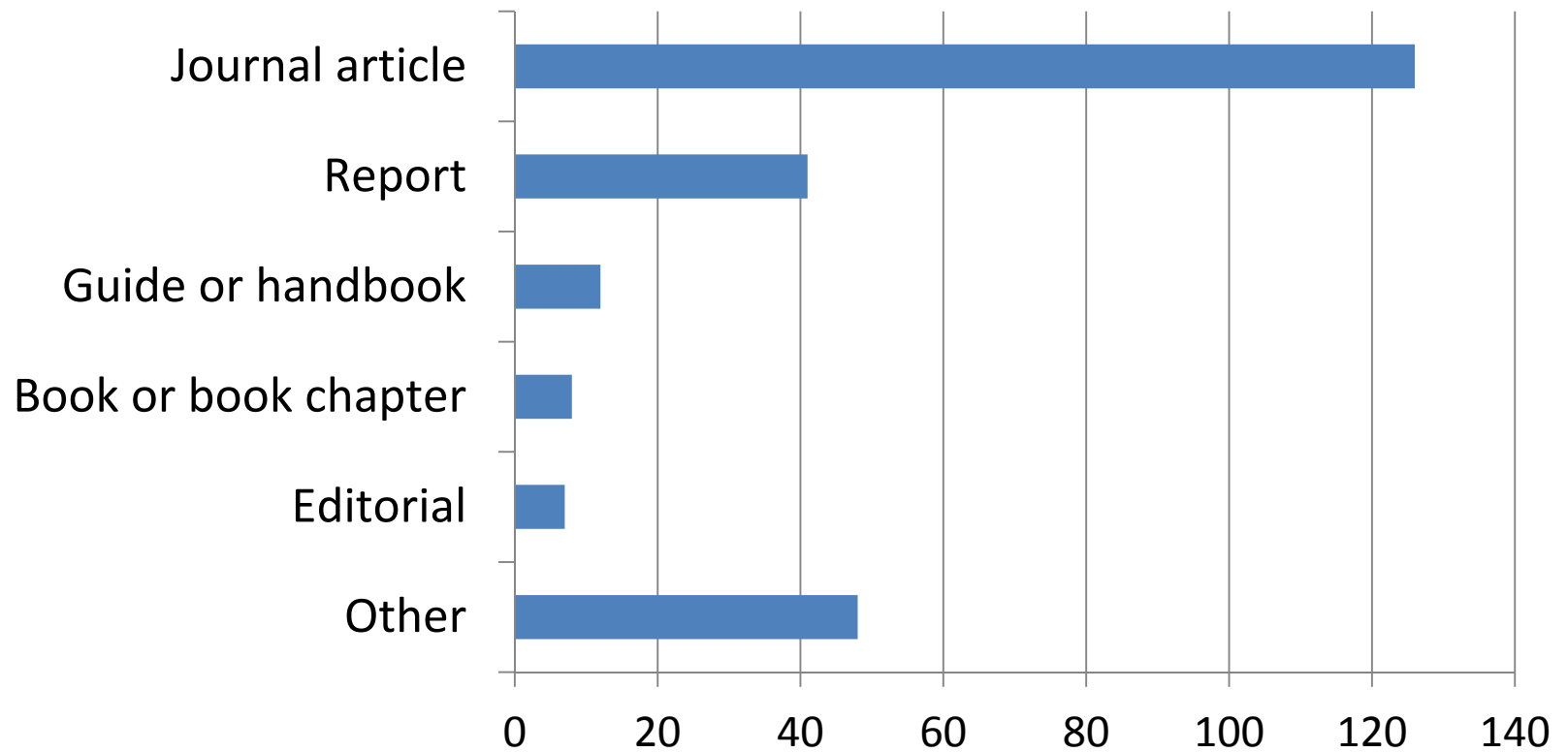
- Webinars
- Captivate
- ELPH Website
- Newsletters
- Sharepoint
- Policy/Research Internships
- Community of Practice

Study 3 Research Questions

1. What health equity tools are available?
2. What is the theoretical relevance of available tools?
3. What is the practical utility of available tools?

Creating an Inventory

Number of documents identified in initial searches



Assessing Theoretical Relevance

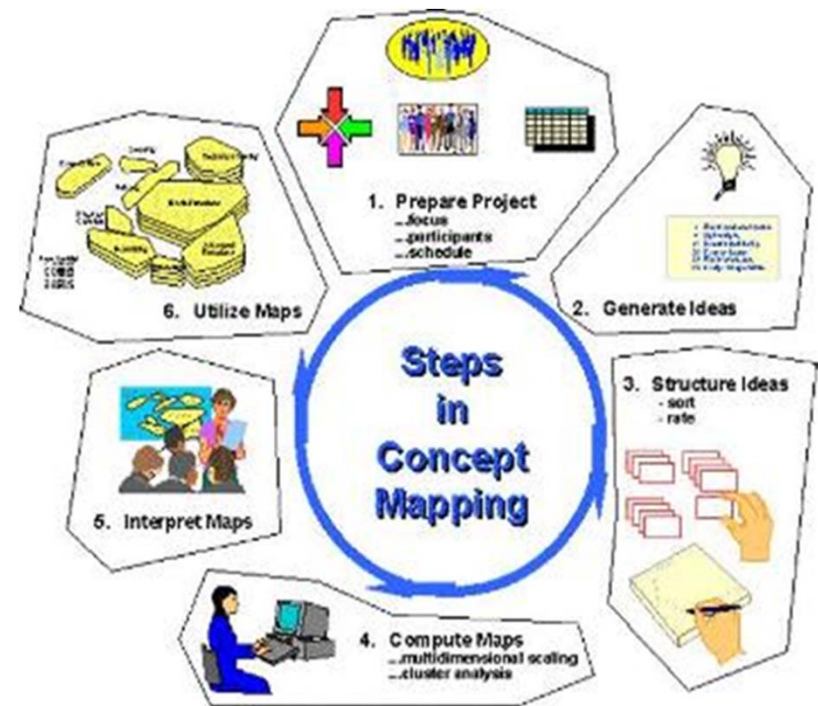
Does the tool address:

1. Social conditions that shape health outcomes
2. Determinants of inequities (e.g. racism, gender bias, and so on).
3. social, historical and cultural roots of disadvantage
4. distribution of power in both the production of inequities and policy processes

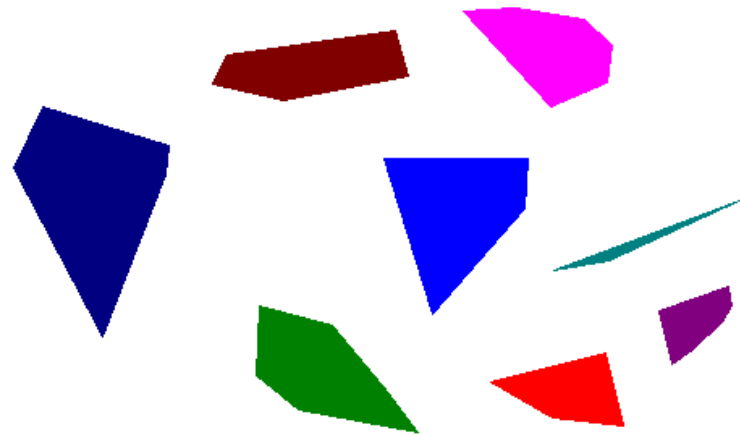
(Pauly et al., under review)

Assessing Practical Utility

Concept Mapping with public health practitioners engaged in developing and implementing health authority health equity plans, promotion of mental health, and prevention of substance use programs



Assessing Practical Utility



This will lead to the development of a set of criteria (generated by practitioners) for assessing the practical utility of equity tools.