**2017 KT Conference:**

**Knowledge Translation Outcome Measurement**

Interactive Discussion with Presenters, Conference Wrap up

Kathleen Murphy/Donna Mitrani, presenters, participants, reactors: Tracy Boehm,Lisa Engel, Kathe Matrone, Christian Vogler

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 >>STEVEN BOYDSTON With that I wanted to hand the mic over to Donna Mitrani, who is a senior health communications specialist here at AIR who will guide a discussion session and provide a wrap up for the last portion of our conference. Donna?

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you, Steven. Hello and welcome to this afternoon's discussion session. For those just joining us today, my name is Donna Mitrani. I'm on staff for the American Institutes for Research.

 I want to thank Melanie Barwick for that presentation. As someone who is on the communication side working on dissemination strategy and health communication, it is interesting to learn more about KT and really hear how it is distinguished from communication activity. I appreciate that.

 Our director, Kathleen Murphy is not feeling 100 percent today and was concerned about losing her voice. I will be moderating in her place. Helping us to reflect on the discussion questions and share their own thoughts are four other people here with me today I would like to introduce. Tracy Boehm Barrett, Director of the Knowledge Translation for Disability and Rehabilitation Research at the University of Montana. Lisa Engel, post-doctoral Fellow at Toronto Western Hospital.

 Kathe Matrone, Director of Center for Continuing Education at the University of Washington. And Christian Vogler, Director of the Technology Access Program at Gallaudet University.

 And before we get know today's discussion I want to let everyone know that Christian is going to be working with an ASL presenter today. There may be some brief delays in his responses.

 Thank you so much to you all for joining us in this discussion today.

 So to warm us up we are going to start off with a couple of polls that will give us a sense of how international our audience is today. So the poll asks: Which of the following settings is most relevant to your work? Please only select one answer: The U.S., Canada, a single country that is not the U.S. or Canada and tell us which country that is in the chat box. Or international, meaning all countries are really relevant to your vote.

 While you work on that poll, in case some of you are just joining us, let's introduce the presenters still with us on the phone and who will be joining in the discussion. David, are you there?

 >> DAVID GOUGH: Yes, hi.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Welcome again. And Mark?

 >> MARK CARRIGAN: I am, although I'm also losing my voice, I think.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Welcome. And Melanie?

 >> MELANIE BARWICK: Yes, I'm still here.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you all. So just looking at these results, it does seem that most of you, 60 percent actually, Canada is really the country most relevant to your work which isn't completely surprising since the Canadian government is so supportive of KT activities. We appreciate our Canadian friends joining us since they have done so much pioneering work.

 Second in terms of relevance, about 30 percent is the U.S. And then about even, about a little less than 5 percent folks are saying that a single KT or just general international work is most relevant to them.

 And one more poll question before we get into the discussion, begin Mark's presentation on social media, we are wondering what kind of social media tools our audience uses. That is the topic of the next poll. The question is, what social media platforms do you use for communicating science? Facebook? Twitter? YouTube, Instagram or any other social media platforms? Tell us what those might be in the chat box. We are always curious what other tools others are using.

 (Pause.)

 So it seems that most popular amongst our audience here at about 70 percent each, give or take, are Facebook and Twitter, which is not entirely surprising. They are some of the larger social media platforms out there. Coming in next at about 42 percent is YouTube, followed by 20 percent folks who use other platforms. And looking at the chat box right now it seems that some folks said they have used Pinterest or LinkedIn or Wordpress, sound cloud. All really great, great platforms.

 Finally coming in at about 7 percent, folks have utilized Instagram.

 So with that I want to get into today's discussion. We have about 40 minutes to get into it. There's a lot to discuss following today's great presentations. So if somebody can progress the slide? I'm sorry.

 There we go. And so I just want to let everyone know we did share these three questions with our four respondents ahead of time. The questions are: Which measurement strategies would be most appropriate for grantees in the area of disability research? How would you implement these strategies? And how would improved measurement strategies affect the lives of people with disabilities?

 And to start off our conversation I would like to turn to Christian, Christian, did these questions spur any thoughts on your part?

 >> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Can everyone hear me okay?

 >> DONNA: Yes, thank you.

 >> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: Thank you for inviting me to the table today. I have a lot of comments. I'm going to try to narrow them down a bit. I think I will focus specifically on the involvement of people with disabilities and how critical that is. There has been a lot of discussion today that I've seen from the presentations -- which were all great, by the way. I've seen one commonality. A lot of strategies from the presentation focused on a general audience. Not specifically on people who have disability, which is fine. Hopefully as a community we can derive things from these presentations that can be applied to the community of disability.

 But one key component that I would like to emphasize is, first of all, the community of people with disabilities is much smaller than that of the general audience. And there are a lot of people who have disabilities, but they are very diverse. Each group requires their own strategy. With take being said we need to take care of thinking of how to best involve people from each community that we are targeting.

 And then in our experience, trying to ensure that the Knowledge Translation is successful. It is very critical to involve people from those communes from the very beginning. Meaning that from the beginning we should be developing the research question, identifying those problems. Also identifying the strategies. And involving people with disabilities in the outcome.

 Without that, often we are getting a mismatch. The research is going on per use, but then trying to translate that into practice, the disability community is resistant to those things because they were not involved in the process from the beginning. Because it doesn't match their current situation or it's something that they just don't want to be involved in for political reasons.

 I have seen all of that happen. I also would like to make a second point about the first presentation from David. I like the idea of a systematic approach, systematic review. But I do have a question for David, if you wouldn't mind. Within the disability communes, as I mentioned they are very small, that means that there's less research available. So what do we do if there's not enough studies published? There is not enough data for a systematic review?

 >> DAVID GOUGH: Do you want me to answer?

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Yes, please, David, go ahead. That was a great question. Thank you, Christian.

 >> DAVID GOUGH: Yes. I think it is a very important question. So one of the purposes of the systematic approach is that it can give you clarity about what we do know and what we don't know. Then we can make a planned decision about what more do we want to know. At the moment a lot of research is developed by academics having great ideas which are very creative and innovative, which is wonderful. To balance that, we also need to stand back and clarify what are the important questions for us, what we know and what we don't know.

 If there are areas of disability research that, there are things that are known for some groups but not other groups, with he need to clarify that so we can have better information to plan. Without that everyone is having what they all think is great ideas.

 And if you look at one study, often the same things are studied over and over again, and other important things are neglected. I think it is a really important issue.

 >> DONNA: Thank you so much, David. And Christian, I agree 100 percent with what you were saying. I mean, really to ensure that ultimately what we are doing has a positive impact on the target community we really should be involving community in all of our research from the outset. So from research question formation all the way through evaluation. I appreciate you making that great point.

 Moving along, I want to turn to Kathe and see if you had responses on the questions we sent ahead of time.

 >> KATHE MATRONE: I think it's more a couple of comments. I was intrigued with the Information Assessment Method. We struggled with this, I think within the ADA national network about information that is posted on our web and how do we figure out it's actually being used. We tried different methods, some short-term things. This would be very helpful in terms of measuring impact on information on the ADA for consumers.

 I did have one other question. David talked a little bit, this doesn't figure in with the measuring impact question but I was curious. He talked a little bit about behavioral techniques and including, he was talking about nudging evidence use. And I was thinking how we might use or how maybe if there was some examples of how social media might be used to nudge evidence use. I'm thinking about rehabilitation counselors in the field who are extremely busy and they need just some in time information working with a client and if there was some way to nudge that research out that would maybe help them with that information.

 So that was just a thought. That's all I have to say right now. Thank you.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you, Kathe. Mark, do you want to respond to that comment from Kathe on social media?

 >> MARK CARRIGAN: I think it's an interesting idea and I would love to learn more about how that can be used. My intuitive research is skepticism alongside of curiosity. Nudging techniques, if you are trying to ensure people use research in a way that informs their practice reflectively in a considered manner, then bailiff nudges would not seem to be the way to go about that. I also would like to learn more about the techniques that were possible.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thanks so much. And then turning to Lisa, Lisa, any thoughts on our three discussion questions today?

 >> LISA ENGEL: Hi, yeah. Great presentations, by the way. And I have far too many thoughts to say. I'm a recent Ph.D. completer, almost graduated. I'm starting a post-doc. A lot of this made me think about how we are educating our future researchers and that I really liked when Melanie was saying we have to look at the return on our investment in our research more than just increasing our CV and relating that back to day one where Chris McBride said starting with the questions of how can I help? How can those two opinions be used to change how we view Ph.D. research, the Ph.D. process and also how are we educating our future researchers to make sure that KT is part of the beginning of the plan? I must be honest, it was not for me. And then definitely I'm still needing to move forward with that as a new researcher.

 So Melanie, I would love your thoughts on how can we change the education process so that KT becomes more prominent?

 >> MELANIE BARWICK: Good question, Lisa. We have been working at that for a long time. Since we are probably less than 1 kilometer apart from each other in Toronto, I'm sure you know about our scientist Knowledge Translation training, which since 2004 we have been training scientists on how to develop a plan and why they should do it. So I think it is building your skill set and really understanding it. I still get a little stuck with people's belief that you can only do Knowledge Translation with a systemic review. We have to be clear about the KT goal. I think a systematic review, high quality, rigorous, ethical research and a body of high quality, rigorous, ethical research is necessary for a KT goal of changing behavior or practice. Often times informing policy, although that's a little sketchier. That doesn't mean you can't do KT for a single study or project. You have to have the appropriate Knowledge Translation goal attached to it.

 I hope that's clear.

 And so there is really no Knowledge Translation you can't do. So it is about building your skill set. And building that skill set is going to serve you in good Stead. I know there was some very informal work that Kelly Merklus with Ian Graham. I was you can taking to the Michael Smith Foundation for Research. They discovered when they helped grantees to refine and improve their KT plans, they were more successful in getting research funding. So I haven't seen it published anywhere, but that was an exercise that they worked through. That's interesting.

 And as you know, in a Canadian context, academic faculty are now being measured on sort of their Knowledge Translation impacts. The funders are driving it. There's a lot of reasons to build those skill sets. And there are places to go to get them.

 >> STEVEN BOYDSTON: Thank you for that. Donna's line died and she'll be back. In the idea of making sure that everybody has a chance to comment, David, do you have any thoughts?

 >> DAVID GOUGH: Yes, I do. I mean, there have been a lot of people talking about research waste. We need to be much better in how we use our research. I agree with everyone who said that already.

 But I think that research is really an essential component of our thinking here. So although I agree with Melanie that you can have Knowledge Translation of an individual study, I think it is important to contextualize that with what is not known, with what is already known. And as I said in my presentation about justifiable evidence claim, if you are going to translate knowledge you have to have a base for the evidence claim. That is difficult to do unless you can contextualize it.

 A few years ago I was invited to Ottawa to comment on a whole-day presentation of the Canadian science research council initiative. All the presentations were really, really interesting and told really interesting stories, but I think the late presentations, only one of them contextualized their findings within what was already known. They were doing a Knowledge Translation story, a narrative, and very interesting, but I don't think it was a full explanation without contextualizing within a broader understanding. And sorry, just to finish, I think that that way, my personal bias, is that that way of thinking needs to be truly built into academic education.

 >> MELANIE BARWICK: Can I step in? To stimulate the debate a little further, I think partly it has to do with the utilization of the research evidence. Often times we have a great hope and desire, it is indeed our poster, that our research will have instrumental utility. In other words, it will be used, applied, it will change. I think we can all agree in those instances, the systematic review and sort of the prevalence really, the context is important. What do we know, how well do we know it, how much confidence do we have in what we know, before we encourage people to use the research in some instrumental way. But a good lot, I would say probably just off the top of my head, I would say maybe even 60 or 70 percent of the research that we produce in health research alone is not at that instrumental use point just yet. It might be conceptual or symbolic or sort of along the evolutionary spectrum towards potentially instrumental utility. I think that that helps to contextualize the kind of knowledge translation that is appropriate for a particular project. Sometimes what we are learning is about a condition or even about a concept. If you think about in behavioral health, understanding what vulnerability is. It is not going to can he the world or what anybody does, but it is a researched empirical finding about a particular concept, if that makes sense.

 >> DAVID GOUGH: I know we're hogging the conversation, but just to say that the synthesis applies to perpetual search as well as empirical.

 >> Yes.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you so much. This is really a great conversation.

 Tracy, turning back to you, I wanted to check and see if you had any thoughts on the overarching questions.

 >> TRACY BOEHM BARRETT: Tracy, thanks. A lot of what I have been thinking and took notes on has been discussed. But my overall take on the presentations today is really how we are demonstrating the value of our research to multiple audiences. And in our work I am familiar with really engaging with our stakeholders, which includes people with disabilities directly. And so I really appreciated the thoughts about the need to engage stakeholders, both in Melanie's presentation and planning but also related to David's presentation and also Mark's in that a lot of time we are in the field working with service providers and talking with people with disabilities about what are the real life issues that they are having. We take that information back and we can do and we can dot work that David is talking about.

 Well, what is the evidence? And a lot of the disabilities folks take we work with are also advocates. If they are saying we experience this problem as a person with a disability, then working together with them we can say okay, in our research and the research says this, to support those claims. So it ends up being a really great collaborative approach to focusing on an issue that impacts the lives of people with disabilities and their quality of life.

 And the way that I really thought about Mark's presentation in regard to social media is kind of the opportunity -- I think, Mark, you mentioned really paying attention to how people are using tools, the language that they are using, what they are focusing on, where they are coming from. And I think the point being made about don't identify a tool and decide you want to use it. It is what is the ambition behind it? What is it that you need to engage about? Then what is the tool that you need to use? Otherwise you are walking around with a hammer looking for fails and ways to use it.

 Those are some of the messages that I got. And I did really pick up on something that both David and Melanie said in terms of -- David, you said be respectful of previous work done by researchers and the value of systematic review is just that. Kathleen Murphy probably texted at the same time I was thinking this. It is also being respectful of the return on investment and demonstrating that to our funders.

 So have we done the research to validate a research line that we are hoping to pursue in the future? But I'll stop there because I feel like a lot of this platform discussion is more rich when people ask specific questions and we can engage in dialogue that way.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you so much, Tracy. I want to turn the conversation back to Christian. Christian, do you have a comment on the discussion that we have been having?

 >> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: I do. This is Christian. I have two comments. My first quick comment is to Tracy. I'm happy to hear your explanation and we are doing the same thing here at Gallaudet. We are partnering with advocate organizations who work with people with disabilities.

 For the purpose of making change based on evidence.

 But there is another thing I wanted to mention. We can do all of these great activities to share the knowledge. We can have a great knowledge translation plan for practice and feel like everything is beautifully written up and ready to be implemented. But sometimes key individuals, for example policymakers, government officials or company partners, they are not ready to listen. So I think sometimes we need to recognize if the opportunity presents itself we need to take advantage of it right away and I think that it's important to have some skills to be able to recognize those opportunities. For change to practice or a change to a system to occur.

 When the opportunity arises to really jump on the band wagon and move forward with that.

 I have two examples from NIDILRR funded research where exactly that happened. We had two major changes for accessibility for people with disabilities. We have been working on that for a long time. But still, it was very important to identify when those opportunities arose for make making those changes going forward.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you so much, Christian. Melanie, I would be curious to hear your thoughts on this. In Canada, the government there specifically supported KT activities for some time now. Knowing that you speak with researchers around the world and sometimes in places where the governments aren't as actively supported of those activities, what advice do you have to researchers working in institutions or with governments who aren't necessarily on board with KT activities or as aware of them?

 >> MELANIE BARWICK: Sure, thank you. So I have a response to Christian's question that is a great question. On two levels. The first is, is Knowledge Translation even on the menu for a research funder? And there are examples worldwide of different extents to which funders will support Knowledge Translation activities right from its requested, invited, and paid for. So you can incorporate your KT activities into your budget. That's the full spectrum of support from a funder.

 In other countries, it's asked for, talked about a lot, but you can't be funded to do the KT activities within your research budget. So there I would just see a role for advocacy and clarity of thought.

 (Chuckles.)

 >> MELANIE BARWICK: -- about what they are really trying to accomplish. If they are focused on, it's a bit of a miss not to be funding KT projects.

 The second level of activity and I think this is perhaps where Christian was going with the comment, you know, when you engage knowledge users like policy or government or industry or even community who are not ready to listen and not ready to hear what the research has said or even act upon any of the recommendations, I think we need to see that as an opportunity to get in earlier. Engage with your knowledge users early on, up front, so that they are part of the solution rather than being told by us in the ivory towers what the solution might be for them.

 It's that true authentic partnership.

 In doing so, you build authenticity, but you also build better alignment between what you are hoping to accomplish, what your goals are in the research, and what they would see as good goals for them. You have an opportunity to cross any language barriers. What do you mean by this? This is what we mean by it.

 You have an opportunity to improve on your approach or your methodology and your feasibility and even to begin a conversation about what would be the definition of success in the research endeavor from the point of view of different participants. And those are all part and parcel of a better research endeavor.

 Now, it is not always applicable or appropriate. There are many instances of research activity that perhaps don't involve stakeholder engagement. Basic cell work, for instance. But where it does -- I think we need to get in earlier. We need to think about how well do we really know one another. What is our contribution? How are we going to work together?

 When we don't do that or we don't do it in an authentic way an it is tokenistic, that group is listed on a grant but they are not fully engaged, we really miss an opportunity.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you so much, Melanie. And then turning back to David for a minute, I'm just curious. Apologies while I get back to my notes. Sorry about that.

 So in your presentation you stated that at the center of a proposed new framework is a behavior system involving three essential conditions: Capability, opportunity, and motivation. What we term the Com-V system. How is this the same or different from Michie's framework?

 >> DAVID GOUGH: She is a colleague in the same university, so as somebody commented, Kathe commented. We used it. So the mechanisms we developed from early work by Sandra Nutley about ten years ago, we have been developing them a bit and we realized that they didn't seem to be sufficient. So we looked at Susan Michie's Com-V components. When we did this review of the literature, we found that the framework worked. Because it showed that the mechanisms of access to the, the communication research on its own wasn't sufficient and interactions, development of relationships between the gain wasn't U.S. we needed these behavioral components as well. This takes us back to the earlier discussion we were having about communication and KT. A lot of the things that Melanie is talking about, tell me if I'm misinterpreting you, Melanie, but you started off about people understanding about research, but Melanie discussed other things about people being motivated, having people on board and things like that. I think that we found the framework very helpful to unpack some of the different things that we may need to change. And the sixth mechanism was about structures and procedures because I think there's a lot of the emesis on knowledge translation has been on the individuals and it is quite tough on individual members of the public or individual practitioners, professional practitioners to do things all on their own, even with the support of all of the individual knowledge brokers. I'm interested in how systems and processes are built in. It's not a question of academics being educated about these things, which they should be, but the whole system and process should be structured in a way to enable knowledge for research to be used. So in terms of, I mentioned in my presentation about most government departments have expert committees, but which are trying to enable knowledge to be used by the ministries. But if you examine them they don't work in the way that Melanie and I would suggest are the most effective way for research to be used in decision making across a huge government department.

 I think there's a lot we can do in that area.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you so much, David. And I know we only have a few more minutes left for this discussion. Thank you so much, than, for the rich conversation. I just wanted to turn this back to Christian, who I believe had a follow-up question or comment for Melanie.

 >> CHRISTIAN VOGLER: I was just chatting in the chat box and I'll try to summarize that. My point was that sometimes we depend on the whims of people. So if there's a key decision maker who leaves or if a supervisor tells them to stop an activity, then sometimes we have to be in a holding pattern and patient with the work and look again for those future opportunities. Whenever that future opportunity shows up, hopefully they will be more friendly to the idea.

 I believe that Melanie wanted to respond to that.

 >> MELANIE BARWICK: I can indeed respond to that. It is certainly one of the things I have encountered. I don't think you do participatory research and have never encountered an unsatisfactory partner experience and I don't confess to have all of the solutions, but I can think of three ways to mitigate this. And of course, working with government and policymakers, I think for one thing you have to expect in a two to three or four-year project that your particular contact person from government will not be the same person in that role two or three years down the pike because they make a lot of lateral moves. That's probably universal and not specific to KT.

 But often times we spend a tremendous amount of energy building relationships with nonacademic partners around research activities. And it takes a lot of time and takes a lot of effort to do it well. So when it fails and something interrupts that situation, it can be quite costly. You might not get to your envisaged goal. It might slow down your research process. So it is certainly important to think of.

 One of the things you might think of doing when you involve an organization, a nonacademic organization is to pick the right level of person within the organization. You don't want to go too high so that they have interests that pull them in other directions and they are not available, don't have the bandwidth to absorb and reflect on the work that you are asking them to participate in.

 You don't want to go too low in the food chain. I'm sorry to sound so hierarchical but we all know that exists out there. You want somebody who can move the information when that information gets brought back to the organization. So well connected, interested, enough of a managerial position or enough clout that they have the ear of people. They know where the information that they are gaining from the research project might be useful and they can insert it there.

 So who you pick is important. I think picking more than one person from an organization is important. Donna, I'm seeing your message here. I'll make this short. Picking more than two mitigates attrition. One person goes off on pregnancy leave or changes job or goes back to school. Now you're left with nobody if you only had one person. So the whole history of the project lies on the shoulders of the person who is no longer there. We have to recognize that organizations are dynamic and may be involved too.

 When you involve two they can spell each other off and offer the opportunity for dialogue. You know, what is interesting about this project is this and had this is how it pertains to the work we're doing. You have somebody to bounce ideas off of.

 The last idea would be when you involve your partners and bring them in to meet around project issues, is to scaffold how and when they might share that information back in the organization. Once you leave the building, whatever conversation happened goes in one ear and out the other. Maybe they'll remember it. Maybe they won't. Unless they have a dedicated plan to share it in the next five minutes of their business meeting back at home, the opportunity for integrating that research activity to the business of the organization is unrealized.

 The last, fourth possibility would be to develop a project charter or memorandum of understanding that people can refer back to when they are trying to remember what the heck they signed up for in the first place and what is expected of them. And what might they derive from the partnership. So those would be some ideas.

 >> DONNA MITRANI: Thank you so much, Melanie. Thank you so much to everyone who participated in this great conversation. I think we are going to go ahead and wrap things up for the day. Thank you so much to Tracy, Lisa, Kathe and Christian in sharing their experience with us today. And big thank you to Steven who helped us kick off the day with the recap of Wednesday's sessions. We appreciate our presenters who gave us food for thought, especially for those who stayed through the discussion, Mark and David, I know you are in the U.K. and it is super late. We appreciate you taking the time and staying with us through the afternoon.

 To everyone on the line we hope today's sessions have been useful to you as you work to measure the impact of your NIDILRR grant or other work.

 Before we end the conference for this year we have three other announcements. First off, go ahead and pull out your calendar so you can save the date for the 2018 KT conference, held on November 5, 7, and 9 in 2018 with the same Monday, Wednesday, Friday afternoon sequencing. The preliminary theme of next year's conference is going to be engaging ways to engage stakeholders.

 If you can't wait until next November for more KT learning opportunities, no worries. Just join us next week on Wednesday, November 8, 3:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Knowledge Translation for Disability and Rehabilitation Research will host a follow-up live interactive session with Dr. Melanie Barwick. You can register on the chat box and the form will roll over to the evaluation form queue.

 Finally, speaking of evaluation form, let us know what worked for you and what didn't about this year's conference. We scrutinize all of our evaluation data and strive to make this a better experience for all involved each year. We appreciate you taking the time to fill out the evaluation form and sharing your thoughts on this year's conference.

 With that we'll go ahead and close this year's KT conference. Thank you to everyone who was able to join this week. We hope to see you at next year's KT conference. Have a good afternoon.