

RTNA Conference Reporting Template

Context

Why is KT important to your organization? What is your role/interest in KT?

KT is important to the Addiction and Mental Health portfolio of Alberta Health Services because of our Addiction and Mental Health Research Partnership Program and our Addiction and Mental Health Strategic Plan. My role is to guide and assist knowledge translation initiatives throughout addiction and mental health and more specifically within the Knowledge and Strategy area and the Research Partnership Program.

Session Overview

Please provide an overview of the conference, the intended audience, and the theme.

The conference, KT-10, was themed “Bridging the Gap” meaning bridging the gap between the various areas of knowledge translation. The various areas that it addressed included bridging the gap between the building of multidisciplinary teams, forming sustainable researcher-decision maker partnerships, understanding integrated KT, and discussing why we still need workable KT theory and frameworks. The conference was aimed at anyone involved in KT, whether in the area of practice or research. It had didactic lectures, discussion panels, and workshops covering all the themes.

Please choose one session you attended (keynote, panel, workshop, etc.) and provide an overview of the key messages of the session.

The first keynote speaker was Andre Picard, a health reporter for the Globe and Mail newspaper. He discussed making knowledge understandable to the general public. He had two key messages in relation to this idea: 1) it is essential to integrate research into health policy; and 2) never lose sight that the public are the end users of the knowledge that is generated. He also posed another interesting question for the audience to ponder: "Is knowledge actually created if it is not translated to other people?" He expressed his opinion that researchers have an obligation to share their results with the public. He went on to say that research should be explained in a way that your mother would understand. Overall, he provided some good tips and thought provoking ideas.

Key Lessons

Overall, what key lessons for KT did you gain from this conference?

1. Integration of KT is important
2. Research needs to be translated all the way to the general public and in a way that is understood by all
3. Social media is a useful tool for KT, especially in the area of diffusion
4. There is a need to think in different ways regarding KT and changing the way we do things is okay

Putting It Into Practice

Is there anything you will change your KT practice as a result of this conference?

As a result of the conference, I will be better able to assist others in their KT planning by:

- Considering how messages are presented to the public
- Thinking of new methods for KT (ie social media)
- Work more diligently at ensuring integrated KT
- Determine how different tools, frameworks, and theories might enable more effective KT