The DELIVER Research Project:

- Identifies what the people and healthcare providers of western Victoria need most in terms of home-based healthcare services
- Designs and tests the best way to deliver these services, so that home-based healthcare services will continue to grow and improve across the region and beyond
- Supports the growth of research in western Victoria, so that future research findings can quickly be translated to improvements in healthcare

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Models and approaches for building knowledge translation capacity and capability in health services

The challenge

There is growing interest in effective ways to translate knowledge into practice to improve healthcare delivery, and ultimately, health outcomes. Several initiatives have been developed and implemented in an effort to build the capacity of healthcare services to adopt, adapt and implement research evidence, but this evidence has not yet been gathered and summarised on how well these strategies work in terms of implementation, health outcomes and sustainability.

In order to build knowledge translation capacity and capability across the western Victoria region we wanted to know:

(1) What models or approaches have been or are currently being used to develop knowledge translation capacity and capability in healthcare settings?
(2) How are the models and approaches to building knowledge translation capacity and capability funded, and the efforts sustained in healthcare settings?
(3) How are these models or approaches evaluated and what types of outcomes are reported?

What we did

We conducted a scoping review of the literature using a systematic approach. Scoping reviews seek to present an overview of a potentially large and diverse body of literature. They are a particularly useful in identifying and mapping the available evidence.

What we found

- We identified 34 knowledge translation and capability building programs implemented across high-income countries.

- Targeted training and education were the most frequently described strategies to build knowledge translation capacity and capability however, programs were typically multifaceted comprising a combination of two or more strategies.

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- Other strategies included dedicated support roles, strategic research-practice partnerships and collaboration, co-designed programs, and dedicated funding streams.

- Many programs utilised experiential learning ("learning by doing") whereby participants applied their new knowledge and skills to a real-world knowledge translation initiative. Collaborative learning was also commonly used to foster connections with peers and promote social learning.

- Strategies to build research translation knowledge were implemented across varying levels of influence from programs targeted at the individual or team level to large-scale strategic partnerships. Middle or senior executive managers were described as integral to many of the programs regardless of level of influence.

- 27 programs included some degree of formal evaluation which is a strength because this showed some of the benefits of these programs included self-reported improvements in knowledge, skills, confidence, and organisational culture. There was also observed behaviour change and expanded partnerships and collaborations. No studies measured health outcomes as a result of the program.

- Many programs appeared to be dependent on time-limited funding and didn't report inclusion of sustainability features.

What this means for health services looking to build knowledge translation capacity and capability

When implementing a knowledge translation capacity strategy, consider:

- Utilising multiple strategies such as targeted training, support roles, strategic partnerships and dedicated funding, to promote knowledge translation.

- Involving managers, regardless of the level that the program is implemented.

- Including experiential learning whereby participants apply their knowledge to the real-world.

- Including opportunities for collaborative learning to foster peer connections and development of communities of practice.

- Planning a formal evaluation which includes measurement of key outcomes that align with the aims of the knowledge translation program.

- Paying attention to sustainability and integrating features that support continuation of knowledge translation strategies in the longer term.

King, O., West, E., Alston, L. *et al.* Models and approaches for building knowledge translation capacity and capability in health services: a scoping review. *Implementation Sci* **19**, 7 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-024-01336-0