

Increasing impact of HSR in policy

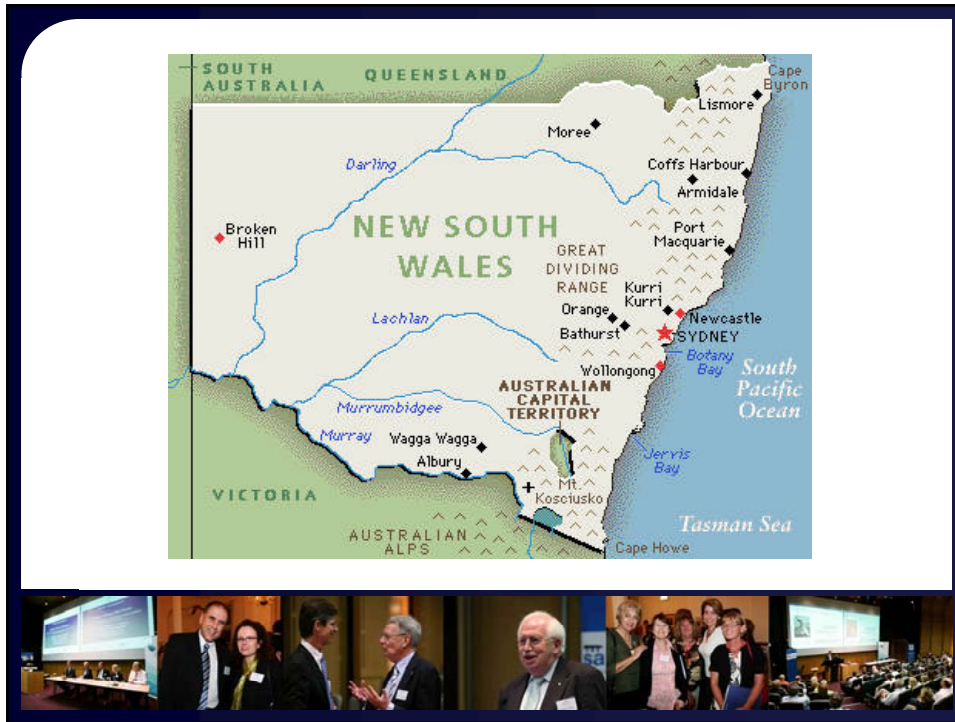
Health Services Research in Europe Working Conference
9 April 2010

Louisa Jorm:
Head, Epidemiology and Biostatistics Division

 the
saxinstitute

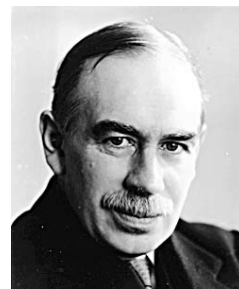


Working Conference Health Services Research in Europe, 8 & 9 April 2010.
Keynote presentation by Louisa Jorm, Sax Institute.
Plenary session 9 April 'Increasing impact of HSR in policy'.

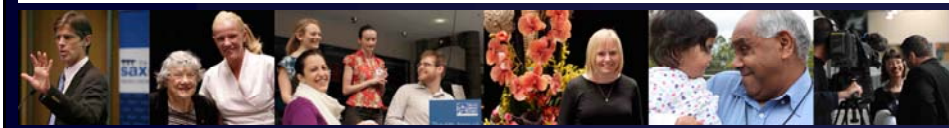




“There is nothing a government hates more than to be well informed; for it makes the process of arriving at decisions much more complicated and difficult.”



JM Keynes, 1937



“Policy design and policy evaluation should be driven by analysis of all the available options....we’re interested in facts, not fads”

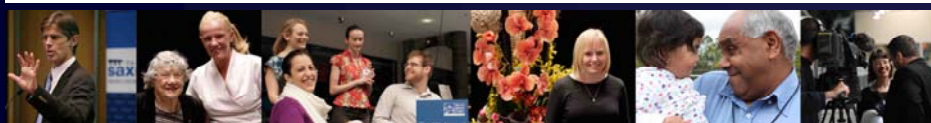


Kevin Rudd, 2008



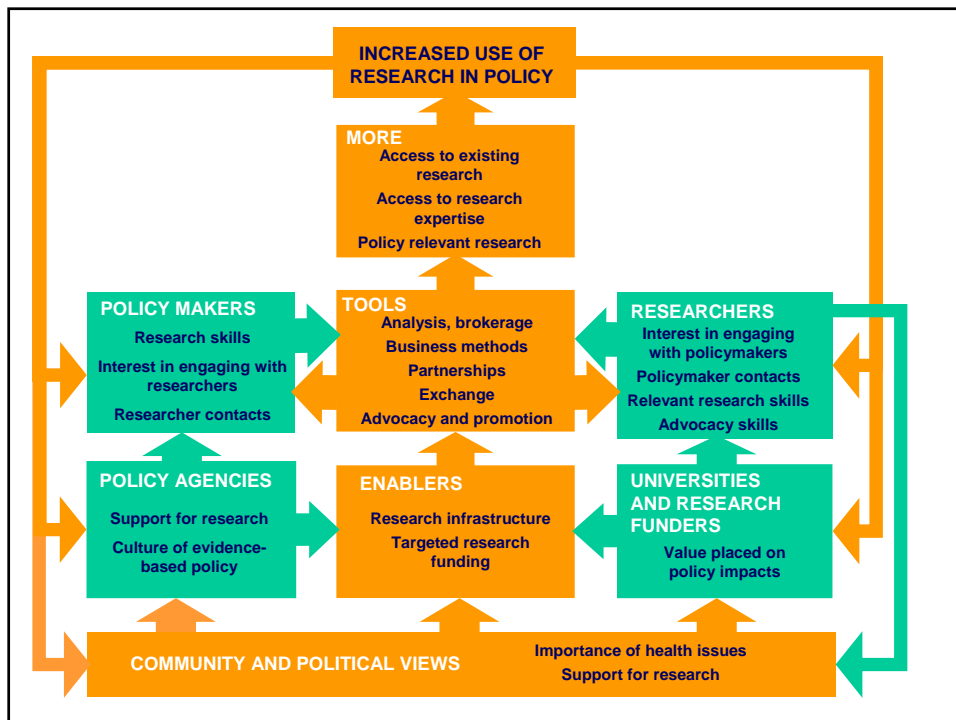
About the Sax Institute

- Independent not for profit company limited by guarantee formed in 2002
- Membership from public health and health service research groups in New South Wales, Australia
- Core funding from New South Wales Department of Health



Mission and vision

- **Vision:** Evidence from health research is considered fundamental to policy to improve the health of the community
- **Mission:** To improve health services and programs by increasing the use of research in policy making



The Sax Institute....

- Helps policy makers **access existing research** findings
- Facilitates **policy relevant research**
- Brings **policy makers and researchers together**
- **Tests what works** to increase the use of evidence



The way things are now...

Sax Institute survey of NSW Health policy makers

- **63%**: there is a **HIGH** need to improve the use of research in policy
- **68%**: brief research summaries difficult or impossible to find
- **5%**: local research is both **relevant** and presented in a **useful** way

Campbell et al. Aust NZ Health Policy 2009, 6:21



What policy makers said about why they don't use research

- Lack of appropriate or relevant research
- Difficulty accessing research findings
- Need to consider local context
- Time pressures
- Difficulty in accessing researchers

Campbell et al. Aust NZ Health Policy 2009, 6:21



What strategies increase the use of research in policy?

- **115 studies relevant to this question**
- **16 described conceptual frameworks or models**
- **93 were commentaries, surveys of opinion or case studies**
- **only 6 tested the impact of strategies to increase the use of evidence in policy or programs**

Moore, Todd, Redman, Report to NSW Health



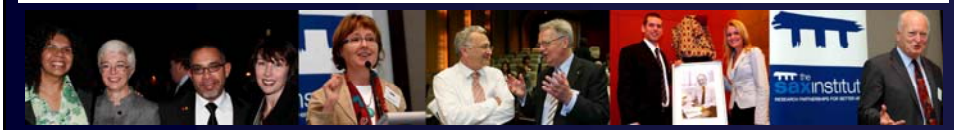
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Can we make evidence from research more readily available? *Evidence Check*



Evidence Check

- Is a system for providing reviews of existing evidence targeted at issues defined by policy makers
- Provides **quick** answers – on average 4-6 weeks
- **Is hassle free:** Sax Institutes contracts and manages
- **Provides knowledge, not just information:** best bets, best buys, what we know, what we don't know



Evidence Check process



An example: Falls prevention

- Question provided by policy maker:
 - What are the types, frequency and intensity of physical activity that is most effective in reducing the risk of falls in older adults?
- Purpose provided by policy maker:
 - To assist NSW Health to develop physical activity recommendations for different ages and population groups



What it ended up looking like

- Question 1: What are the types, frequency and intensity of physical activity that are most effective in reducing the risk of falls in older adults?
- Specifically;
 - i. What types of physical activity are most effective in preventing falls in older people?
 - ii. For those activities what are the minimum requirements in terms of frequency (number of times per week) and intensity (number of times per session) that are likely to be effective in preventing falls?



Cont...

- Question 2: What are the most effective programs for delivering these recommended types and levels of physical activity?
- Specifically;
 - i. What are the characteristics (including recruitment methods, intervention components, duration, costs) of effective
 - Community based programs
 - Programs in residential aged care settings



Cont...

- ii. Are specific types of programs more likely to be effective with particular population sub-groups (people aged 85+ years, people with chronic disease or functional limitations, CALD communities, Aboriginal people)?
- iii. What does the evidence suggest would be the best bets for community based programs and residential aged care programs in NSW?

For the purposes of the review "older adults" will be defined as people aged 65 years and over, or people aged 50-64 years with clinically significant chronic conditions or functional limitations.

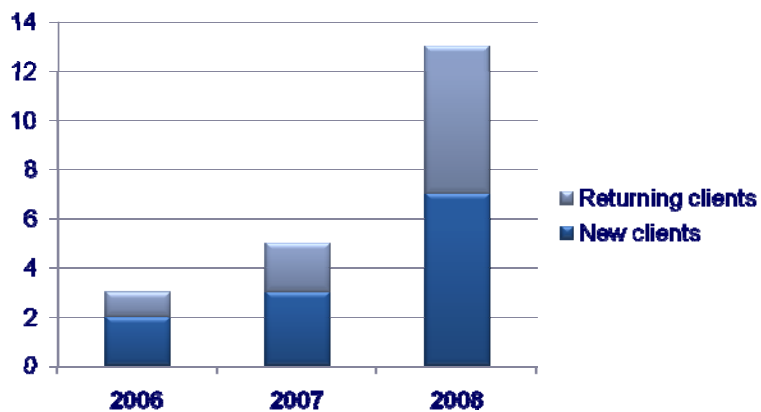


>50 Evidence Check Reviews...

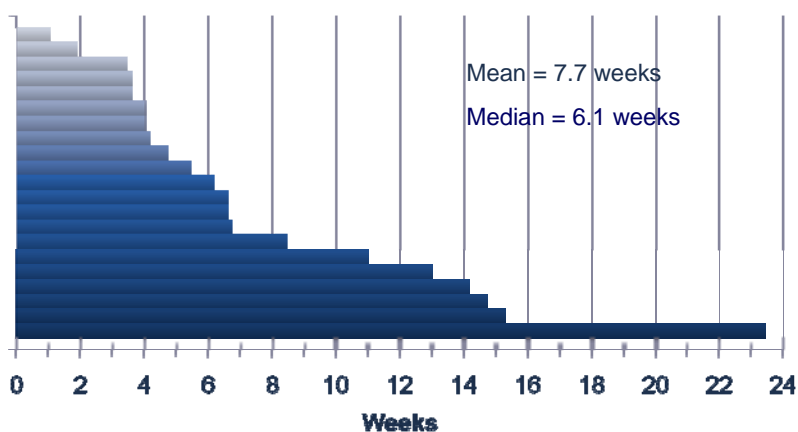
- What is the cost-effectiveness of antiviral treatment and screening for Hepatitis C?
- What is the impact of after hours GP care on acute care utilisation?
- What is the best way of resolving conflicts in end of life care?
- What is most effective in reducing domestic and family violence?
- For NSW Government including: Health; Treasury; Premier and Cabinet; Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care; and Department of Human Services Vic



Reviews commissioned by year



Time to complete reviews



Acceptability of Evidence Check reviews to policy makers

Policy makers agreed that...	N=8
Review was well structured	n=7
Review adequately answered research questions	n=5
Review provided the information required to inform policy decisions	n=5
Review represented good value for money	n=7
Would use <i>Evidence Check</i> again	n=8



Policy impacts of reviews

Review of interventions to prevent falls in older people...

Recommendations distributed to clinicians & health promotion
Review of NSW Health falls prevention programs

Review of treatments for Hepatitis C...

Used by Ministerial Advisory Council to set new targets for treatments and improved access

Led to trials of new models of care

Government-industry partnership in data collection

Review of management of end of life care...

Advisory group used the review to develop guidelines for doctors



Outcomes of reviews for researchers

Researchers agreed that...	N=11
Experience of conducting the review was professionally interesting	n=11
Received direct feedback about how review was used	n=3
Published or plan to publish findings from review	n=4
Would undertake another <i>Evidence Check</i> review	n=11



Advantages of *Evidence Check*

- **Quick:** Average time frame is 4-6 weeks
- **Relevant and specific:** provides specific answers to specific questions formulated to meet the policy-maker's needs
- **Hassle free:** Sax does the contracting and management
- **Inexpensive:** Cost is \$12,000 - \$30,000
- **Provides knowledge, not just information:** best bets, best buys, what we know, what we don't know



