

# Summary of seminar and questions

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# Seminar aims

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1. Explore dilemmas and options for action where evidence has not provided expected answers.
  2. Acknowledge dynamic nature of research knowledge production.
  3. Share lessons from different decision making contexts.
  4. Develop tool for decision makers.
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# Seminar process

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- Presentations by the speakers were followed by discussion with the audience.
  - Each speaker nominated key questions for decision makers to consider in the light of new evidence.
  - Audience discussion raised further questions, which were collated.
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# Questions: From Sophie Hill

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- Am I in denial with the results from this systematic review?
  - Should I examine my beliefs?
  - Is there a question, or doubt in my mind, that wasn't there before?
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# Questions: From Russell Gruen

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- Do I have a problem with this research?
  - Does the problem relate to validity of the research?
  - Does the problem relate to applicability or relevance of the research?
  - Does the problem relate to the implications of the research?
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## Some possible key questions to inform your decision: From Sally Green

- How much do you know of the 'context' of the existing research?
- How different is the 'context' to your setting?
- Is it plausible that the result in your population would be different?
- In which direction is the difference in result likely to be?
- What are the trade offs in 'getting it wrong?'
- How much time do you have (can you wait for the results of the commissioned research?)
- Can you data collect as you implement?

# Five key questions from Jeremy Grimshaw

- **What should be transferred?**
- **To whom should research knowledge be transferred?**
- **By whom should research knowledge be transferred?**
- **How should research knowledge be transferred?**
- **With what effect should research knowledge be transferred?**

Lavis JN, Robertson D, Woodside JN, Mcleod CB, Abelson J (2003) *Milbank Quarterly*

# Questions from floor about the evidence and our response to it

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- Should I believe the evidence?
  - What is the starting view of the researcher?
  - Should we automatically question the evidence even when it does agree with our views (a state of suspended scepticism)?
  - What are my own views and beliefs and how are they affecting my reading of the evidence?
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# Questions from the floor about the context for applying the evidence

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- When is a systematic review the last step and when is it only part of the answer?
  - How is the research question framed and how might that influence the outcomes and their broader relevance?
  - What are the risks of acting or not acting on the evidence?
  - What types of decisions do we need to make?
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# Questions from the floor about our role as decision makers

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- What kinds of skills do we need to be part of this dialogue?
  - How can we use systematic reviews to open up this dialogue?
  - What are the organisational drivers to establishing infrastructure for evidence-based practice and policy?
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# Questions from the floor about our role as decision makers

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- What can we learn from the research to aid us? It is not just the bottom line but the information contained in the research is helpful.
  - What people are participating in the dialogue and are some missing (and it matters)?
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# Summary remarks (1/2): Sophie Hill

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- Some social and political contextual points are that:
    - Better to be transparent.
    - Policy = quick; research = slow, so context is very challenging
    - Australia is small and has limited health services research infrastructure – so we are often relying on research from elsewhere (applicability can be complex issue).
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# Summary remarks (2/2): Sophie Hill

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- A dynamic evidence base has knowledge management implications, ie need routine knowledge transfer, need responsive capacity, skilled people, awareness of evidence in context.
  - May be costly to change and benefits may not be large.
  - Developing the capacity to deliver complex interventions requires investment.
  - Researching complex interventions is costly and takes time.
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