



Evidence – Dissemination plan

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What is a dissemination plan?

A dissemination plan is a plan for disseminating research findings or products to those who will use the information in practice. It is something that you should be thinking about early on and never as an afterthought. It is what will help you get the message out whether it is results of research or a successful intervention based on the findings.

Why is it so important?

An effective dissemination strategy is critical for maximizing the impact of results on various recipients. It will keep you on track and ensure that all stakeholders are reached using the most appropriate approaches at the right time. If real-world impact is truly the end goal, then it is crucial to be prepared for the process of implementation beyond publishing and presenting in peer-reviewed venues. In general, all research studies designed to influence policy and practice should have a clear and well-developed dissemination plan. However, this is not always the case and oftentimes it seems to be approached as an "add-on" rather than an important aspect to consider throughout. If a dissemination strategy is not well thought-out there is a risk that difficult challenges may arise. For example:

- Poor packaging and indexing of research findings (which may lead to stakeholders not taking part of the results)
- Research findings that do not provide the clarity that policy makers need in order to work for the change
- The research does not reach the relevant stakeholder and end-users (resulting in no real impact)

How do we get there?

There are numerous hands-on resources available on how to develop a research dissemination plan. Below are some tools listed that explain what a dissemination plan is, what it should consist of, and how you, as a researcher, can start to think about it. One important aspect to consider throughout is the context and the end-users. Make sure you understand the context (or collaborate with someone who does) and involve the end-users at an early stage. If you manage this well, the dissemination will surely be a lot simpler!

Below are some shortlisted simple and concrete tools with multiple templates and ideation techniques to assist you. There are many more out there so do check out our deep dive section as well or spend some time doing your own desktop research. Best of luck!

- 🔗 **TOOL: [Essential Questions for developing a dissemination plan](#)**
By: World Health Organisation (WHO)

In chapter 7 of this very comprehensive WHO report is a list of the most essential questions and aspects to consider for developing your dissemination plan (Box 7.1). This is a great starting point to get the thought process going but we recommend reading the entire chapter on dissemination, and the rest of the report. More questions and checklist in the second tool below.

- 🔗 **TOOL: [Dissemination Planning Tool](#)**
By: Westat

This tool can help researchers evaluate their research and develop appropriate dissemination plans. This is a relatively short (9-page) document with lots of useful questions, checklists, templates and ideation techniques. We suggest printing out and using the relevant templates in workshop or teamwork settings. Make sure you have diverse representatives in your group to get the most out of the planning stage.

- 🔗 **TOOL: [Beyond Scientific Publication](#)**
By: Yale Centre for Clinical Investigation

This is a 22-page document, more in-depth and provides key strategies for dissemination, including practical advice and specific templates researchers can adapt for their use.