

research snapshot

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Knowledge Translation at NeuroDevNet

What is this research about?

NeuroDevNet is a part of the new Canadian Network Centres of Excellence. The program supports large-scale research networks that are led by academics. It seeks to harness Canada's creative and inventive scientists in health, nature, social science and engineering. NeuroDevNet consists of 3 demonstration projects: research programs in cerebral palsy (CP), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). A knowledge translation (KT) group has also been created at NeuroDevNet. The KT group focuses on KT between: scientists, researchers, technological innovators, and the public. KT may ensure that knowledge is taken up by users and applied appropriately so that its immediate benefit can be gained. The KT working group wanted to learn how their members currently engage in KT activities. They also wanted to identify future priorities for KT.

What did the researchers do?

The KT group wanted to determine the extent to which researchers in NeuroDevNet were currently engaged in KT activities. An online survey was sent out to all members. The

What you need to know:

Most members of NeuroDevNet are somewhat engaged in a number of KT activities. However, these tend to be traditional activities such as conferences. There is very little public engagement. NeuroDevNet seeks to implement a KT core plan that includes services and activities that bridge research with community.

respondents were asked to rate their frequency of engagement in a variety of KT activities. They chose between 5 responses, ranging from "never" to "more than 12 times a year". They were also asked to identify priority training and activities that should be pursued in the future. 36 out of the 120 members (30%) of NeuroDevNet responded to this online survey. Interviews were also done with 14 key informants including project leaders and scientists.

What did the researchers find?

The survey of NeuroDevNet researchers' KT activities suggested that most members are somewhat engaged in KT. They take on many activities and strategies that encourage the dissemination and use of knowledge. However, they often relied on traditional tasks.

For example, they attended conferences and presented their work to other researchers. There was less focus on engaging the public and doing consumer-focused activities. There were low levels of engagement with social media. Members also engaged on a higher level with online communities, such as “wikis”. The majority of the time, the target audience was other researchers. This was followed by clinicians, families, and patient groups.

How can you use this research?

Researchers involved in NeuroDevNet may use this research to understand the importance of KT. It may inform future impact strategies for their research with the general public.

KT experts may use this research to understand the goals of NeuroDevNet. It may also shape future tools and support to assist researchers in doing KT more effectively.

About the Researchers

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Knowledge Translation at NeuroDevNet

This is a NeuroDevNet product. NeuroDevNet is a Network of Centres of Excellence dedicated to helping children with neurodevelopmental disorders. The Knowledge Translation Core at NeuroDevNet helps to maximize the impact of research and training in neurodevelopmental disorders. The KT Core serves NeuroDevNet researchers, students and their partners by providing services such as: knowledge brokering, support for KT events, support for KT products, KT capacity building, KT evaluation and support for KT planning.

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