



Developing Evidence for Health Promotion Interventions and Assessing Effectiveness

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Overview

- Types of evidence needed in South Africa
- Current challenges in developing evidence
- The role of a health promotion foundation in addressing challenges
- Suggested research functions of a health promotion foundation
- Types of research
- Examples from the alcohol area
- Conclusion

Why do we need to develop the evidence base; what types of evidence needed?

- Strong need to implement interventions that work, rather than ineffective interventions
- To ensure the best use of resources, particularly in resource-constrained environments.
- To understand the nature of consequences (intended and unintended) of interventions (e.g. loss of jobs; increased use of unrecorded alcohol), and how to address them
- Strong need to counter effects of alcohol promotion strategies of alcohol industry
- Evidence needs to be both pro-active and responsive

Current challenges

What hinders the development of the evidence and implementation of evidence-based interventions in South Africa?

- Funding limitations
- Limited expertise in some areas
- Limited research
- Evidence is not disseminated often enough
- Competing influences (e.g. alcohol and advertising industry input which may conflict with evidence)

What role can a health promotion foundation play in addressing those challenges?

CHALLENGE	RESPONSE
Funding	Fund research
Expertise	Research capacity development
Limited research	Enhance; stimulate; conduct research
Competing influences	Conduct strategic research
Limited dissemination	Enhance dissemination

The role of a HPF in funding research in South Africa

- Addresses limited funding for research
- Can fund relevant areas of research not necessarily aligned with priority areas of international funders (e.g. papsakke research)
- Current funding shortages exist, and future shortages anticipated

The role of a HPF in enhancing research capacity

- Research scholarships/studentships
- Research fellowships
- Small grants for innovative research; pilot projects; demonstration projects
- Training grants/scholarships (e.g. short courses to enhance specific research skills, post-graduate courses; monitoring and evaluation courses)
- Networking; research collaborations

The role of a HPF in enhancing the research base

- Stimulate research, mainly in priority areas
- Provision of research grants for investigator-led research
- Commission research to address specific issues identified by the Foundation

The role of a HPF in addressing conflicting information

- Strategic research
- Need to be proactive as well as responsive
- Research to address topical issues:
 - e.g. effects of a ban on alcohol advertising – studies could be commissioned to address issues

The role of a HPF in research dissemination

- Support research dissemination efforts:
 - Enhance networking
 - Policy briefs and reports
 - Presentations
 - Stakeholder meetings
 - Clearing house

Types of research needed

To develop evidence for and assess effectiveness of health promotion (including policy) interventions:

- Surveillance activities
- Determinants research
- Evaluation research
- Translational research

Types of research designs

- Primary research
 - Longitudinal studies
 - Experimental designs
 - Quasi-experimental designs
 - Randomised controlled trials
- Secondary data analysis studies/archival studies

Sources of secondary/archival data

Source of data	Type of information
Surveillance systems	Patterns of disease and ill-health
Health information systems	Service use, morbidity, mortality, distribution and consumption of health commodities
Behavioural surveys	Patterns of risk behaviour, perceptions of health/illness
Economic statistics	Living conditions, areas of vulnerability, expenditure
Customs and excise	Tobacco and alcohol consumption
Police	Illegal drug use, domestic violence, traffic accidents
Market research companies	Consumption, media exposure, attitudes, practices
Academic research	Various (e.g. social determinants of health; behavioral surveys; economic analyses)
Insurance industry	Morbidity, health care consumption, accident exposure
Corporate industry	Consumption, distribution systems, occupational health

Source: Adapted from Moodie et al (2000)

Examples of policy research topics from the alcohol field

Research may focus on key policy development initiatives identified by Parry (2010):

- Restrictions on alcohol advertising
- Development of liquor outlet policy
- Legislation on alcohol taxation
- Legislation on alcohol packaging

Examples of policy research topics from the alcohol field

Areas for which cross-cultural/developing country evidence relatively limited:

- College student normative education and multi-component programmes
- Brief interventions with high risk students
- Mandatory treatment of drink-driving repeat offenders
- Public awareness programmes
- Research on alcopops
- Differential price by beverage

Conclusion

- A Health Promotion Foundation should focus on identification, development, promotion and implementation of evidence-based interventions
- Research should be an essential component of a Health Promotion Foundations in South Africa

Conclusion

A Health Promotion Foundation can play an important role in the development of evidence for health promotion interventions, by

- Filling the funding gap
- Filling the knowledge gap
- Priority setting
- Capacity building
- Monitoring and evaluation activities
- Enhancing networking
- Promoting and enabling knowledge dissemination