



The Five Fundamentals of transforming research to policy:

- **Transparency**
- **Relevancy**
- **Accessibility**
- **Credibility**
- **Timeliness**

Disseminating disability research to policymakers

A fact sheet for disability and health researchers

We asked a small group of policy experts to discuss ways to increase the likelihood that research findings are used in policy development and generated the following recommendations. You can find the full report at www.healthwellness.org.

Master the policy process.

Learn to anticipate the changing political climate.

Know that each administration has a distinct culture.

Understand how the three branches of government interact.

Know legislators, their committee assignments and their staffers.

Know the role of committees in the legislative process.

Understand the researcher's role and the policymaker's role in the policy sphere.

Research the available funding streams.

Be aware that there are funding streams available for systems-based research.

Couch research questions in contemporary issues to utilize existing funding streams.

Find ways to bundle funding across multiple states.

Cultivate trust-based relationships with policymakers.

Guard your credibility by disclosing all biases and conflicts of interest at the outset.

Be willing to invest time into the policy process without a guarantee of return.

Maintain relationships even if policy makers do not use your findings as you would like.

Remember that the most important vote is the *next* vote.

Develop alliances with other organizations.

Be careful not to jeopardize credibility when forming alliances with advocacy groups.

Work with the research arms of disability organizations to maintain impartiality.

Political tactics (e.g., sympathy votes) are not a wise strategy in the policy process.

Synthesize research.

Allow policymakers to see the big picture quickly by synthesizing information.

Know that there are multiple forms of research synthesis.

Recognize the importance of systematic reviews.

Put your findings in context by synthesizing all available data on the subject for reports.

Create accessible reports

Use plain, non-technical language.

Keep reports brief and timely.

Use both data and illustrative personal stories where possible.

Do not over-qualify your results (e.g., use point estimates instead of confidence intervals.)

Do not oversell your findings as this poses a serious threat to credibility.

Develop training for policy-research career

Build an understanding of the policy process into the training of disability researchers.

Develop a field placement for researchers in government.

Build incentives for academic careers in disability policy.

Build a career track for policy-based research.

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