

New tool makes tracking research impact easier

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A database template that tracks the impact of research is now available free of charge to organisations that need to measure the true reach of their work.

The tool, developed by the Centre of Research Excellence in Rural and Remote Primary Health Care, records not only [journal articles](#) for a particular [research project](#), but the wider impact of this research such as conference presentations, media exposure and uptake or use of the

project's research. Research projects can be across multiple institutions or individual institutions.

The centre is a collaboration between the School of Rural Health at Monash University, Centre for Remote Health (a joint centre of Flinders University and Charles Darwin University) and the Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health at The University of Sydney.

Monash University's Lisa Lavey, who led the development of the tool, said traditional research measuring methods often didn't show the total reach and impact of research – which was a challenge facing any researcher.

"Being able to demonstrate the wider influence of research, rather than just published journal articles, is a lot more difficult," Ms Lavey said.

"The centre started with a very simple database that grew into a tool that can handle complex data. It can now record an incredible amount of detail, including the traditional journal articles, books and conference presentations, as well as stakeholder presentations, media contact, and evidence of uptake or use of research."

The pilot database has attracted interest from other Centres of Research Excellence and external organisations that are also interested in tracking the impact of their research.

Developed in Microsoft Access, the database's framework was suggested by an article about research impact published in the Australian Journal of Rural Health by the centre's researchers.

Indicators of impact are organised by domain (academic, policy, service delivery and society at large) and whether those impacts were initiated by the centre or institution, or by the user of the research.

Ms Lavey said the centre wanted to share the database template with other researchers so that they too could gain a true picture of their [research impact](#).

More information: Buykx, P., Humphreys, J., Wakerman, J., Perkins, D., Lyle, D., McGrail, M. and Kinsman, L. (2012), " 'Making evidence count': A framework to monitor the impact of health services research." *Australian Journal of Rural Health*, 20: 51–58.
doi: 10.1111/j.1440-1584.2012.01256.x

The database template is available free of charge under a licence agreement with Monash University. To arrange a demonstration, contact Lisa Lavey by email lisa.lavey@monash.edu or phone (03) 5440 9077. For more information on the centre go to the website at: www.crerrphc.org.au

Provided by Monash University

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