



# What is the role of research evidence in workforce development?

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## Summary of Research

### What is research evidence?

“Knowledge that has been acquired through a systematic and transparent process of enquiry”

- Responses to the employer survey highlighted a broad understanding of the definition of research evidence although access to and uses of research evidence varied considerably in terms of informing workforce development. **How can understanding of research evidence and its role in organisational decision making be improved?**

### Headline findings and food for thought

#### Accessing Research Evidence

- The majority of organisations state that they are competent in supporting the effective use of research evidence. However, analysis of policies and procedures and the roles and responsibilities of managers with responsibility for workforce development highlight room for improvement. **Is the case with your organisation?**
- The biggest gaps in terms of support made available for staff to access and use research evidence were in terms of: the use of podcasts and videos; access to social media sites; and subscriptions to relevant online electronic databases or journals. **Why is this the case? Would support to close these gaps be valuable?**
- The survey revealed relatively little demand for access to learning and development to build skills to use research evidence. **Why is this the case?**

#### Using Research Evidence

- The survey highlighted a variety of examples of how social care organisations use research evidence to inform workforce development. **How is evidence used in to influence workforce development in your organisation? What works? What doesn't work so well?**
- 'Translating research into practice' was the area most frequently cited by employers as requiring support. **What are the barriers to organisations achieving this at the moment?**

#### Informing an Employer Engagement Strategy

- The survey revealed demand for a regular digest of research evidence characterised which provides a simple assessment of research evidence and the implications for social care employers linked to workforce development. **In reality, would such a resource actually be used?**
- Consultation revealed broad approval of attempts to support employers to maximise their access and use of research evidence. **For you/your organisation, what would be most useful/efficient way to contribute (and benefit) from engagement activities coordinated by SfC?**

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### Research Evidence and You – A Personal Audit 13<sup>th</sup> – 17th January 2014

During the week leading up to the workshop we would like you to take 3 minutes at the end of each day (far better than on the train coming to the workshop!) to respond to the statements raised through the research based on your own working day.

We would like you to collate how many times have you accessed research evidence, how you did this and how you actioned the research? Also, what stopped you from accessing research evidence and how does this compare with the barriers highlighted through the research (e.g. time and work pressures, over complicated summaries of research, irrelevant or impractical research findings).

We will ask you to think about your actual experiences throughout the workshop. A template to record your thoughts is provided below.

Access to / use of Research Evidence	How often?	Further information
I have received a newsletter, bulletin or social media message with details of research evidence		
I have accessed research evidence to inform workforce development as a result of the above		
I have accessed research evidence independently to inform workforce development or wider business objectives		
I have passed on a summary of research evidence to colleagues		
I have been stopped from accessing and using research due to work pressures		

We'd also like you to bring along a piece of research or information to assist with the activity scheduled for 13.05. It could be something which grabbed your attention, made you think or an article you liked the format of – basically anything that demonstrates information that you find useful or engaging! It could be related to evidence or research but there is no requirement for it to be. HINT: Try looking to see what's on the front of your fridge, tucked inside the front cover of your diary or notebook, or saved on your computer favourites.