Reviewer’s report

**Title:** How research funding agencies support science policy and practice integration? : An international overview

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**Reviewer:** Reza Majdzadeh

**Reviewer’s report:**

The subject of this paper, i.e. the policy of health research, is one of less developed issues in literature. Therefore, the topic is quite relevant and urgently needed. The authors reviewed document of funding agencies in six developed countries according to three domains of intentions, actions and Effectiveness. While the methodology is not rigorous, as authors mentioned its limitations and relied on secondary data from websites and documents, it can add information on granting institutions and by this fill some of the information gap existed in this field.

The paper can be presented with better format. Right now the there are so many information in the paper which might be better presented, if the authors consider a conceptual framework for that. It is not clear now why and how the three domains, which their titles changed through methods and result section, are selected and were developed. Introducing the framework and or the concept that the authors had in their mind can improve readability of the paper.

Page 5: ‘In the literature on science policy, or how “policies of national government, supranational organizations, public science funding organizations and large public research organizations aimed at influencing the production of scientific knowledge “ (citation Leiden university), granting agencies have been analyzed.’; needs reference.

Page 6: ‘We studied both policy and practice instead of limiting ourselves to just one side of the spectrum.’; not very clear.

The following part could be presented in discussion section instead of introduction. In addition, it can be better presented.

Page 7: Challenges in SPPI, here the variety of models, definitions and measures across agencies, have been documented and elaborated. The definition of knowledge transfer across granting agencies at the international level is not consistent [19] as shown by a comparative study, based on interviews from health research funding agencies, ministries, granting councils, non-governmental organizations-focused on translation policy-, researchers, funding and internal activities of agencies.

Many differences emerged as to the involvement of each agency in the knowledge translation process. Each agency’s abilities and types of support for pull, push, linkage and exchange, and capacity to evaluate of results [19] were also observed.
Other challenges found:
- The need for a clarification of individual and organizational brokering interventions factors [20];
- The lack of consistency in publication dissemination measurement and guidance [21];
- The need to adapt health research systems to policymakers, and to stakeholders policymaking systems [3, 22];
- Researcher autonomy (knowledge, career based on productivity, stable position);
- Policy motivation (agenda, urgency, short term, career based on publicity, re-election);
- Closeness or not of granting agencies with researchers and with policy makers.

The next part is not necessary:

Page 9: The distinction between policy integration and practice integration will be highlighted when data allowed us to, especially in the result section.

The following part is very crucial and better to be presented as the limitations of the study in discussion.

Page 11: The empirical secondary data gathered through these sources are limited: they do not necessarily reflect the most recent and up-to-date decisions of granting councils. To make up for these limits we searched for and focused on the last strategic plans and organizational documents available and accessible, exposing a positive and selective discourse on ongoing activities and results obtained. This desirability bias did not matter so much since we were interested in achievements rather than failures and barriers.

Results reported on the impacts on policy or practices were included when the data was detailed and contributory to the grant received. Source data analysis may not have allowed us to compile all the internal dynamics, furthermore these internal dynamics were not points of interest.

Secondary data presents the advantages of having a similar level of depth as original data and sometimes similar headings, making the comparisons more accurate and straightforward. Reports and information published on websites are produced after a review process and approval by the department responsible for editing and publishing official data, thus safeguarding combined views about the topic of interest and the thorough data collection. Such a wide and pluralist dataset would have been difficult to obtain otherwise: a single representative from one institution could not have provided such a variety of content. We believe reports and official website information are a useful dataset to study SPPI in granting councils at this point in the development of science policy and health research.

Page 12: Links and exchanges (L&E); While this term was used in previous lines, it was introduced in page 12.

The following two parts is better to be presented in discussion:

Page 14: INSERM may be considered as serving translational research and not being part of KT (Graham et al., 2006), however there needs to be adoption of knowledge with the partnered companies, qualifying for KT in our analysis here.

The following sentences could be summarized. It wanted to show that this institution has push model strategies. It can be captured by the first sentence as well.

Page 18:

NHMRC urgent research program reflects the pull model:

“Research that must be undertaken rapidly in response to a threat to public health. The threat may be generalised, or specific to a particular group of individuals, and may be identified as either a current major problem, a potential major problem or a problem that is expected to increase in the future. The main catalysts for urgent research will be the fact that a disease or illness, or its variant(s), is previously unknown or unidentified, and has a high morbidity and/or mortality rate, thus garners media coverage and public and/or governmental concern. This definition covers the range of possibilities at the cellular level (the identification of the disease or illness, and its variants), to those at the public and population level, and then the level of risk to a nation. For example, if a disease poses a probable or actual threat to the national and/or local economy by hindering exports, tourism, agriculture, and so on. The SRDC has outlined a process for considering requests for urgent research based on this decision.”

In methods the variables of the study were introduced, but the names in result are not consistant with them. Suppose in method section, authors used ‘Steps of innovation’ which in the result it changed to ‘Eligible expenses’. The order of the ‘Synthesis’ in the methods is first and in result is 4th. In the methods they used ‘Benefits’, while in the results section it changed to ‘Effectiveness analysis’.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests