

# SUPPORT tool for assessing the applicability of research evidence

## A summary of

Lavis, J.N., Oxman, A.D., Souza, N.M., Lewin, S., Gruen, R.L. & Fretheim, A. (2009). SUPPORT Tools for evidence-informed health Policymaking (STP) 9: Assessing the applicability of the findings of a systematic review. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 7(Suppl 1): S9. doi: 10.1186/1478-4505-7-S1-S9.



National Collaborating Centre  
for Methods and Tools  
Centre de collaboration nationale  
des méthodes et outils

## How to cite this NCCMT summary:

National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (2012). *SUPPORT tool for assessing the applicability of research evidence*. Hamilton, ON: McMaster University. (Updated 12 September, 2017) Retrieved from <http://www.nccmt.ca/resources/search/142>.

## Categories:

Tool, Adapt, Organizational capacity and management, Policy development

## Date posted:

September 5, 2012

## Date updated:

September 12, 2017

## Tool

---

## Relevance For Public Health

This SUPPORT Tool can help with interpreting and adapting research evidence to the local setting to support evidence-informed policy making.

## Description

Developed by the SUPporting POLicy relevant Reviews and Trials (SUPPORT) Project, this [SUPPORT tool](#) provides questions to help decision-makers assess if findings of systematic reviews are applicable in a local setting. Assessing applicability to determine if research findings are feasible to implement in practice is an important step in moving research evidence to practice.

Specifically, this tool can help with the [Adapt step](#) in Evidence-Informed Public Health (see NCCMT's [webcast on Adapt](#)). This SUPPORT Tool can be used alongside NCCMT's [Applicability and Transferability of Evidence Tool](#). The A&T Tool assesses cost-effectiveness, organizational culture and capacity to implement research evidence in a specific setting.

This tool is part of a series to support the use of research evidence in policy making. The SUPPORT series includes 18 tools that address four broad areas:

- developing organizational support for evidence-informed policy making
- identifying needs for research evidence for policy making
- finding and assessing research
- moving from research to action

To access the full suite of tools, which are available through the *Health Research Policy and Systems* journal, [click here](#). To access the tools in book format, available from the Norwegian Knowledge Centre for the Health Services, [click here](#).

## Implementing the Tool

### Who is Involved?

The SUPPORT tools are targeted to policy-makers and those who support policy-makers in assessing evidence for decision making.

### Steps for Using Tool

This SUPPORT Tool assesses the applicability of systematic review findings in a specific setting by asking:

- Were the studies included in a systematic review conducted in the same setting or were the findings consistent across settings or time period?
  - Are there important differences in practical realities and constraints that might substantially affect
- 

These summaries are written by the NCCMT to condense and to provide an overview of the resources listed in the [Registry of Methods and Tools](#) and to give suggestions for their use in a public health context. For more information on individual methods and tools included in the review, please consult the authors/developers of the original resources.

the feasibility and acceptability of an option?

- Are there important differences in health system arrangements that may mean an option could not work in the same way?
- Are there important differences in the baseline conditions that might yield different absolute effects, even if the relative effectiveness was the same?
- What insights can be drawn about options, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?

## Evaluation and Measurement Characteristics

### Evaluation

Information not available

### Validity

Not applicable

### Reliability

Not applicable

### Methodological Rating



Not applicable

## Tool Development

### Developers

John N. Lavis  
Andrew D. Oxman  
Nathan M. Souza  
Simon Lewin  
Russell L. Gruen  
Atle Fretheim  
SUPPORT Project (SUPporting POLicy relevant Reviews and Trials)  
website: <http://www.support-collaboration.org>

### Method of Development

The SUPPORT Tools were designed to help people use the best available research evidence in their decision making. The SUPporting POLicy relevant Reviews and Trials (SUPPORT) Project is an international collaboration funded by the European Commission's 6th Framework. There are 18 tools in total, including tools that address:

- using research to clarify a problem;
- using research to frame options for a policy issue;
- preparing policy briefs; and
- using policy dialogues in decision making.

The tools are freely available through the *Health Research Policy and Systems* journal ([click here](#)).

### Release Date

2009

### Contact Person

John N. Lavis  
McMaster University  
1280 Main St W, CRL-209  
Hamilton, ON L8S 4K9  
Phone: (905) 525-9140, ext. 22521  
Fax: (905) 529-5742  
Email: [lavisj@mcmaster.ca](mailto:lavisj@mcmaster.ca)

## Resources

<b>Title of Primary Resource</b>	SUPPORT Tools for evidence-informed health Policymaking (STP) 9: Assessing the applicability of the findings of a systematic review
<b>File Attachment</b>	None
<b>Web-link</b>	<a href="http://www.health-policy-systems.com/content/7/S1/S9">http://www.health-policy-systems.com/content/7/S1/S9</a>
<b>Reference</b>	Lavis, J.N., Oxman, A.D., Souza, N.M., Lewin, S., Gruen, R.L. & Fretheim, A. (2009). SUPPORT Tools for evidence-informed health Policymaking (STP) 9: Assessing the applicability of the findings of a systematic review. <i>Health Research Policy and Systems</i> , 7(Suppl 1): S9. doi: 10.1186/1478-4505-7-S1-S9.
<b>Type of Material</b>	Journal article
<b>Format</b>	Periodical
<b>Cost to Access</b>	None.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Conditions for Use</b>	Copyright © 2009 Lavis et al; licensee BioMed Central Ltd.

---

These summaries are written by the [NCCMT](#) to condense and to provide an overview of the resources listed in the [Registry of Methods and Tools](#) and to give suggestions for their use in a public health context. For more information on individual methods and tools included in the review, please consult the authors/developers of the original resources.