



Actuaries  
Institute.

# Whole person. Whole system.

IDSS 2023

12 – 14 November  
Hobart

## Maximising impact for policy decision making: learnings from a Research Government Partnership

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© Institute for Safety, Compensation and Recovery Research (ISCRR), Monash University  
WorkSafe Victoria

*This presentation has been prepared for the Actuaries Institute 2023 Injury and Disability Schemes Seminar.  
The Institute Council wishes it to be understood that opinions put forward herein are not necessarily those of the Institute and the  
Council is not responsible for those opinions.*

## Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of Hobart, the Muwinina people, and pay my respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging.

I acknowledge that ISCRR's offices are located on the unceded lands of the people of the Kulin Nations. We are also co-located with WorkSafe Victoria on the lands of the Wadawurrang people.

I extend that respect to First Nation Peoples here today.

# Factors for maximising impact

- ✓ Shared vision and clear priorities
- ✓ Co-design breeds impact
- ✓ Measure impact from the start
- ✓ Embed impact assessment
- ✓ Continuous improvement

# What happens to 90- 95% of academic research?



In Butler, D; Nature, 2008, Illustration by B. Mellor

# Use of research evidence to impact policy

- 8 - 15% of research evidence contributes to a change in policy or practice<sup>1</sup>
- 37% of public health policy documents referred to academic research, instead of other internal policies<sup>2</sup>.
- Adoption of private sector principles in public sector
- Constrain the 'cost' of government, FTE caps
- Privatisation, contracting , “outsourcing”
- Widespread ‘research to practice gaps’ globally<sup>3</sup>

1. Best & Holmes (2010). Systems thinking, knowledge and action: towards better models and methods. Evidence & Policy, 6(2), 145-159.

2. Zardo, P and Colliet, A. (2011). Measuring use of research evidence in public health policy: a policy content analysis. BMC Public Health, 14;496.

3. Klepac, B et al. (2022). Increasing research evidence translation and utilisation to improve population health outcomes. Policy evidence brief 2022-02. Mitchell Institute, Victoria University. Melbourne. 0bck-q209

# Key barriers facing government organisations to closing the research to practice and policy gap



**Limited capability and knowledge**



**Under-utilisation of research evidence**



**Poor translation**

# Institute for Safety, Compensation and Recovery Research

A unique collaborative partnership between



RESEARCH



BROKER



TRANSLATION



TRAINING

- 14 years of decision-informing research in the field of Australian worker health and safety
- Broad area expertise with skills in applied research for policy and practice

Prevention

Recovery

Mental Health



# How ISCRR operates



**CO-LOCATION**



**CO-DESIGN AND  
COLLABORATION**



**RESEARCH  
NETWORK**



**INDUSTRY  
STAKEHOLDERS**



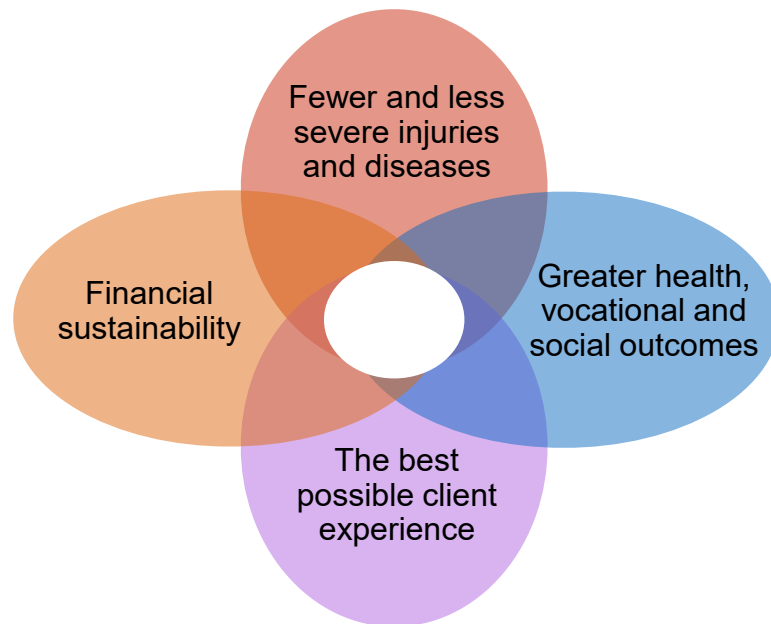
**GOVERNANCE**

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# Shared vision and priorities leads to true collaboration

- Shared vision must be sustainable, not just solving a short term problem of today
- Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate
  - Champions driving agenda
  - Researcher engagement throughout project life cycle
  - Good partnerships upfront will enhance research outcomes and maximise impact



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# Co-design and collaboration breeds impact

## Across multiple areas

- Conducting research
- Facilitating and managing research
- Research dissemination and translation
- Institute governance
- Co-location

## Various end-user needs

- Inform policy
- Business planning
- Strategic and program development and review
- Address legal requirements

# What type of research do we do?

## ISCRR research products

- Evaluations and program logics
- Evidence reviews – general and clinical
- Environmental scans
- Tailored research products

## Snapshot

- Draws upon existing data

## Rapid

- Address a specific question

## Comprehensive

- In-depth analysis

Research products  
tailored to:

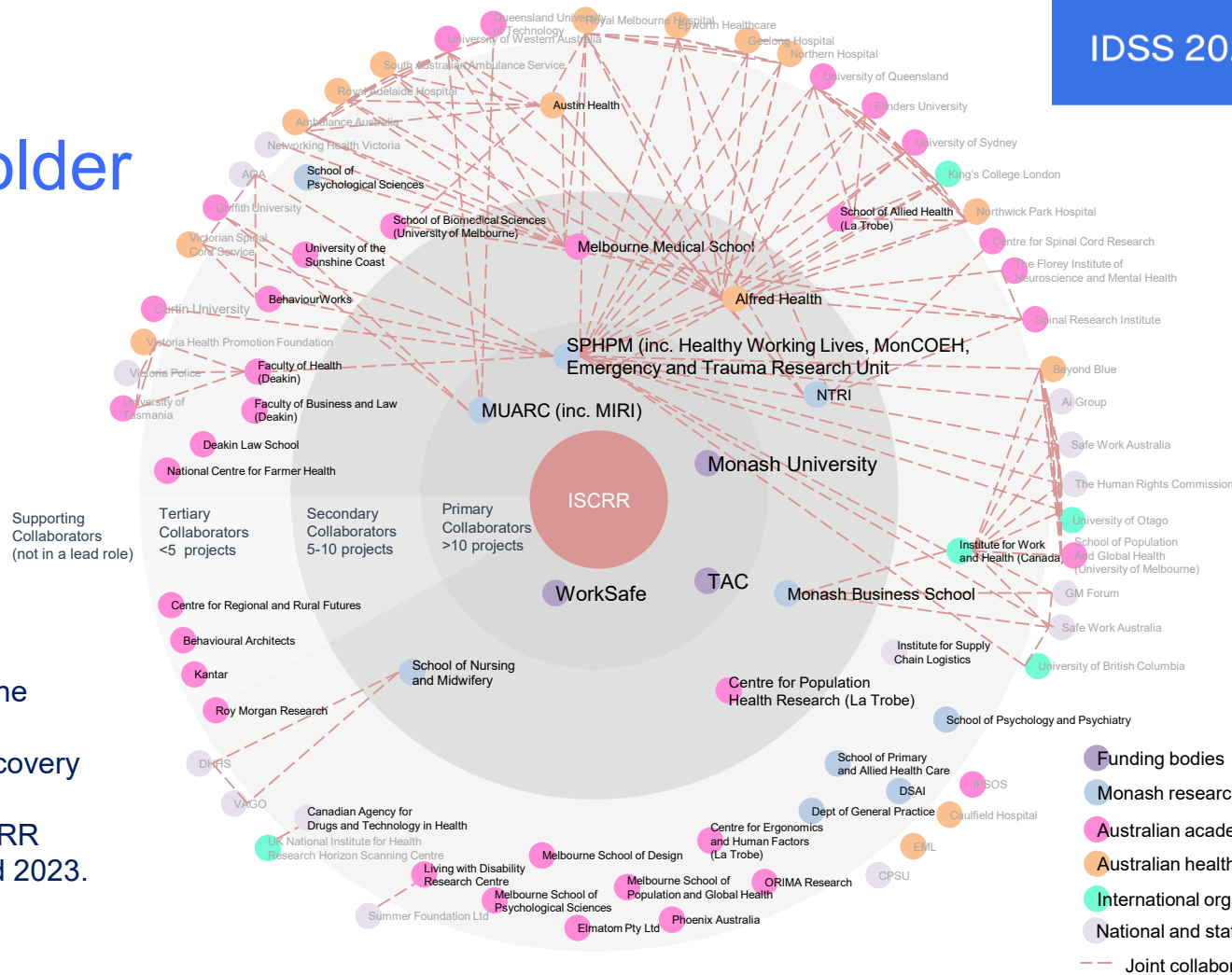
- Research needs
- Industry needs
- Intended impact

# ISCRR Stakeholder Map

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This map details the collaborators on prevention and recovery research projects conducted by ISCRR between 2015 and 2023.

# Factors for maximising impact

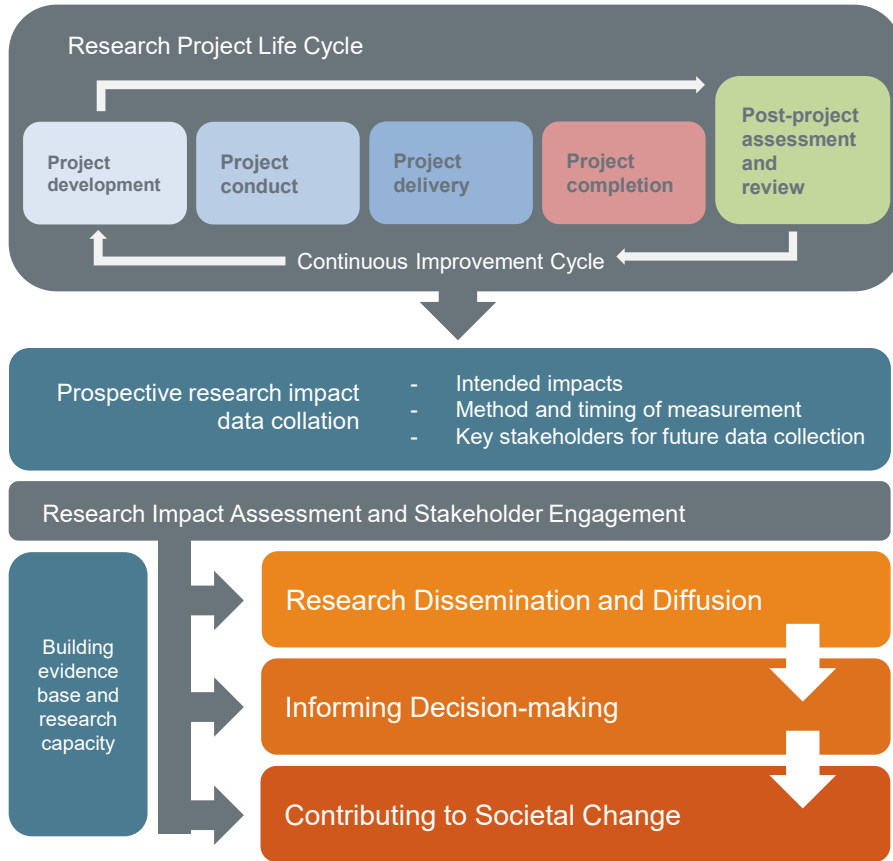
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# Measure impact from the start

## Research Impact

“the verifiable outcomes that research makes to knowledge, health, the economy and/or society, and not the prospective or anticipated effects of the research” NHMRC





# ISCRR Research Impact Framework

# Types of research impact

## Dissemination and diffusion



- Tracking where learnings are expected to be used next
- Identification of communication channels
- Potential reach of research findings

## Informing decision-making



- Research funder
- Public decision-makers
- Target populations

## Contribution to societal change



- Reduction/prevention of injury/illness
- Cost savings
- Improvement in population health

# ISCRR research impact assessment pilot

## PROJECTS

**17** ISCRR  
projects

14 from 2018–19 FY  
3 from 2020–21 FY

**71** Intended impacts  
were identified  
during project  
development,  
conduct and  
completion

**96%** research  
diffusion and  
dissemination impacts  
achieved

**73%** decision  
making impacts  
achieved

**36%** impacts  
achieved contributed  
towards societal  
change

## IMPACT

6-12 months post-project

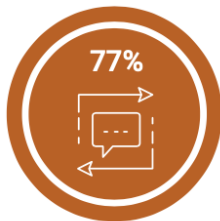
**65%**

Intended impacts  
achieved at some  
level 6-12 months  
project completion

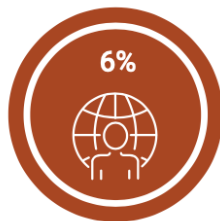
# Embed impact assessment



Research Dissemination and Diffusion



Informing Decision Making



Contributing towards Societal Change

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# Continuous improvement to leverage for greater impact

- **Change is constant**

- Shift in government priorities
- Shift in research needs and knowledge

- **Continuous improvement culture and experimental mindset**

Example 1 – Iterative evaluation throughout the project life cycle

Example 2 - Adapt the approach in which we do knowledge translation



## Example 1: Clinical Hotline Pilot Evaluation

# Impact case study: Clinical Hotline Pilot Evaluation

## Background

- WorkSafe Victoria identified a need to improve access by Treating Health Practitioners (THPs) to their Clinical Panel support - improving injured worker experiences and recovery outcomes

# Rapid Evaluation



# Impact case study: Clinical Hotline Pilot Evaluation

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- WorkSafe Victoria identified a need to improve access by Treating Health Practitioners to their Clinical Panel support - improving injured worker experiences and recovery outcomes

## Key findings

- Treating health practitioners and agents reported capability uplift, increased confidence and improved decision making. Injured workers experienced improved treatment and outcomes.

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## Impacts relating to pilot participants

- 30% received expedited claim decisions, 67% received a change in treatment based on advice
- 23% improved capacity and 15% returned to full/partial work within 6 months post-call
- Post evaluation WorkSafe have expanded to include an on-line Contact Form, more Treating Health Practitioner disciplines, to promote externally. WorkSafe Victoria continue to receive positive feedback from users.

## Example 2: ISCRR research translation activities

### ISCRR translation products

- Research insights
- Research summaries
- Podcasts
- Workshops and webinars
- Tailored translation products



### Knowledge transfer

- Engagement and education

### Impact assessment

- Measurement and monitoring

### Impact showcase

- Research impact stories

### Communication and translation products tailored to:

- Disseminate research findings
- Inform decision making
- Enable societal impacts

# ISCRR Clearinghouse



## ISCRR Clearinghouse

*The ISCRR Clearinghouse is a fully-searchable repository for all of our publicly available research output. It can also be browsed, with material arranged under three major categories: Prevention, Recovery and Supporting independent living.*

### Browse...



#### Prevention

Our research studies the range of factors that affect the health and safety of workplaces, including investigating how risks can be measured and managed.

- › Identifying and measuring workplace risks
- › Preventing workplace injury and illness
- › Promoting healthy working environments



#### Recovery

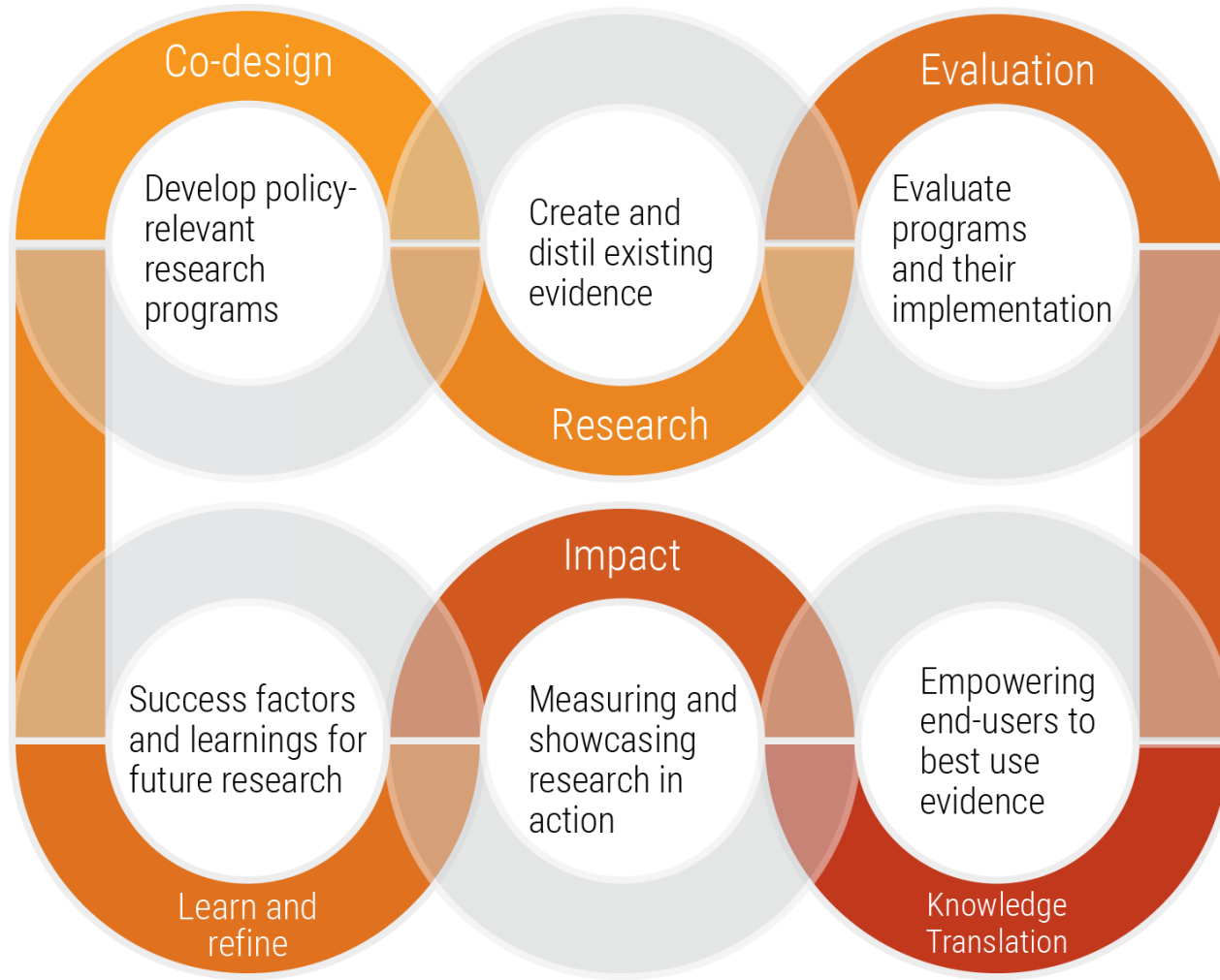
This area of research focuses on how best to support people with injuries to recover and return to work.

- › Treatment
- › Claims management
- › Return to work

<https://research.iscrr.com.au/>

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## The ISCRR model



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Thank you

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