National Disability Research Partnership

What to expect from the Evidence to Action Event

Exploring knowledge mobilisation

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Summary

About the National Disability Research Partnership

The National Disability Research Partnership (NDRP) funds research led by and with people with disability. Its purpose is to build a national disability research program in Australia that builds evidence for policy and practice to advance the rights of people with disability.

The NDRP wants research to lead to real world solutions. This means working together with people with disability and their organisations, government, service providers, and the community.

Evidence to action

The NDRP holds 'evidence to action' events to talk about what is known about a certain topic, what is not known, and what research is needed. The goal of these events is to work together and inform future research and policy directions.

What is this event about

This event is about **Exploring Knowledge Mobilisation**. Mobilising evidence for action means using good research to make real world changes that helps improve the lives people with disability. Knowledge mobilisation refers to the process of making knowledge from different sources ready for action. Knowledge mobilisation means taking a collaborative, relational approach to exchanging and sense-making of knowledge in useful and accessible ways to co-design research.

This event, Exploring Knowledge Mobilisation, explores how research by and with people with disability leads to real policy and practice impact.

What you will find in this document

- the agenda for the event on 1 May 2025 with what is being covered and for how long,
- details about the speakers,
- information to help you get ready,
- what to expect in the break-out room in session 3, including the topics,
- questions people often ask, and
- some of the key terms.

The agenda

11:00 am AEST – Session 1 (25 mins) Welcome and keynote speaker:

- **10 mins:** Mary Sayers, NDRP CEO, opens the event.
- **15 mins:** Professor Erin Wilson from the Centre for Inclusive Employment and the Centre for Social Impact gives a speech about why knowledge mobilisation matters.

11:25 am AEST – Session 2 (70 mins including a 10 min break) SHUT OUT – Then and now:

- **5 mins:** Maddy Clarke will introduce herself and give a short overview of the SHUT OUT Report —why it was created, what it found, and how it influenced policy.
- **30 mins:** Maddy will introduce panel members who were involved in creating the SHUT OUT Report including Associate Professor Lorna Hallahan and Professor Kirsten Deane OAM. They will share their ideas about good knowledge mobilisation.

12:00 pm AEST Screen break (10 mins) Time to think of any questions before the next session.

- **25 mins:** Maddy will lead a panel discussion to answer your questions and thank the panel.

12:35 pm AEST – Session 3 (70 mins including a 10 min break) Interactive session: overcoming barriers and advancing best practice knowledge mobilisation:

- **5 mins:** Mary Sayers explains the role of NDRP in turning research into real-world impact.
- **5 mins:** Mary will introduce the small group discussions and explain how they will work.
- **30 mins:** Participants will join small groups led by facilitators. Each group will discuss a different part of knowledge mobilisation.

1:10 pm AEST Screen break (10 mins) Time to refresh before the next session.

- **25 mins:** Mary will ask each facilitator to summarise the key points from the breakout discussions and share final thoughts on what actions need to be taken next.

1:45 pm AEST – Session 4 (15 mins) Closing reflections and what’s next:

- **10 mins:** Mary will recap insights from the event and discuss how can we embed these practices in our own work
- **5 mins:** Mary will close the event and share resources and support information.

Speakers

Host and break-out room facilitator - Mary Sayers – CEO, NDRP

Mary Sayers (she/her) leads the NDRP, driving inclusive research by and with people with disability. She has family and personal experience of disability. With extensive experience in policy and systems change, she is committed to research that delivers real-world benefits and empowers people with disability.

Keynote speaker - Professor Erin Wilson

Erin Wilson (she/her) is a member of the NDRP Research Committee and has spent over 20 years researching disability and inclusion. She specialises in finding ways for children and adults with disability to share their experiences in research and in service design. Her work has won an international award for making research more accessible. Erin is the Director of the Centre for Social Impact at Swinburne University, where she focuses on research about social impact and how to improve employment outcomes for people with disability.

Panel - Associate Professor Lorna Hallahan

Lorna Hallahan (she/her) is a disability advocate, researcher, and social work expert. She is a NDRP Board Director and has worked on disability rights and policy since the 1980s and helped shape the NDIS trial. Lorna was also a Senior Research Advisor at the Disability Royal Commission, where she wrote about Australia’s disability history. She is an experienced leader in social impact and continues to advise on disability policies at a national level.

Panel - Professor Kirsten Deane OAM

Kirsten Deane (she/her) is a disability advocate and has experience in policy, advocacy and research. She helped create the SHUT OUT report, which led to the creation of the first National Disability Strategy. She is currently the Deputy Director of the Melbourne Disability Institute, where she works with researchers and people with disability, families and organisations on research that will help improve outcomes for people with disability. Kirsten was panel member on the NDIS Independent Review Panel which made recommendations to improve the way the scheme works.

Panel and break-out room facilitator - Madeleine Clarke

Madeleine Clarke (she/her) is a disabled early career researcher with a strong background in disability advocacy. Through her work at Children and Young People with Disability Australia, she has experience in co-design, with a focus on research and resource outputs relating to education and child safety. Now she works in cervical cancer prevention as a Research Assistant at the University of Melbourne, where she continues to advocate for the importance of lived experience and inclusive methodologies in disability-related research.

What to expect in your break-out room

How to contribute

When you register, you can choose a breakout room or decide on the day. Joining is optional—if you prefer not to join a small group, you can still share your thoughts by:

- Adding input to an online poll during the session.
- Using the Q&A function to share comments, which the NDRP team will include in the discussion.
- Providing feedback after the event, if you'd like more time to reflect.

How break-out rooms work

Each small group discussion is led by a facilitator. You can speak, listen, or share ideas in the chat—there's no pressure to talk.

- The facilitator will introduce the topic and key ideas.
- People can share experiences, challenges, and solutions.
- The group will discuss practical ways to make research more useful.
- Notes will be collected to inform future actions.

Sharing your ideas in break-out rooms

To ensure each person gets a turn, facilitators will use a communication order:

- They will invite people to contribute in turn.
- You can raise your hand (physically or on Zoom) or type in the chat.
- Pauses will allow time for those using interpreters, captions, or communication devices.
- You can share thoughts in the chat or after the session if you prefer.
- This ensures everyone can contribute in a way that works best for them.

Guidelines for a respectful and inclusive space

- Be considerate of the different experiences and perspectives that people bring to the discussion.
- Avoid using acronyms or jargon. If you do, please explain or spell them out clearly so everyone understands.
- Use and respect people's pronouns and language, such as "person on the autism spectrum" or "an autistic person."

Break-out room topics and discussion points

1. **Research-policy partnerships:** How can researchers and policymakers work more closely together to ensure research is used? We will discuss:
    - What works well when researchers and policymakers collaborate.
    - What gets in the way of research being used in policy decisions.
    - What needs to change to improve these partnerships.
2. **Sharing research in accessible ways:** What would make research more accessible and usable? We will talk about:
    - The barriers that make research hard to access.
    - Ways to present research in different formats (e.g., Easy Read, videos, summaries).
    - How to ensure research reaches the people who need it most.
3. **Community-led advocacy:** How can research empower people with disability to advocate for change? We will discuss:
    - How research can support lived experience advocacy.
    - What's missing from current research that would make advocacy stronger.
    - How community-led research can create change.
4. **Cross-sector collaboration:** What will help build closer links between researcher teams and policy makers and other end users of research? We will discuss:
    - Who needs to be involved in knowledge mobilisation.
    - How to build stronger links between researchers, government, service providers, and the community.
    - What supports are needed to help these partnerships work well.
5. **Overcoming barriers:** What are the barriers and solutions to knowledge mobilisation?
   We will discuss:
    - Common barriers (e.g., research being too complex, lack of funding, lack of partnerships).
    - What has worked in the past to turn research into action.
    - New ideas to improve how research is shared and used.

Frequently asked questions

Will the event be recorded?

Yes, all sessions except the breakout discussions will be recorded and will be made available on the NDRP YouTube channel. At the start of the session, the facilitator will let everyone know that the event is being recorded.

What if I have technical difficulties or need help?

We will have support available to assist. You can send a message in the Zoom Q&A function or email Sue Tape, Head of Evidence to Action who is organising this event at info@ndrp.org.au.

Can I take a break?

Yes, there will be breaks between each of the three sessions. You are also welcome to take additional breaks whenever you need to. You are welcome to stay in the event during these breaks.

Will there be captioning?

Yes, captions will be available during the event. A professional captioner will type what is said for accuracy. To turn captions on or off, click the "More" button (three dots) in the Zoom menu and select "Captions."

Will there be Auslan interpreters?

Yes, Auslan interpreters will be available for the whole event.

Who will be attending?

Attendees will include people with disability, family members, researchers, policymakers, advocates, service providers, and government representatives.

How can I give feedback on the event?

We invite feedback on all aspects of our work. Please access the event feedback survey here. Or you can send an email to info@ndrp.org.au

Key terms

1. **Knowledge:** includes evidence from academic and community-based research, information, insights and story held by people and communities because of their lived, cultural, service and/or systems experience, and expertise from practice.
2. **Knowledge mobilisation:** Knowledge mobilisation refers to the process of making knowledge from different sources ready for action. Knowledge mobilisation means taking a collaborative, relational approach to exchanging and sense-making of knowledge in useful and accessible ways to co-design research.
3. **Knowledge synthesis:** Knowledge synthesis is using rigorous and transparent methods to bring together what is known about a topic, assess it, and make sense of it in a context. It is about generating a summary of the body of knowledge available and establishing better understanding about what is known about a particular topic or area.
4. **Co-design:** Co-design means bringing people together to share what they know and share power whilst working together to make decisions about the questions their research should answer, and how it should be done. The 'co' is about being collaborative. The 'design' means making something. In the co-design of research, this means working together to come up with ideas, possible solutions, outcomes, approaches and methods that could be used in a future research project. Design usually means doing this over a few rounds of testing, and refining with each other, before final decisions are made. Co-design needs shared understanding, access and relationships to be established before the design can start.
5. **Co-production:** Co-design is one part of co-production. Co-production is, broadly, working collaboratively, in ways that respect different ways of being, as well as different sources of knowledge, to deliver an outcome. Other terms such as co-creation, or participatory ways of working are sometimes used interchangeably.
6. **Disability-inclusive research:** Research in which people with disability are involved, valued and respected through all stages of the research process, from coming up with the concept, through the design and conduct of the research and in sharing research findings in ways that are accessible, relevant and appropriate to everyone who needs the knowledge.
7. **Disability-led research:** This means that people with disability are authentically involved in decision-making roles and in other ways that truly influence the project. For example, leadership might look like a Disabled Persons Organisation and a person with disability in the formal 'Lead' positions. This is not the only way. Teams should describe how their project and governance structures support genuine power sharing and respond to the cultural needs of communities, groups and people, and their values and priorities, and the context they are working in.