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The Centre for Translational  
Research in Public Health

# Examples of successful research collaborations between academia and practice in the North East

**Dr. Peter van der Graaf,  
Fuse Knowledge Exchange Broker**

[www.fuse.ac.uk](http://www.fuse.ac.uk)

# Getting research into practice

- Research take-up is slow: 17 years to inform practice (Morris et al. 2011)
- Research is often not useful:
  - Takes too long to report
  - No actionable recommendations
  - Fails to address most pressing local issues



➔ Need for collaborative research and spaces to increase and speed up uptake of research evidence in policy and practice



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# Getting research into practice

- Fuse, Centre for Translational Research in Public Health, set up in 2008 to increase flow of evidence into practice
  - Develop high quality public health research
  - Increase local research capacity
  - Built partnerships with practitioners and policy makers



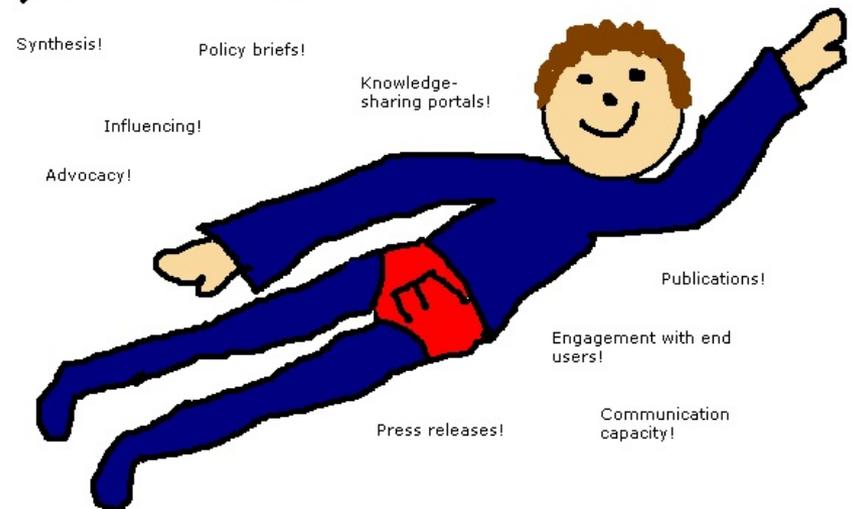
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# So, what is AskFuse ?

- A rapid response and evaluation service launched in 2013
- Acts as a portal to broker access to expertise in five North East Universities
- Free initial conversation(s) to explore needs
- Translate enquiries into feasible research projects
- Match enquiries to relevant academics
- Develop collaborative research and seek funding
- ➔ Build long term partnerships

Evidence to the rescue



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# Preventing Risks Of Mental illness Onset and Treating Early in North East (PROMOTE)

- What we did: identify ‘best bet interventions’ to promote mental health and prevent mental illness
- How: evidence review, interviews, focus groups & workshops with CYP & service providers, service mapping



Partners: Institute for Local Governance, academics from Newcastle and Durham universities, CNTW NHS FT

- Outputs: Detailed report with recommendations (e.g. mindfulness training, mobile apps and more guidance and support in schools)

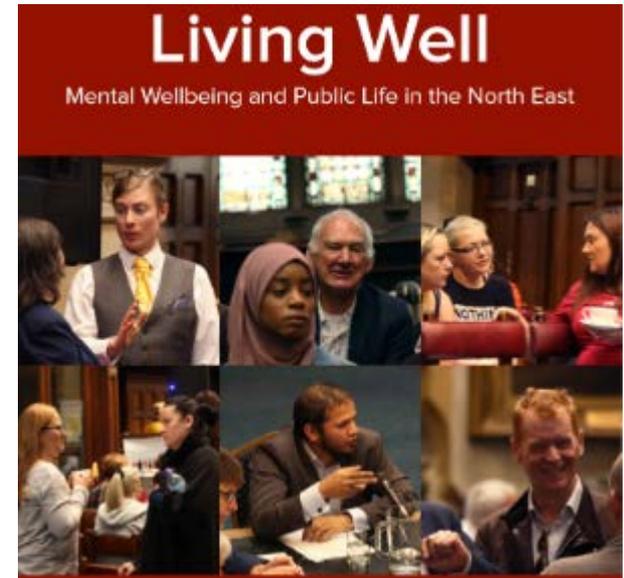


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# Tyne and Wear Citizens Mental Health Commission

- What we did: map problems and identify solutions around mental health services in the North East
- How: data analysis and co-produced recommendations from three public hearings organised by Commission



Partners: Tyne and Wear Citizens, academics from Newcastle University

- Outputs: Report 'Living Well: Mental Wellbeing and Public Life in the North East' launched at public event, Fuse blog & news item
- Impact: redesign of services, local volunteers trained in mental health awareness, Durham Uni developed a suicide protocol

# Developing a public mental health conceptual framework (NIHR SPHR)

- What we did: identify modifiable environmental, social and individual determinants of positive & negative MH outcomes across life cycle
- How: state-of-the-art' review, workshops and a consensus exercise with stakeholders, set up PMH stakeholders' network
- Partners: UCL, University of Cambridge, LSHTM, Fuse, University of Bristol, Imperial, University of Sheffield & LiLaC
- Outputs: Project ongoing, report expected in June 2020, sustainable PMH stakeholders' network for implementing framework

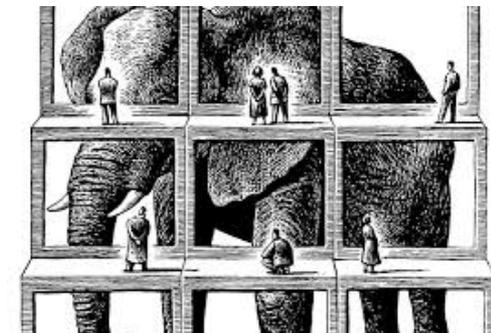


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# Learning from Fuse

- KE is a social process: developing and maintaining relationships
- Integrating KE activities in research process (e.g. 6 knowledge sharing principles)
- New ways of producing evidence (e.g. embedded research) critical for impact
- Support uptake through capacity building and understanding of the local context



# Principles for knowledge exchange

- 1. Clarify your purpose and knowledge sharing goals** - What do you want your findings to do, or to change?
- 2. Identify knowledge users and stakeholders** - Who would be interested in this research, or need to know about it?
- 3. Agree expectations** - How will you get a shared understanding what is expected of everyone and what can be achieved?
- 4. Use knowledge users' expertise** - How will you design the research to benefit from their expertise and knowledge?
- 5. Monitor, reflect and be responsive** - How will you know if your knowledge sharing activities have met your goals?
- 6. Leave a legacy** - How can you develop, capture and sustain any benefits?

(Rushmer et al. 2018)

# Top tips for collaborative research



- Get to know practitioners and commissioners: attend their events
- Start conversations about research early
- Be realistic/ set expectations
- Consider different types of evidence
- Quick wins (e.g. advice on collecting base line data)
- Write case studies together
- Try internships/ embedded research posts



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**Thank you!**

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[fuseopenscienceblog.blogspot.com](http://fuseopenscienceblog.blogspot.com)

# Thank you!



**“My job is to make decisions. Your job is to make them good decisions.”**