



Knowledge in Action

Knowledge Exchange Strategy at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry

Knowledge exchange (KE) at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry aims to enable and maintain dialogues between the Faculty and non-academic sectors of society for the benefit of both. Supporting the Faculty's KE activities are staff from the *Knowledge Exchange Hub* (consisting of the Knowledge Exchange Unit, Education & Media Technology Unit, and Postgraduate Education & Continuing Dental Education section). The Faculty's KE strategy, overseen by the Faculty Executive Committee, forms part of the fourth mission of "Engagement". Some working principles are as follows:

- (1) KE includes not only the traditional emphasis of **technology transfer**, but also **societal development, public/patient education, practitioner/professional development, and government and business/industry collaboration**. It is a part of larger processes, such as *knowledge management, integration, conversion, or operationalisation*, which are key to developing a knowledge-based economy.
- (2) KE activities include media/public relations, fundraising, and **networking** (*knowledge linkage*); **sharing** of information, resources, expertise, experience, and skills; **consultation, collaboration, and contract work**; and **assessment of impacts* of and future needs in research and KE**, especially related to policies, best practices, capacity building, service and programme planning/delivery, organisational structures/procedures, management, strategy, decision making, innovation, intellectual property, health, quality of life, and well-being.
- (3) KE traditionally starts with **published research outputs** such as articles in peer-reviewed journals and patents, **which are communicated in systematic, transparent, and context-sensitive ways**, including appropriate content, scheduling, and dissemination (known overall as *knowledge transfer, translation, brokering/brokerage, sharing, mobilisation*) **to potential end-users**—often to or within collaborative networks of stakeholder groups (eg, *knowledge/wisdom/discourse/learning "communities", or "communities/collectives" of practice, shared practice, knowledge practice, practitioners, knowing, knowledge users, common/shared purpose, or shared mission*)—**for use and commercialisation or further development** (called *knowledge utilisation, uptake, application, deployment, implementation, adoption, absorption, assimilation, appropriation, transformation*).
- (4) KE also entails improving **public (open) access to original sources** of research findings. These include "grey" literature such as unpublished/internal reports, theses, dissertations, and conference material, but these preliminary, tentative sources require very careful use by knowledge users/consumers, knowledge brokers/developers/managers, and the media.
- (5) Broadly, KE is **putting reliable, relevant evidence into practice** and facilitating interaction, dialogue, and collaborative engagement, and is thus an **extension and part of basic, clinical, translational, applied, practice/management and education research**. Researchers and non-researchers are included as KE audiences to promote and facilitate **cross-institutional and cross-disciplinary** collaboration, problem-solving, and further knowledge creation and expansion.
- (6) KE is also an **extension and part of teaching and learning**, as published research findings become integrated into the content of degree-bearing and continuing professional development programmes. Research evidence on educational practices/policies in turn informs curriculum development and further education research, as well as capacity building at student, organisational, and community levels to improve health/science literacy, public health, community engagement/service, and global awareness/participation.
- (7) The Faculty's KE strategy is informed by international practices, as well as KE guidelines and assessment indicators set by the HKSAR University Grants Committee and by HKU. HKU's strategic initiatives in KE are outlined in HKU's latest Strategic Development document, <http://www.sppoweb.hku.hk/sdplan/eng/images/doc.pdf>.
- (8) These principles are regularly reviewed, so the Faculty's KE activities efficiently and effectively meet the community's needs.

We would be pleased to consider any suggestions or comments, which can be e-mailed to dentke@hku.hk.

*To be distinguished from academic impact see:

- Duryea M, Hochman M, Parfitt A. *Measuring the impact of research*. *Research Global* 2007;2:8-9,21; <http://facdent.hku.hk/docs/ResGlob2007.pdf> (used/linked with permission from the Association of Commonwealth Universities)
- *Pathways to Impact*, Research Councils UK; <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/impacts/RCUKPathwayspresentation.pdf>.