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| **Title of Research Presentation** Where should we start to improve evaluation in health promotion? Recommendations from an Australia-wide study. |
| **Background/Objectives**Program evaluation contributes substantially to evidence based planning and decision making, enables accountability to funders and communities and facilitates program improvement. To overcome challenges and realise the benefits of evaluation, the health promotion field has expressed demands for evaluation capacity building strategies. However evidence of what to address to improve evaluation capacity for health promotion has been limited. We distil the findings from a three-year, Australia-wide research project into key recommendations for organisations and policy makers about priority targets to improve capacity for health promotion evaluation. **Methods**We conducted a mixed-methods study with government and non-government organisations (n=116) from four states of Australia. Data were collected from participating organisations in three phases: qualitative interviews (n=40); the Evaluation Practice Analysis Survey (n=219); and, evaluation report appraisal (n=394). Qualitative interviews were analysed thematically. The survey findings and evaluation report appraisal scores were combined for modelling analysis. **Results**While there was a wide range of barriers or facilitators to evaluation, we found a number of influences to be pivotal to evaluation practice. Within the organisation, leadership, support, culture and structures are integral to evaluation. Health promotion organisations that engage with funders and the wider prevention system can influence the resources and conditions necessary for evaluation. The conditions of program funding and the allocations of resources, both from funders and within the organisation are also central to evaluation. **Discussion**To meet the demand for quality evaluation in health promotion, and contribute evidence of program implementation and effectiveness we must continue to build capacity for evaluation. The findings from this study highlight key targets within health promotion organisations, funding agreements and policy environments. While there are context-specific priorities, we have identified common factors that are pivotal to health promotion evaluation. By addressing these, there is potential for widespread gains in health promotion evaluation capacity and ultimately address the evidence-base for health promotion programs. **Keywords**Program evaluation, evaluation capacity building, policy recommendations.  |