AUSTRALIAN DIABETES EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION (ADEA)

Research Framework

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Developed by ZEST Health Strategies

Contents

Introduction

ABOUT THE ADEA

Established in 1981, the Australian Diabetes Educators Association (ADEA is a national member based organisation for health care professionals providing diabetes education and care. The ADEA implements professional recognition and development programs to support diabetes educators working towards achieving and maintaining status as a Credentialed Diabetes Educator® (CDE).

ADEA members largely consist of health care professionals who practice within the specialty field of diabetes education and care. The membership is multidisciplinary and includes practitioners from most health care professional groups such as doctors, nurses, midwives, dietitians, pharmacists, podiatrists and psychologists.

The ADEA has branches across all Australian States and Territories and is governed by a National Board of Directors.

ADEA MISSION, VALUES AND OBJECTIVES

Vision:

Excellence in diabetes support to all Australians.

Mission:

To lead and advocate for best practice diabetes education and care.

Values:

- **Recognises** that people with diabetes carry the responsibility for the daily management of their condition
- **Acknowledges** the rights of people with diabetes to make lifestyle choices and decisions about their health care
- **Expects** it's members to value, respect and support the rights of people with diabetes to make informed decisions about their health care and lifestyle choices
- **Adheres** to democratic principles, elects Branch and National Office Bearers and encourages members' involvement at all levels of the association
- **Recognises** that members come from different social, cultural, geographic, professional and practice backgrounds
- **Values** the diversity and skills of our multidisciplinary membership

ADEA STRATEGIC PLAN

ADEA's Strategic Plan outlines six priority themes to drive ADEA's strategic goals (and activities) until 2017:

- Theme 1: increase member value
- Theme 2: directly influence the federal government agenda
- **Theme 3: strengthen the ADEA's research contribution**
- Theme 4: increase the value of the CDE
- Theme 5: set the standards for diabetes education for the nation
- Theme 6: national office support

Strengthening ADEA's contribution to research is identified as a key theme in the plan. Priority activities to achieve this include:

- providing accessible quality research, information and advice concerning diabetes education in Australia

- a commitment to an active research program over next 4 years with direct alignment to a change in practice

- engaging in research that demonstrates the role of the CDE in achieving positive outcomes

- seeking new funding sources for ADEA research

- raising the research culture within ADEA and put it into practice

- raising ADEA's community research profile

ADEA RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

An annual review of the ADEA Research Framework and Activity plan by the ADEA Board is recommended to monitor progress and to ensure continued relevance to the organisation and it's members.

Development of the Research Framework

The ADEA Research Framework was developed using a series of consultations with key stakeholders, including ADEA Board members, academics and representatives from diabetes and non-diabetes organisations. Consultations were in part guided by the themes identified in ADEA's strategic plan to explore how ADEA could strengthen it's contribution to research in alignment with overall strategic objectives.

Overview of the Research Framework

The ADEA Research Framework outlines three goals and a suite of enablers that sit alongside the goals to support the ADEA to develop an *active research and evidence-use program* over the next 4 years:

- Goal 1: Establish and define a role in research

- Goal 2: Set clear research priorities

- Goal 3: Embed active communication in research

Overarching considerations and challenges

A number of challenges and practical issues were captured through the stakeholder consultations as outlined below. While these have been built into development of the research framework, additional consideration, from an operational and workforce perspective is necessary before developing implementation activity.

- **Limited resources and capacity to conduct research:** most CDEs are nurses with no formal training or exposure to research and research methodologies.

- **Fear of research:** there is a perception that the ADEA and CDEs aren't viewed to be legitimate researchers or partners and demonstrate a general anxiety towards research. Alongside this, there is also an unknown level of interest around participating in research, which requires further exploration.

- **Limited time and resources:** conducting research can be time consuming and difficult to do alongside conducting full-time work.

- **Lack of specific publication mechanisms:** there is currently no specific publication for diabetes educators or education.

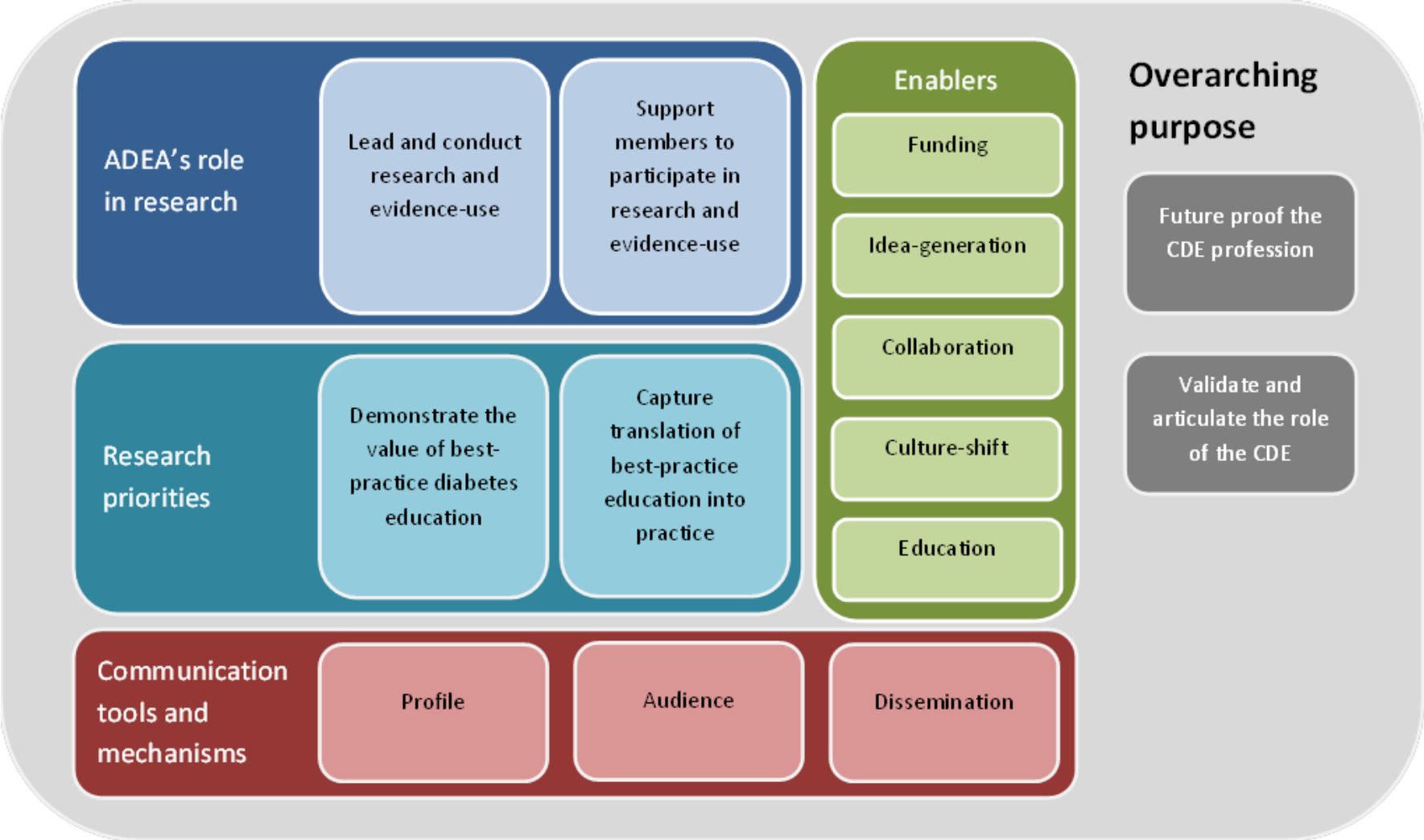## Implementation of the Research Framework

Implementing the Research Framework will require development of an Activity Plan that sits alongside the overall Framework and maps out specific implementation activity over a period of 12 months. Implementation activity should include practical aspects of establishing supporting structures such as funding, resource and communication. Suggested measures and indicators for monitoring progress and success are outlined in the following objective and action tables.

Questions for the ADEA Board to consider:
- What should the Activity Plan contain and who should be involved with developing the plan to ensure that it is realistic and achievable?
    - Some potential to explore planning via an online survey
- How does the Board want to set measures of success and monitoring mechanisms?
    - Is there a need to set targets for certain things such as sourcing, allocation of funding and number of scholarships/grants/fellowships awarded?
- What is a reasonable and achievable timeframe for implementation?
    - Do timeframes need to align with broader ADEA strategy?
- Can monitoring mechanisms for the research framework align with the overall board strategy and business implementation plan for the next 12 months?

ADEA Research Framework

The overall research framework presents an operational model that aligns with ADEA's vision and strategic objectives. It defines a role for ADEA to lead and support research that builds a body of evidence demonstrating the effectiveness and impact of best practice diabetes education.

ADEA's role in research	Lead and conduct research and evidence-use	Support members to participate in research and evidence-use	Enablers	Overarching purpose
			Funding	Future proof the CDE profession
			Idea-generation	
Research priorities	Demonstrate the value of best-practice diabetes education	Capture translation of best-practice education into practice	Collaboration	Validate and articulate the role of the CDE
			Culture-shift	
			Education	
Communication tools and mechanisms	Profile	Audience	Dissemination	

Goal 1: Establish a role in research

AIM

To develop a clear role for ADEA to support development of research ideas and projects that capture and *demonstrate the role of the CDE in achieving positive outcomes* and build the capacity of CDEs to conduct research and use evidence effectively to support practice.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Objective	Strategic Actions	Suggested indicators / measures
Lead and conduct research that drives the standard of care for Diabetes Education in Australia	Establish **mechanisms** for setting research direction, strategic collaboration and governance.	• Mechanisms are established and articulated • ADEA representatives participate in relevant research forum discussions to prioritise research about clinical practice and education • Research register is created and populated
	Build **strategic relationships** with key stakeholders, in particular with academics, universities and scientific institutes to: • participate in discussions about overall sector research agenda • engage in discussions about conducting collaborative research and research funding approaches towards a common goal.	
	Create a **research register** to capture information about research activity currently occurring in diabetes education and clinical practice.	
Support and encourage ADEA members to participate in and undertake research activities	Provide **financial support** to CDEs via establishing grants, fellowships, scholarships and awards to encourage participation in higher education and to facilitate development and implementation of research projects.	• An ADEA research support program that outlines mechanisms for financial support is established with mechanisms to monitor award, progress and outcomes • A suite of guidelines, templates and training mechanisms are established and rolled out to CDEs • A working mentor system is developed and rolled out to CDEs
	Develop and provide **guidelines, templates and training** to CDEs, including topics on: • how to collect data during everyday practice • setting up and undertaking research • describing what best practice looks like • understanding standardised data collection tools • navigating ethics processes • research writing and dissemination • journal submission and review process	
	Establish a flexible short- or long-term **mentor system** within ADEA that connects CDEs interested in participating in research with an experienced researcher.	

Goal 2: Set clear research priorities

AIM

To develop and implement approaches to setting clear research and evidence-use priorities and supporting high-quality research to influence evidence based practice that improves patient outcomes.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Objective	Actions	Indicators / measures
Develop a body of evidence that demonstrates the value of accredited 'quality' diabetes education	Grow the **body of evidence** that demonstrates the effectiveness and impact of best practice diabetes education via: • advocating for research need • developing strategic relationships to participate in research forum discussions • supporting CDEs to conduct research via infrastructure and finance	• ADEA representatives participate in relevant research forum discussions to prioritise the research about clinical practice and education • Participate in development of guidelines and standards relevant to diabetes education
	Set the **standards for diabetes education** in Australia through participation and review of evidence based guidelines and setting benchmarks for quality diabetes education.	

Capture the value of CDE using research approaches	Use **research approaches** to capture:
	• how best practice evidence translates into education and practice
	• how education components delivered in practice impact patient behaviour and clinical outcomes
	• whether patients' needs are being met.
		• Research and evaluation projects that align with ADEA's research framework are developed, have committed funding and are underway.
		• A centralised database to house clinical and practice data is created and coordinated centrally by ADEA
		    ○ A database coordinator is employed
		    ○ Appropriate academic guidance and rigour is used to develop a minimum data standard
		    ○ CDE receive training on how to collect and utilise data
		    ○ Quality data checks are built into data capture and database surety and storage

	Create a database to capture **minimum data in clinical practice** to develop a longitudinal dataset over time to measure clinical outcomes in practice. ADEA could: • employ a centralised research coordinator to oversee/coordinate data collection and other research support activities • lead development of standardised measures nationally incorporate into collection of data into CDE professional development standards	

Goal 3: Embed active communication in research

AIM

To integrate communication tools and mechanisms across all levels of research activity to actively participate in *quality research, information and advice concerning diabetes education in Australia*, *raise ADEA's community profile in research* and *raise the research culture within ADEA.*

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Objective	Actions	Indicators / measures
Increase ADEAs profile and visibility in research and raise the research culture within ADEA	Develop a **communication strategy** that supports all research activity to increase ADEA's profile in research. The communication strategy should include: • existing ADEA communication mechanisms like stakeholder newsletters and member communiques • development of key research messages, including information about key stakeholders and partnerships • an approach to publications, reporting and participating in broader sector discussions	• a communication strategy specific to ADEA research activity is created and embedded into overall ADEA marketing and communication mechanism • key research messages are developed • approaches to publications and reporting are developed • key stakeholder groups are identified and built into the communication strategy
	Identify key internal and external **stakeholder groups** for ADEA to engage with through the communication strategy: • funders - government orgs, medicare locals, private health insurers • referrers – GPs, specialists, nurses, allied health • researchers – universities and other diabetes institutes • ADEA members	
	Disseminate information to and **participate in active discussion** with key stakeholder groups using a variety of mechanisms including: • peer-reviewed publications, such as nursing, general practice and mainstream journals • presentations at key conferences • ADEA publications, such as Annual Reports • ADEA communications, such as newsletters • Contributing to Editorial and Opinion pieces in key journals	

Enablers to achieving research goals

AIM

To support ADEA to develop and implement an *active research and evidence-use program over the next 4 years with direct alignment to a change in practice.*

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Objective	Actions	Indicators / measures
Facilitate transparent approaches to generating research ideas	Facilitate a process of **generating research ideas** via transparent approaches that capitalise, but are not reliant on existing structures: • annual scientific conference, attended by members and partners of the ADS (medical society) • establish a sub-committee or research interest group made up of members interested in conducting and/or being involved with research.	• A forum to generate research ideas is included and promoted in the annual scientific conference • A sub-committee or research interest group is established • External funding is received an captured in the research register • Partnership approaches to source external funding are captured in the research register • Opportunities to educate internal stakeholders about research and evidence-use are established • A module on research and using evidence in practice is developed and implemented in CDE training courses.
Source and provide funding to support implementation of the research framework and activities	Develop **funding mechanism** to support research and researchers undertaking work that falls within in key ADEA strategic/priority areas. This should include • the provision of support to researchers to apply for external funding e.g. nursing grants, innovation grants, research specific grants • establishment of ADEA scholarships, fellowships and small project funding • lobbying for resources and funding to be allocated towards research activities • sourcing external funding	
Develop strategic relationships to facilitate collaboration in research towards achieving common goals	Identify **common strategic areas** with key collaborators to advocate or source further funding, including • Primary care sector • Government (state) • Diabetes Australia • Baker IDI • Academics and academic institutes	

Objective	Actions	Indicators / measures
	Build on existing relationships to encourage two way research idea generation e.g. ADEA could raise ideas with other organisations and vice versa.	
Promote a culture change by embedding the research activity into day-to-day ADEA activity	Embed research into day-to-day activity by creating funding, resource and communication mechanisms to encourage and support implementation of the research framework.	
Provide education about research and evidence-use to CDEs	Provide opportunities to educate the ADEA and CDEs about the importance and relevance of research and evidence-use in practice. Include research and use of evidence in practice as a mandatory element of the CDE course.	