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# The International School on Research Impact Assessment

## ADVOCACY 'Making the case' for research

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Hosted by:



In partnership with:



# Why assess research impact?



# Learning outcomes

- To become familiar with patient advocacy and research advocacy approaches and achievements
- To know when and where to use an advocacy approach
- To become familiar with the concepts that are typically being considered in an advocacy approach



# Contents

- Why use advocacy? When to use advocacy?
- Primary drivers of research and Research Impact Assessment (RIA) audience
- Considerations for using RIAs for advocacy
- Approaches and examples of RIAs
- Key messages



# Why use advocacy?

- To make the case for (more) support in research
- To secure funding in context of austerity
- To make the case for research of quality (avoid waste)



# When to take an advocacy approach?

- Charity wanting to get additional donations
- Redefinition of government priorities/strategies
- Government funder looking to secure funding in austerity
- Changing funding cycles
- University wanting to take a strategic reorientation
- Riding on public opinion



# What are the primary drivers of research?

## 'Curiosity' driven (advancing knowlegde)

- Impact factor
- Number of indexed publications
- Citations

## Meritocratic (prestige)

- Number of Prizes, awards, Doctor Honoris Causa
- Professional carriers

## Capacity driven

- Number of PhD
- Number of researchers

## Market-driven (profits)

- Lisensed patents
- Number of spin-off and start-up
- New drugs introduced into market
- Company profits

## Economic –driven

- Spillover
- Added value
- Jobs created
- Income from taxes

## Social / health driven

- Cases
- Health gain (QALY)
- Net monetary benefit (cost-benefit)
- Time lag (long term)



# CONSIDERATIONS FOR USING RIA FOR ADVOCACY

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# Global heterogeneity



## Local history on using RIA, in terms of:

- Previous studies carried on and implications
- Applications of studies
- Demand / need for such studies

## Resources for advocacy studies

- Information
- Skills
- Capacity

## Contextual R&D policy

- State of the art in R+D policies

## Receptivity of the environment

- Contextual capacity to uptake research results into impact
- Consider low and middle income countries



# Considerations according to target audiences

## General public

- Doing RIA might not be the best strategy
- 'Proximity to disease' and solidarity are key drivers for donors
- Donations might have little connection with the economic cycles
- Patient involvement might help accelerating impact

## Public funder

- Aim to demonstrate social impact
- Social impact e.g. in health, education, sustainability, capacity building, job creation, value added, spillovers
- Public funding is usually counter-cyclical. Therefore advocacy usually needed in times of austerity

## Research user body (e.g. Health services)

- Focus on demonstrating the role of science in recognised changes

## Industry

- Need to use an 'industry' approach
- Economic return
- Specific spillovers, licensed patents

## Academia

- Focus on benefits of building capacities
- Benefits of developing research carriers
- Concept of absorptive research

## Charity governing board

- Social impact focus

# Qualitative evolution of advocacy



Increasing value /  
reducing waste

Demonstrating  
economic and health  
value

Making the case for  
research funding

- Advocacy evolved from demonstrating economic and health gains to advocate for research that is efficient (closing the relevance gap)

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# APPROACHES AND EXAMPLES OF RIA

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# Common approaches, methods and concepts being estimated



## 'Top-down' approaches

- US "exceptional returns" study (Murphy & Topel 2003)
- Australia "exceptional returns" (2003, 2008, 2011)

## 'Bottom-up' approaches

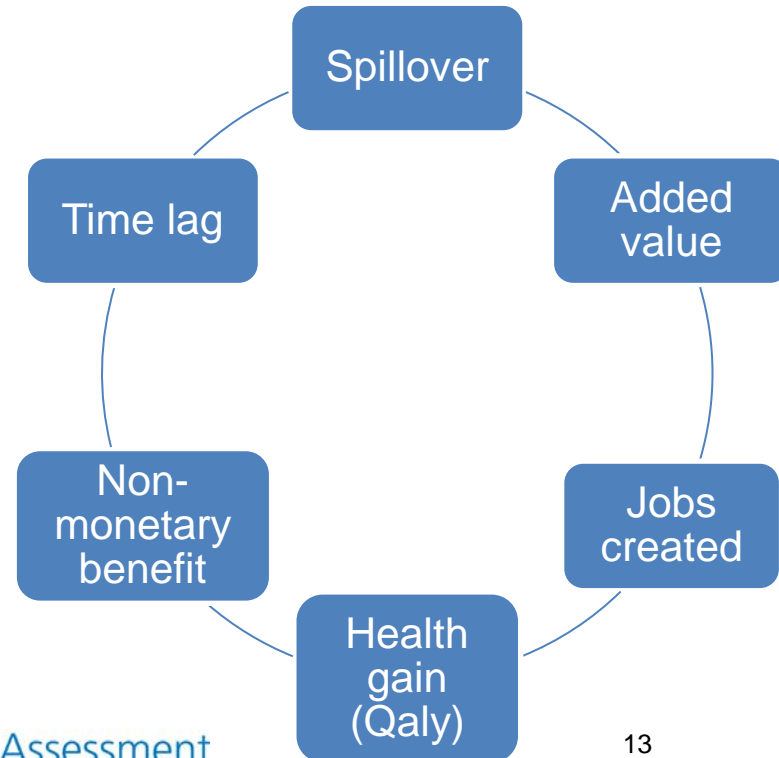
- Health and economic benefits of CVD and mental health in the UK
- Health and economic benefits of cancer from the UK
- Economic benefits from Northern Ireland

## Methods

- Case studies
- Economic rate
- Econometrics
- Bibliometrics
- Cost benefit analysis

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# Case example (1): Short term economic impact in Catalonia



## DIRECT IMPACT

- Output: 34,4 M€
- Gross Value Added: 18,8 M€
- Employment: 572 jobs
- Fiscal revenues: 4 M€

## INDIRECT IMPACT

- Output: 17,6 M€
- Gross Value Added: 6,5 M€
- Employment: 93 jobs

## INDUCED IMPACT

- Output: 16,1 M€
- Gross Value Added: 8,3 M€
- Employment: 169 jobs
- Fiscal revenues: 6,6 M€

68,1 M€ activity  
33,6 M€ de gross value added  
834 jobs  
10,6 M€ fiscal revenues

- **Input output tables:** short term spillover (multiplier) of biomedical research institutes: 2



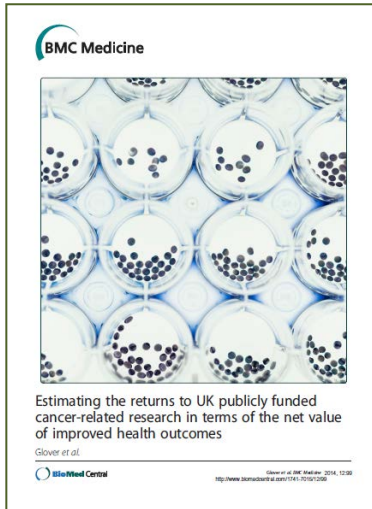
# Case example (2): Northern Ireland Health Research



- 2013 study funded by the Northern Ireland Dept. Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)
- Were interested in showing that funding invested in research has value and should be maintained
- Needed to be able to show the economic benefits gained through providing government funding in a small research environment
- This study used surveys, case studies and country analysis (document review)
- The study found that every £1 invested by DHSSPS leveraged £4.14 for research projects
- Also noted the comparative benefits against other countries



# Case example (3): Estimating economic and health benefits of cancer research in the UK



- Study commissioned by multiple UK research funders
- While the stated aim of the study is around accountability for public funds, the approach and 'bottom-line' findings are advocacy tools
- This study took place in an austerity funding environment where evidence of financial returns on investment is a valuable tool to maintain funding

- Study used a combination of methods (including bibliometrics, health economics and economic analysis)
- Each £1 invested provides annual return of 40% to UK

Spillover  
around  
33%

Health  
gain: 7-  
10 %

Time-  
lag: 17-  
19 years

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# Key messages

- There is a time and place for advocacy RIAs
- That time and place is determined by a number of factors (target audience, reason for advocacy, etc.)
- Doing RIA is not always the best strategy for research advocacy
- There are certain aspects to take into account when doing advocacy RIA (method, design, understand stakeholders, etc.)
- There are examples already that people can build on for their own advocacy RIA
- Advocacy is also oriented to improve research efficiency and reduce waste

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# Thank you!

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Agència de Qualitat i  
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