



**fuse**

The Centre for Translational  
Research in Public Health

# Developing a regional Public Health Research Hub: reflections on 15 years of Fuse

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

# What is Fuse?



- Centre of Excellence in Public Health Research
- A virtual centre, operating across 5 North East universities
- USP - Translational Research in Public Health
- Working in partnership with policy makers and practitioners, enabling research findings to be understood and applied to public health issues
- Founding member of NIHR School for Public Health Research (SPHR)

# Fuse Aims

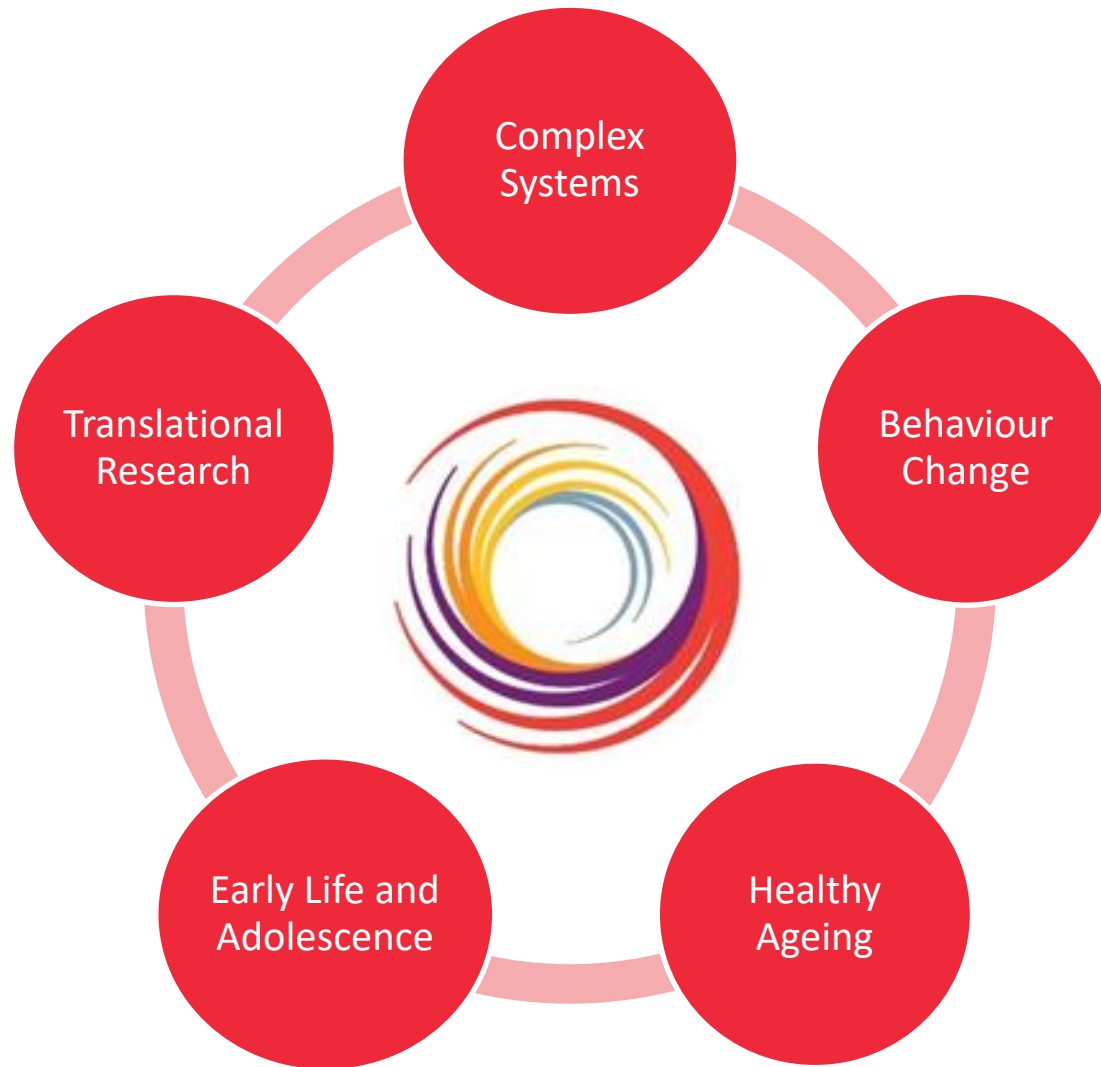


Fuse's mission is to transform health and well-being and reduce health inequalities through the conduct of world-class public health research and its translation into value-for-money policy and practice

To achieve this our three broad aims are to:

- Deliver world-class public health research
- Build sustainable capacity
- Build effective and lasting partnerships

# Fuse Research Programmes



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# Fuse Structure



- **Fuse Infrastructure:**

- 10 Senior Investigators, incl. 5 Associate Directors
- 7 Core staff (KE/Comms/PICE/administrative)
- 7 PhD students (45 completions; Fuse funded & affiliated)
- 200+ Associate members from practice and academia across North East
- >1500 network members

- **Fuse Governance:**

- Centre Strategy Board
- Centre Management Group
- Research Strategy Group
- Communications group
- Public Involvement & Engagement group



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# Funding

- UKCRC funding June 2008 until December 2018 (£9Mln)
- Core funding from the British Heart Foundation, CRUK, ESRC, MRC and NIHR
- Sustained by partner Universities until 2027 (annual subscription fee £40K) for core staff
- Project funding drawn from NIHR School for Public Health Research (£600K)



# What has Fuse achieved?



- >£210M in grant funding
- Published over 2,000 peer reviewed papers with over 60,000 citations
- 477 projects
- 389 public engagement events
- 314 conference presentations
- 45 Fuse-funded PhD students successfully completed their training
- Awards winning blog, research digests, tweets

# What does Fuse do?

1. *Awareness raising*: Communication Manager, Fuse website, newsletter, social media
2. *Knowledge sharing*: QRMs, international conferences, AskFuse
3. *Making evidence fit for purpose*: KEB, AskFuse, embedded research
4. *Supporting uptake & implementation*: capacity building, co-production, linking KE activities







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JOURNAL ARTICLE

## Structural approaches to knowledge exchange: comparing practices across five centres of excellence in public health

P Van der Graaf , O Francis, E Doe, E Barrett, M O'Rorke, G Docherty

*Journal of Public Health*, Volume 40, Issue suppl\_1, March 2018, Pages i31–i38,

<https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fox150>

**Published:** 09 March 2018 **Article history** ▼

### No single interface for collaboration (applying Saner's model)

- **Function:** *Go* (developing new research) or *Stop* (controlling processes or outputs)
- **Focus: internal or external audiences.** Often fluid, e.g. internalising external audiences
- **Engagement:** *info management* (evidence reviews), *linkage* (joint meetings), *capacity development* (training, internships), *decision and implementation support*

# Structural approaches to collaborations

- **Linking** a range of knowledge exchange **activities**
- Engaging policymakers and practitioners at **different levels, intensities and points** in their decision-making processes
- Dealing with complexity: breaking KE process down into **practical steps** (awareness raising, knowledge sharing, making evidence for purpose, supporting uptake and implementation)
- **Starting small**, developing into larger/longer-term collaborations, securing '**quick wins**' early on  
(evidence summaries/ joint case studies)



# Next steps

- **Build capacity and expertise** by linking with other infrastructures (ICBs, HDRCs, ARCs, CRN NENC): seamless interface with their responsive services
- **Scale-up provision** nationally (NIHR PHIRST, NIHR SPHR)
- **Strengthen international collaborations**  
(Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research, USA; and Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research in Canada, Tilburg and Erasmus Universities NL)



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# References

Van der Graaf P, O Francis, E Doe, E Barrett, M O'Rorke, G Docherty, Structural approaches to knowledge exchange: comparing practices across five centres of excellence in public health, *Journal of Public Health*, Volume 40, Issue suppl\_1, March 2018, Pages i31–i38, <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fox150>

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Van der Graaf, P., Cheetham, M., Lake, A., Welford, M., Rushmer, R., Shucksmith, J., Mobilising knowledge in public health: reflections on 10 years of collaborative working in Fuse, the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health. *Evidence & Policy*. 2019. 16(4), 673-685. <https://bristoluniversitypressdigital.com/view/journals/evp/16/4/article-p673.xml>

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# Thank you!



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