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Policy Change To Prevent Suicide: Turning Research Into Action

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As suicide researchers, we develop hypotheses, collect and analyze data, and draw conclusions to contribute to efforts to save lives and create lives worth living. Beyond these academic pursuits, however, we must also use our skills and expertise to influence community and social change. One step toward creating this change is using data and research to inform policy. To do this, however, we must also understand how research is used in policy and what the policymaking process looks like.

Understanding the Use of Research in Policy

Research is typically just one of many sources of information policymakers use in drafting and implementing legislation.^[1] As such, it is important for researchers to think about *who* is using our research and *how*. While we may see our work as straightforward, understanding how policymakers define, acquire, interpret, and use research is imperative.^[2]