



Communicating Cancer Prevention Information to State Policy Makers

Thank you for participating in this research. We'd like to share with you what we learned.

Purpose of the Study

This study was conducted to determine how to communicate cancer prevention information to state policy makers using policy briefs. A large portion of the cancer burden is preventable and policy interventions can play a central role in changing health outcomes.

Participants

Policy makers and researchers, alike, strive to better serve the public. With your help we surveyed close to **300 policy makers**, from six states.

Participants included state-level legislators, committee staffers, and executive branch administrators.

Participants received one of four types of policy briefs on the topic of mammography screening:

- A data-focused brief with state-level data
- A data-focused brief with local-level data
- A story-focused brief with state-level data
- A story-focused brief with local-level data

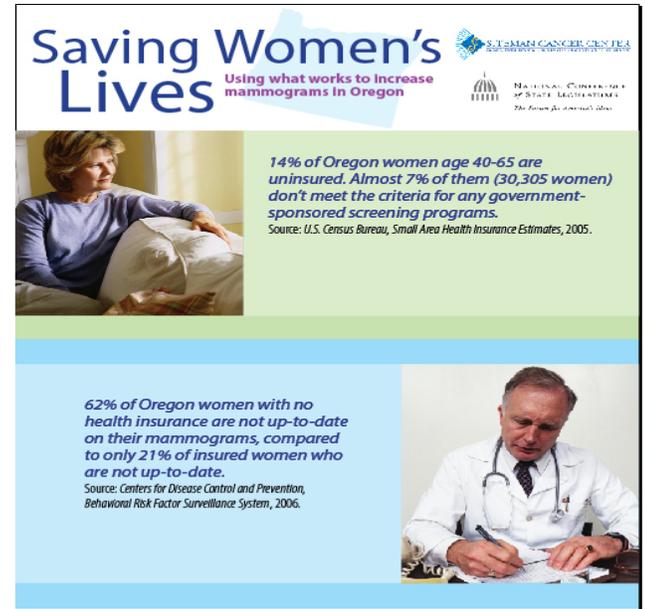
Participants also answered a questionnaire about the policy briefs. All briefs contained policy recommendations, as well as references and contact information for policy makers to learn more about the topics described.

What We Found

We found some differences among the three groups of policy makers.

State Legislators

Overall, state legislators were the most likely to use and share policy briefs. They preferred policy briefs that were **data-focused and slightly preferred state-level information**. **Story-focused briefs** were more likely to be used and shared when they contained **local-level data**. And finally, **Democratic legislators** were more likely to use **data-focused** briefs than Republican legislators.



Taking a “one-size-fits-all” approach when delivering information to policy makers may be less effective than communicating information based on the type of policy maker.

Committee Staffers

Overall, committee staffers were most likely to use and share policy briefs that were **story-focused, and slightly preferred state-level data**. Staffers with **graduate educations** were more likely to use policy briefs with **local-level data**. **Male** staffers with **no graduate education** were more likely to use story-focused policy briefs.

Executive Branch Administrators

Executives expressed **no clear preference between data- and story-focused policy briefs**. Overall, the majority of executives who participated in this study were female, 52 years of age or older, identified as socially liberal or moderate, and fiscally moderate or conservative.

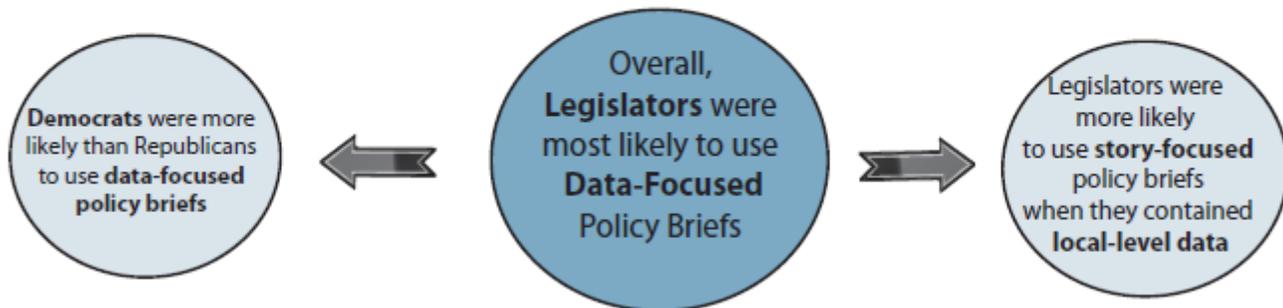
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So What?

We know that policy interventions are effective in preventing cancer. However, a “one-size-fits-all” approach to delivering information to policy makers may be less effective than changing the way the evidence is communicated based on who will be receiving it.

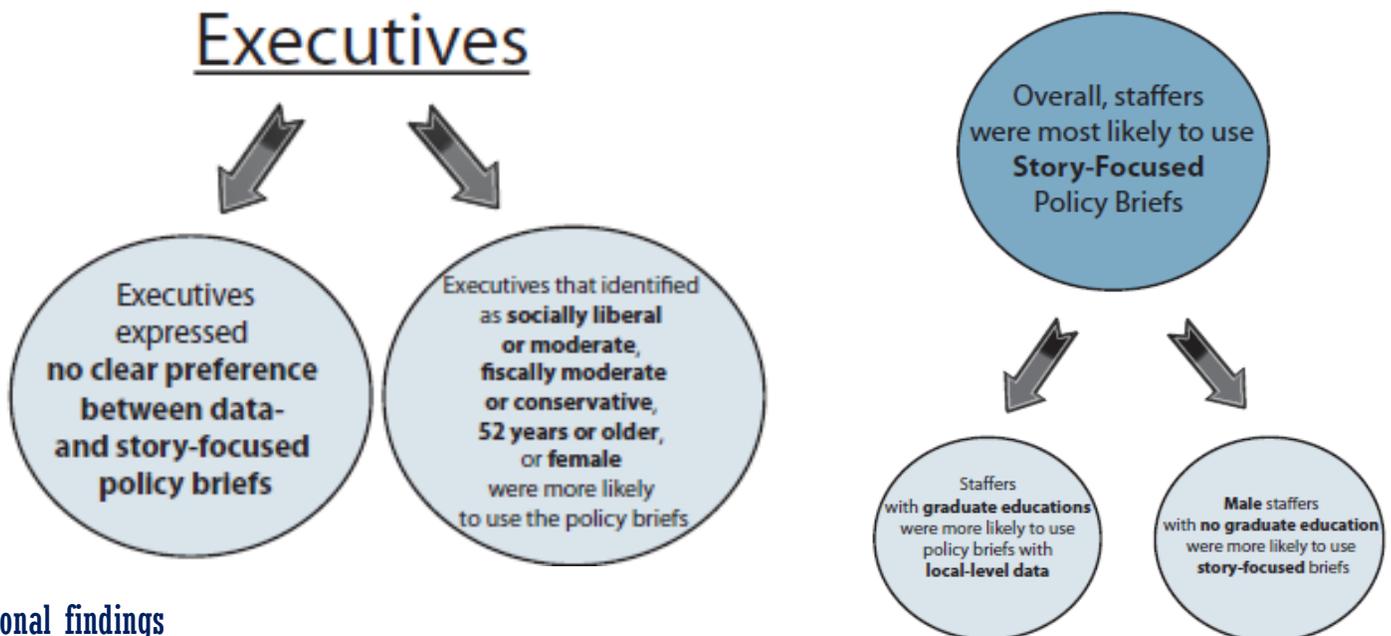
Likelihood of using the policy briefs, by type of policy maker

Legislators



While there is more work to be done, we learned more about the likelihood of using policy briefs among a variety of policy makers (eg, legislators, staffers, and executives). **This information will help make research evidence more useable, understandable, and believable in policy settings.**

Staffers



Additional findings

For more detailed information about findings from this study, please view full paper or contact Elizabeth Dodson, edodson@wustl.edu.

Brownson, R.C., Dodson, E.A., Stamatakis, K.A., Casey C.M., Elliot, D.A., Wintrode, C.G., Kreuter, M.C. (2010). Communicating Evidence-Based Information on Cancer Prevention to State-Level Policy Makers. *Journal of National Cancer Institute*. 104. 1-11.

Thank you for your participation in our study!