



Waypoint
CENTRE for MENTAL HEALTH CARE
CENTRE de SOINS de SANTÉ MENTALE

Knowledge translation to support mental health system planning: A nurse's experience

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*Registered Nurses' Association of
Ontario (RNAO): Nursing Week 2026*





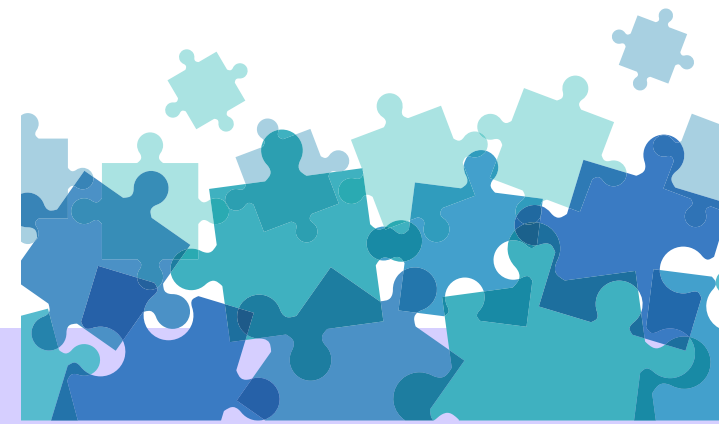
Agenda



**Defining
"nursing"**



**Knowledge
translation**



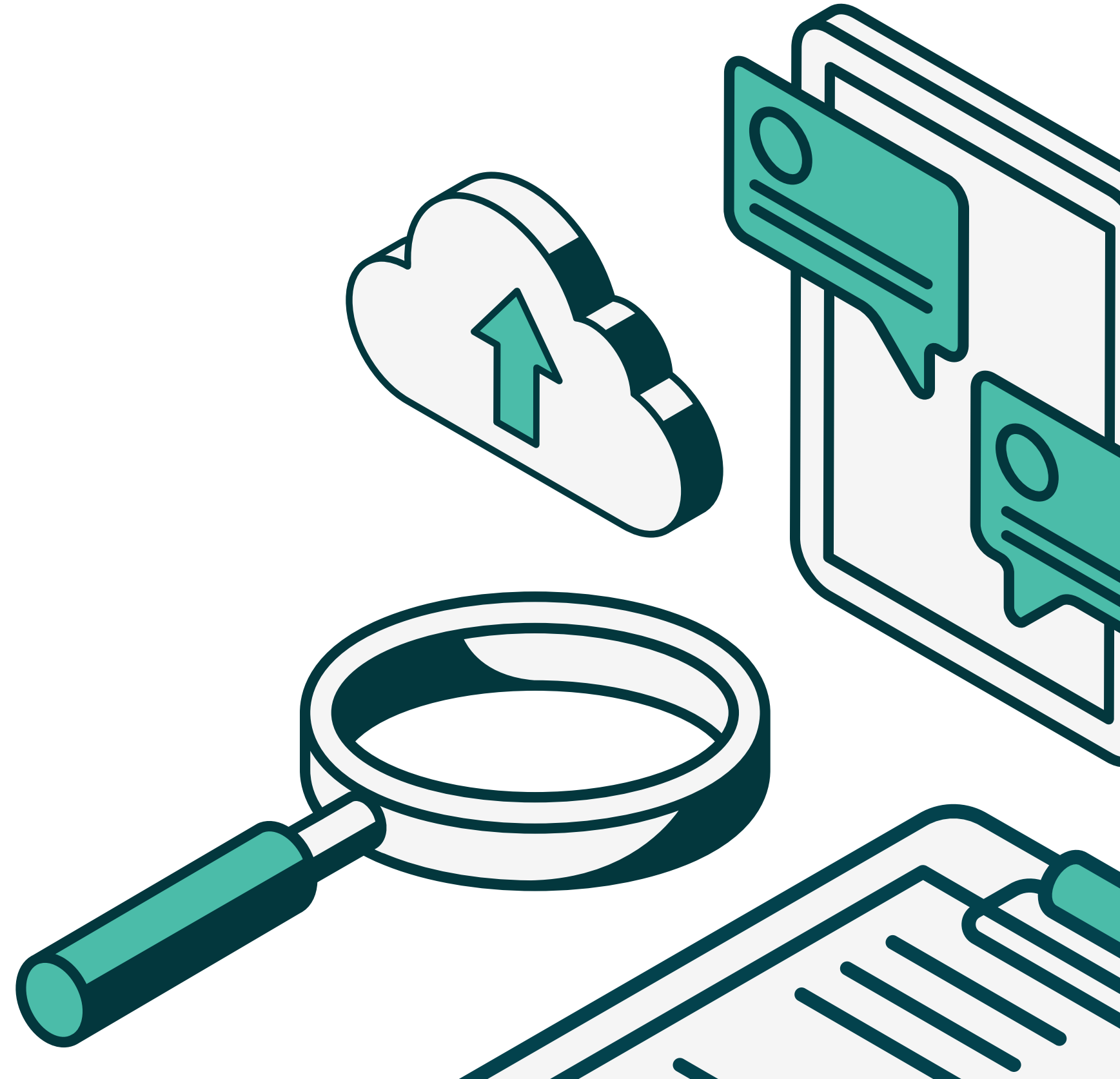
**STREAM
Lab**



Implications



Defining "nursing"



What is a "nurse"?

"Someone who...

meets the
nursing education
requirements"

is permitted to
perform certain
controlled acts"

treats patients"

works in the hospital
or community"

What is a “nurse”?

As per the RNAO (2023):

*The public most often associates nurses with clinical roles and bedside care. Yet, nursing is a mature, diverse and sophisticated profession with **countless educational and career pathways to explore.***

Nurses work in a range of roles and settings

- E.g., hospital, primary care, community care, long-term care, retirement homes, colleges/universities, governmental/professional organizations, public health, etc.

What is a “nurse”?

Nurses are also trained across a defined set of core competencies/principles, such as:

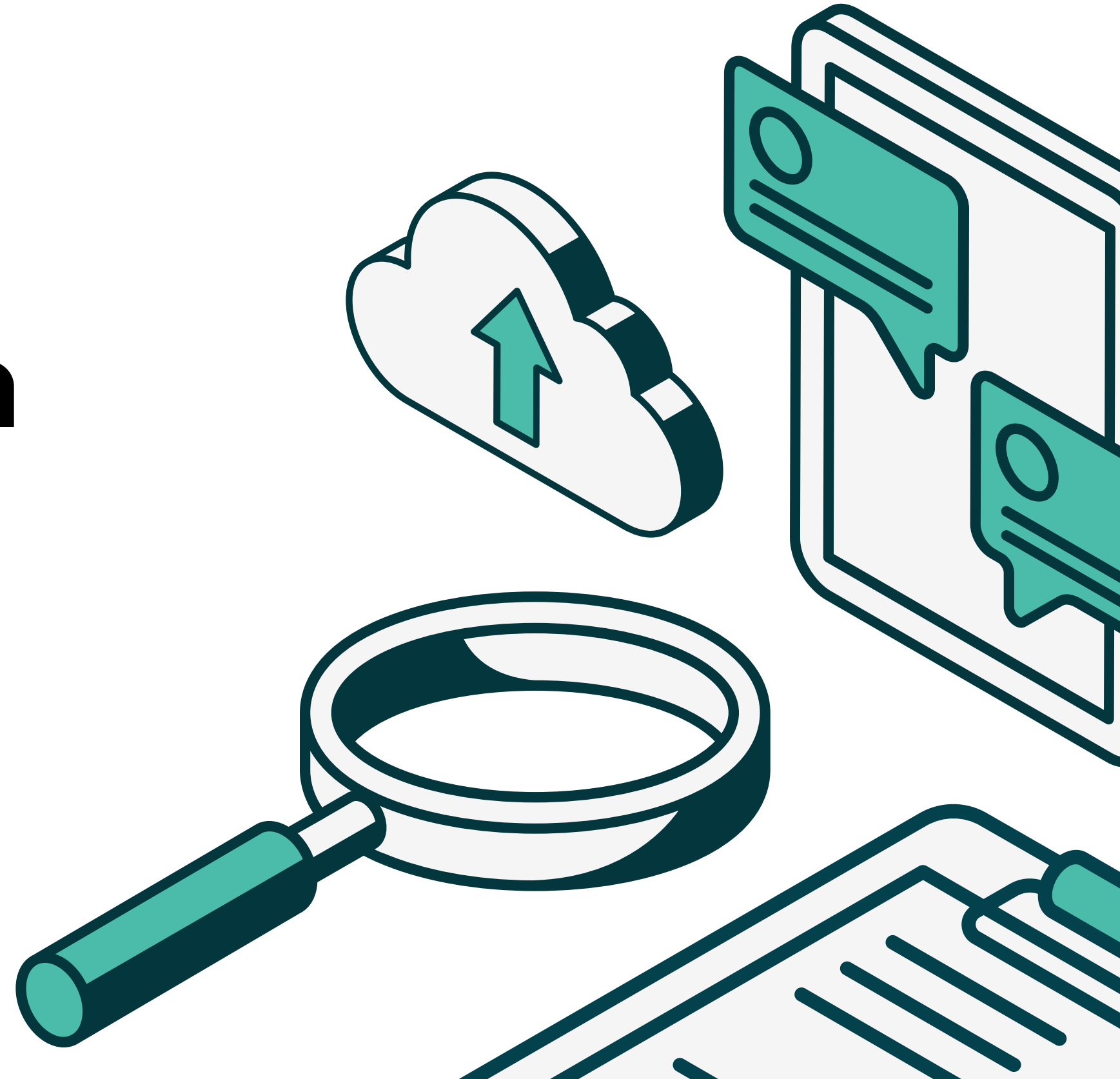


- evidence-informed practice
- critical thinking/inquiry
- research skills
- advocacy
- clear communication
- quality improvement
- positive organizational culture
- interprofessional collaboration

(College of Nurses of Ontario [CNO], 2019)



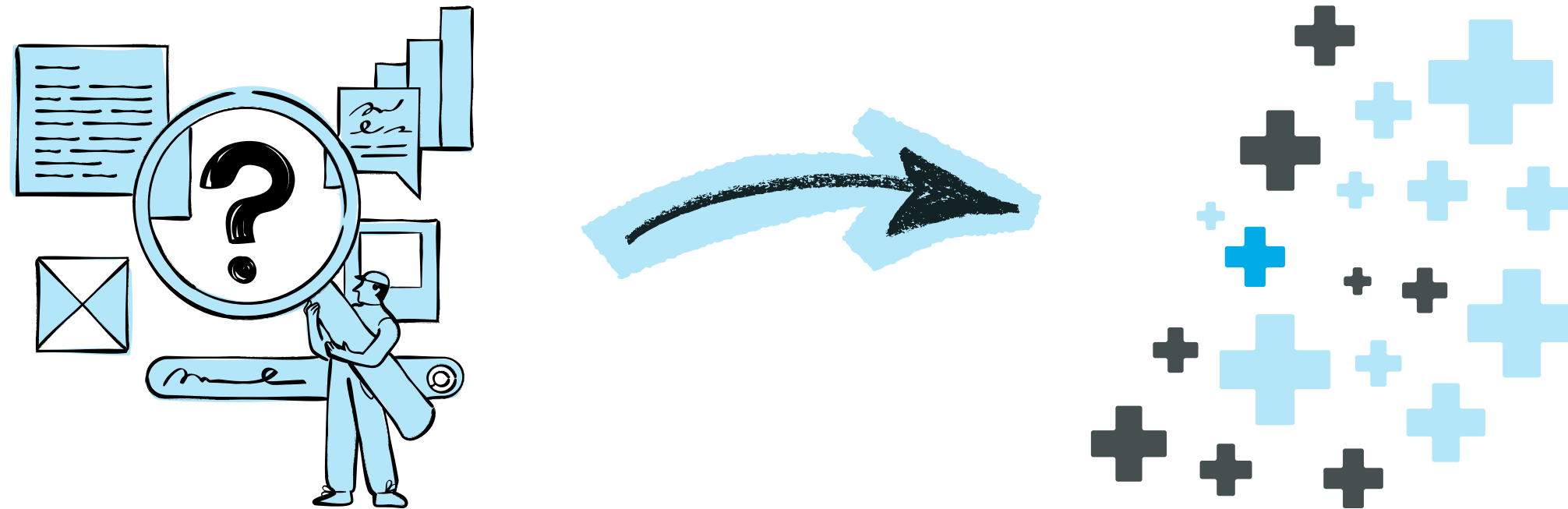
Knowledge translation



What is “knowledge translation”?

Knowledge translation (KT) *“refers to turning research discoveries into action for health and socioeconomic benefits”*, including improvements to patient health, health services, and care systems (CIHR, 2015).

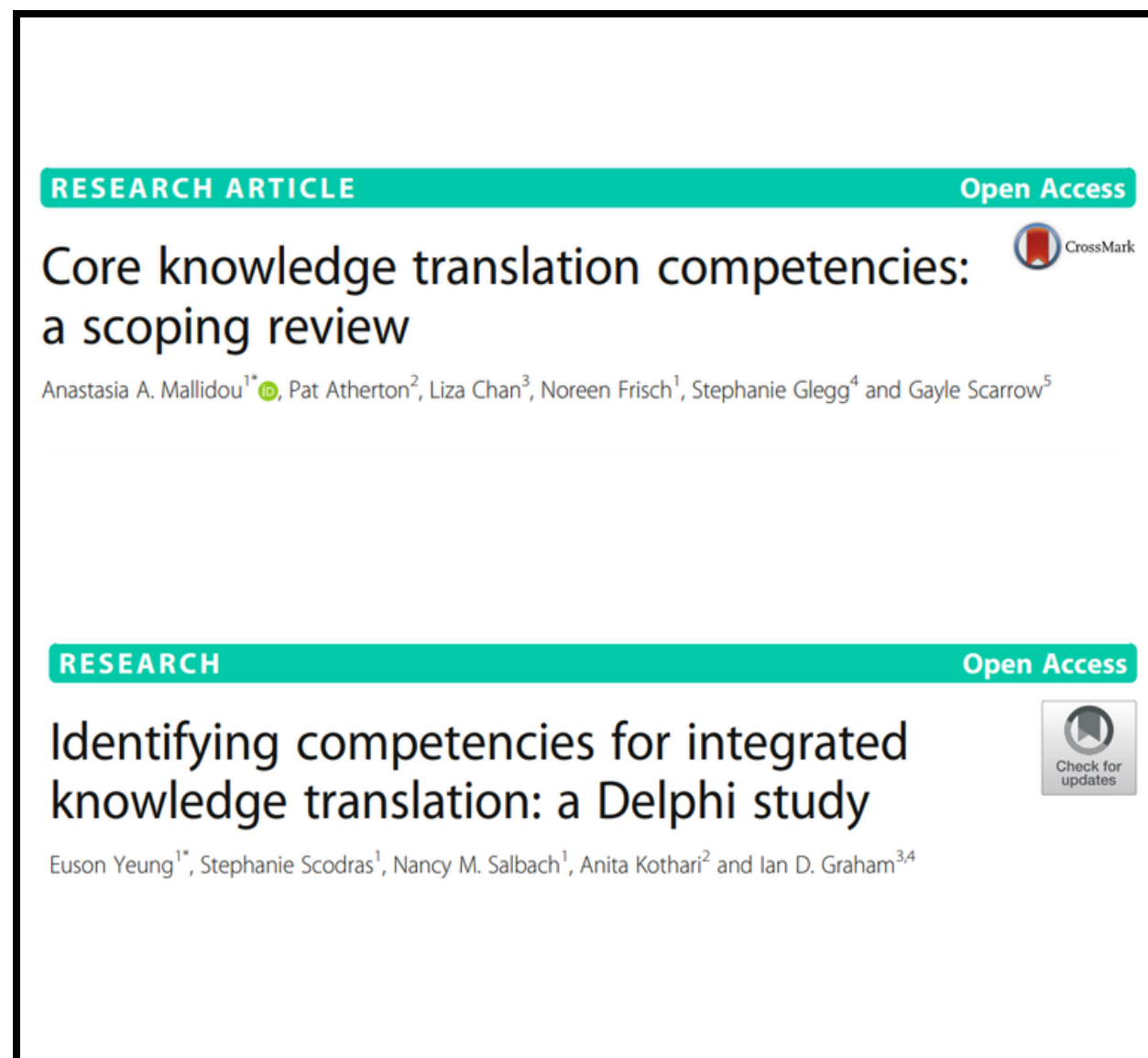
KT aims “to improve the use of health research in practice” (Mallidou et al., 2018).



(Canadian Institutes of Health Research [CIHR], 2015; Mallidou et al., 2018)

What is “knowledge translation”?

Among others, core competencies/principles for KT practitioners may include:



- support of evidence-informed practice
- critical thinking attitude
- understand the research process
- advocate for inclusion of varied interest-holders
- sharing knowledge
- understanding quality improvement
- valuing teamwork
- collaboration

([Mallidou et al., 2018](#); [Yeung et al., 2021](#))

Notice anything?

There are many similarities between nursing and KT practitioner competencies.

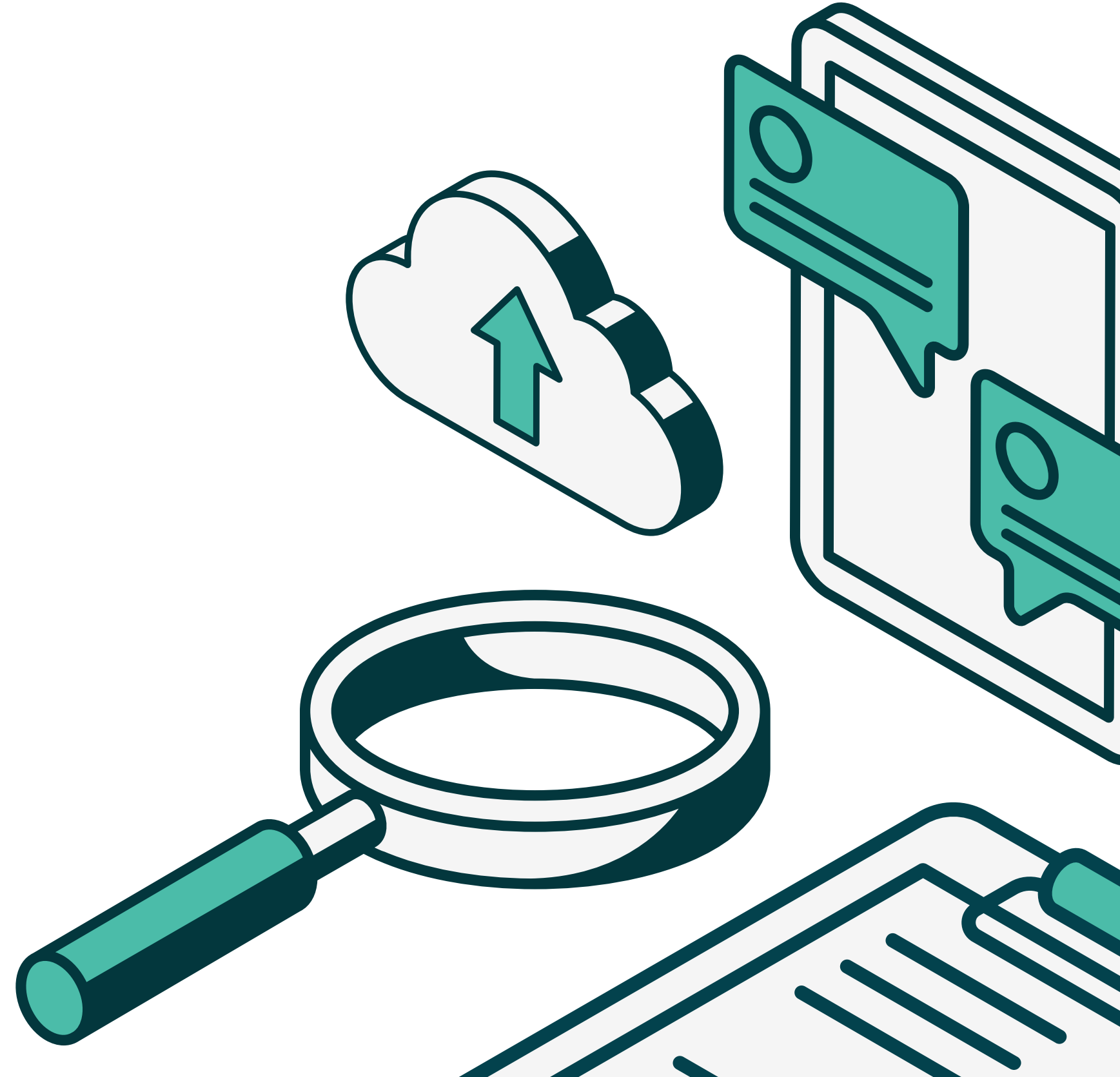
Nursing		KT practitioner	
evidence-informed practice	research skills	support of evidence-informed practice	understand the research process
critical thinking/inquiry	advocacy	critical thinking attitude	advocate for inclusion of varied interest-holders
quality improvement	clear communication	understanding quality improvement	sharing knowledge
positive organizational culture	interprofessional collaboration	valuing teamwork	collaboration

You're likely already doing a lot of KT in your own work!

([CNO, 2019](#); [Mallidou et al., 2018](#); [Yeung et al., 2021](#))



STREAM Lab



About STREAM

STREAM (*Supporting Transformation through Research, Evidence, and Action in Mental health*) **Lab** was established to meet the evidence needs of mental health and substance use system decision-makers in Ontario and beyond.

Our team uses rapid review methods to produce timely, structured, transparent, relevant, and action-oriented summaries (e.g., reports, data tables) of available knowledge in response to questions posed to us by provincial decision-makers.

	Source (hyperlinked)	Source type	Year data collected	Diagnosis	Jurisdiction	Type of prevalence data (i.e., point, period and lifetime)	General population	Stratified by gender/sex
1								
2	Mental Health Indicators - Statistics Canada	Dashboard	2012	Perceived mental health, fair or poor	Ontario	Not stated	8.2% (ages 15+)	6.6% (males, ages 15+) 9.7% (females, ages 15+)
	Health of Canadians - Statistics Canada	Grey literature	2022	Mental health	Canada	Not stated		



About STREAM products

Products are typically produced within 3 days to 8 weeks.

Evidence sources for our products include...

- academic literature
- grey literature (e.g., environmental scans)
- key informant/expert insights

Products typically include...

- a description of our methods and the limitations
- a summary of the findings
- equity considerations
- context-specific considerations for Ontario decision-makers



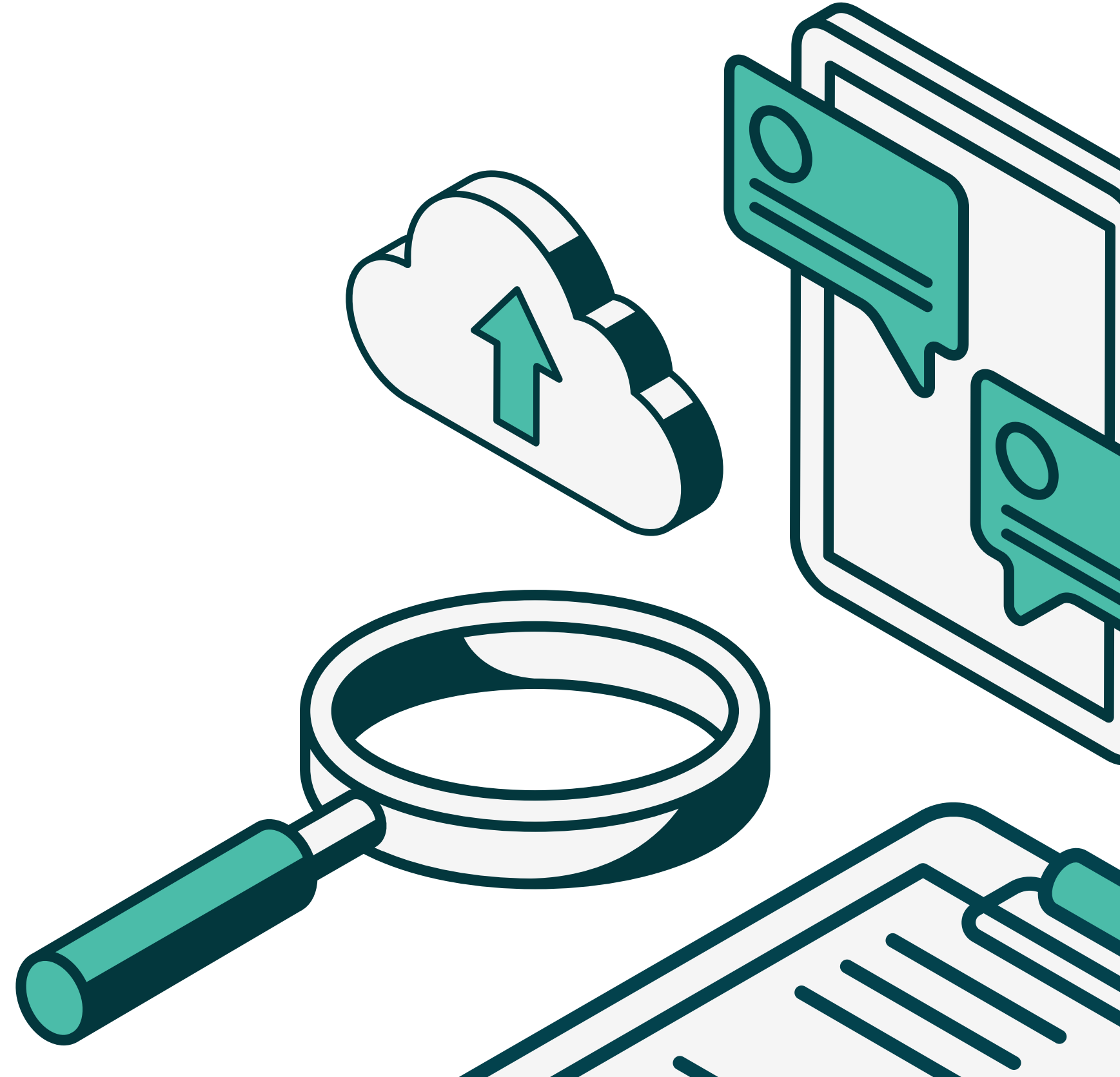
About about my role

I am the KT and Implementation Coordinator on the team.

Competency/principle	Example(s)
Evidence-informed practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocating for the use of evidence to inform policy decision-making.
Research skills/critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formulating appropriate and policy-relevant research questions and methods.
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embedding equity considerations across all products.• Engaging diverse, representative experts for key informant interviews.
Knowledge sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Synthesizing and translating evidence into clear, action-oriented products.• Preparing user-friendly slide decks to support decision-making meetings.
Quality improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing standard operating procedures and an evaluation framework.
Teamwork/team culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contributing to a positive, collaborative, and inquisitive team environment.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fostering and maintaining relationships with interest-holders (including policymakers) to clarify needs, refine methods, and contextualize findings.



Implications



Implications

Nurses are well-positioned to support KT for health system decision-making.

We bring...

- health system expertise
- clinical practice experience
- patient-centred perspective
- relevant competencies



Positioning nurses within KT roles can...

- enhance the relevance and usability of evidence for decision-makers
- strengthen alignment between policy decisions and frontline care realities
- expand the professions' influence beyond direct patient care, into policymaking

Opportunity: Annual General Meeting (AGM)

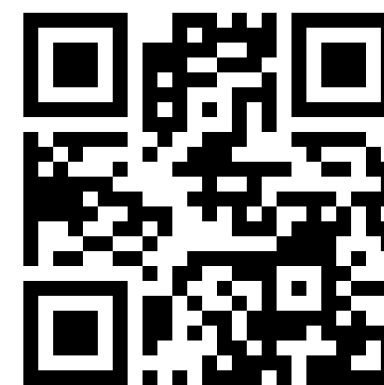
RNAO's 101st AGM is being held on May 28-29.

Contribute to health system decision-making by...

- Attending and connecting with colleagues to help shape priorities for the year ahead
- Submitting resolutions (i.e., "priority advocacy items" developed by RNAO members)
- Volunteering as a Consultation Rep to review proposals and vote on resolutions



Scan to learn more about RNAO's AGM



(RNAO, n.d.)

Final note

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*“Regardless of setting and role, nurses draw on their nursing knowledge, skills, and judgment to provide expert care and services to persons, communities and the health system. Effective functioning of a health system that provides access to all in Ontario **requires nurses be engaged vibrantly across all health sectors and systems of care**”...including KT!*

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Thank you for your time!

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waypointcentre.ca/services/streamlab

