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Guiding the provision of quality policy advice: the 5D model

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a process model to guide the production of quality policy advice. The work draws on engagement with both public sector practitioners and academics to design a process model for the development of policy advice that works in practice (can be used by policy professionals in their day-to-day work) and aligns with theory (can be taught as part of explaining the dynamics of a wider policy advisory system). The 5D Model defines five key domains of inquiry: understanding Demand, being open to Discovery, undertaking Design, identifying critical Decision points, and shaping advice to enable Delivery. Our goal is a 'repeatable, scalable' model for supporting policy practitioners to provide quality advice to decision makers. The model was developed and tested through an extensive process of engagement with senior policy practitioners who noted the heuristic gave structure to practices that determine how policy advice is organized and formulated. Academic colleagues confirmed the utility of the model for explaining and teaching how policy is designed and delivered within the context of a wider policy advisory system (PAS). A unique aspect of this work was the collaboration and shared interest amongst academics and practitioners to define a model that is 'useful for teaching' and 'useful for doing'.

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1. Introduction

This paper presents a process model¹ to guide the production of quality policy advice. We situate the model as part of the 'policy infrastructure' which refers to a deliberate design of system components that contribute to policy advisory capability (Washington 2023b). The conceptual development and methodology of this work draws on the authors' engagement with public sector practitioners in the design, leadership and critique of policy advisory systems. This involved an iterative process of testing our model with a diverse range of policy practitioners whose

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feedback contributed to a process of co-creation. Practitioner critique helped refine the model and deepened our understanding of its utility and how it might guide practice.

Academics and governments regularly investigate what supports the production of quality policy advice (Halligan 1995; Washington and Mintrom 2018; Commonwealth of Australia 2019). Recent research has pointed to a decline in advisory capacity in many jurisdictions (Craft and Halligan 2017; Craft and Henderson 2024). There are calls for the function of policy advice to stay within government agencies (reducing the reliance on external consultants and contractors) which necessitates action to build internal policy expertise (Tiernan, Holland, and Deem 2019). In the 5D model we focus on the action of public servants since despite the growth in contestable policy advice and the input of expert external actors, public servants continue to provide the bulk of policy advice to government decision makers (Aubin and Brans 2021). Our aim has been to develop a repeatable and scalable model for supporting policy practitioners in their day-to-day work, regardless of their level of experience, agency or jurisdiction.

Our model, described in section four, defines five key decision points that shape the process of designing and delivering advice to support policy decisions. This involves understanding Demand, being open to Discovery of evidence, undertaking Design, identifying critical Decision points, and shaping advice to enable Delivery. Surrounding these five decision points is continuous consideration for Engagement and Evaluation. Engagement ensures external input, including from those affected by policy decisions and informs the advisory process. Evaluation ensures emerging evidence from continuous review has input to the analysis process and helps confirms quality aspects of advice. Here evidence may constitute qualitative data, quantitative data and forms of input (such as shifting political and social understandings) that build deeper and broader understanding of the issue. We refer to this process or 'value-chain of policy advice' as the 5D Model. We use the term value chain to highlight the interconnected nature of each component and the notion that value is added throughout the process, including as new evidence and stakeholder buy-in. However, we are cautious not to suggest a sequential or linear process of activity which is a common criticism of the traditional 'policy cycle' and other models based on steps or pathways (Bardach 2024). Given the developmental nature of our work, we were keen to inquire if our model was considered useful by policy practitioners. Thus, throughout our research we asked two critical questions.

- How might an inquiry driven model of advisory practice support quality policy advice? And,
- do policy practitioners find the 5D model useful for guiding the development and provision of quality policy advice?

The 5D model provides guidance around critical lines of inquiry, including encouraging analysis of the policy challenge and assumptions about why advice is being sought. It is inquiry orientated and not prescriptive of steps or actions practitioners should take.

Following this introduction, we briefly locate our 5D model within the context of the policy advisory system (PAS) literature. The literature of policy advisory systems, policy practice and policy analysis is vast and for the purposes of this practice orientated paper, we touch on a few key relevant sources that have influenced our thinking for this project. Our literature analysis is not exhaustive and while we recognize the limitations of this element of our discussion, our work is pitched primarily toward a practitioner base that has an interest in frameworks to guide policy work in complex and dynamic environments. Section three provides a description of our methodology including the engagement with policy practitioners in the critique and potential application of the model. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of the 5D model before moving to our findings including how the model connects practice to theory. Before concluding we highlight further areas of research and our future intentions for progressing the model.

2. A model of inquiry within the structures of policy advisory systems

The 5D model assumes the dominant administrative- political system characterized by Westminster democratic practices.² In the context of growing complexity and more actors involved in “... the provision of ‘substantive’ advice” (Migone and Howlett 2023) our model aims to provide guidance for practitioners on how they might manage within this ‘noisy’ field of activity. This paper does not explore the impact of politicization and externalization on PAS (Craft and Halligan 2017) although political considerations are part of understanding Demand in the model. The 5D model also recognizes that PAS face increasing demands for responsiveness, including having to collaborate with a diversity of actors providing input and influencing the policy advisory process. The boundary crossing behavior of experts such as academics (Brans, Timmermans, and Gouglas 2022) and the variable rate of input, influence and participation from other non-government actors (Craft and Howlett 2012) and consultants, makes the structures of advisory systems more porous and open to a diversity of input (Halligan 1995; Craft, Head, and Howlett 2024). PAS are also now increasingly influenced by international bodies and the transfer of policy ideas across jurisdictions (Baker and Walker 2019).

While advisory systems need to be adaptive, they also remain embedded in the bureaucratic agencies of government. Craft, Head, and Howlett (2024) highlight the connection of expert quality policy advice with adaptable systems, state authority and bureaucratic instrumentality. Our model seeks to structure how practitioners and their agencies manage diverse input whether in data collection, advice formation or decision-making processes. The lines of inquiry in the model encourage policy practitioners to consider the ‘who, what, when and why’ of policy design and delivery. Our thinking is also influenced by traditional articulations of the policy process that account for the authority and instrumentality of the state such as the policy cycle (Althaus et al. 2022), incrementalism (Lindblom) and the social constructivist interpretation (Colebatch 2009) of policy activity. However, we also note the limited normative guidance that policy theory provides practitioners (Cairney 2021). Rather than explain policy making activity our model aims to define points of targeted inquiry as the focus for developing policy advice. Here our work shares alignment

with the inquiry driven aspects of models of policy analysis elaborated in work by authors such as Brommell (2024) and Bradach (2024), however we argue the central elements of our model (the 5Ds) are more dynamic, iterative and not sequential. The 5D model highlights the crucial relational aspects of policy work and the continuous value of what we label as ‘engagement’ and ‘evaluation’. An important feature of the 5D Model is that it provides guidance for action that is repeatable and scalable, thus moving policy advice from an unspecified or personalized ‘craft’ activity to a more rational and expert process, affording more consistent policy performance within agencies and across government.

3. Methodology

The method of design and development of the 5D model reflects our commitment to collaboration between policy scholars and policy practitioners. Theory can emerge from engagement with practice and theoretical models have value for practitioners if they resonate and are communicated well (Cairney 2021). Our method constitutes an inductive and collaborative approach where we have incrementally exposed our model in different learning and applied settings and invited constructive critique from policy practitioners and scholars to help refine the model, develop deeper explanations of its practical utility, and to catalyze ownership and socialize its application.

This work emerged from the authors’ own experience as policy practitioners as well as our experience as researchers and teachers of public policy (Adams, Colebatch, and Walker 2015; Washington and Mintrom 2018; Washington 2023b). Additionally, our work at the Australia and New Zealand School of Government takes us into public sector agencies to advise on policy advisory processes and building policy capability (Meere 2021; Washington 2023c; Washington 2024). We often find ourselves at the interface of policy theory and policy practice. And while we found conceptual models like the Policy Cycle helpful for teaching and learning purposes, practitioners tell us that such models and theories are less useful in guiding practice and the critical process activities that are necessary to ensure the development of quality policy advice. We are increasingly asked to support organizations to develop bespoke models and frameworks to structure their policy advisory work. In this context we saw that both the literature and practice was lacking an accessible and generic model for operationalizing policy advisory systems at the agency level. We initiated this project in 2021. We sought a framework that was useful in an instructive context (academic learning and teaching as well as professional development) and could be used to guide agencies in their design of policy advisory functions and building their own policy capability infrastructure.

The first stage of our iterative design process involved reviewing theories and models of the policy process and policy advisory systems from both the academic and grey literature. This included a review of texts used as heuristic devices to connect policy theory with policy analysis and advice, such as the Australian Policy Handbook (Althaus et al. 2022) and Eugene Bardach’s Practical Guide for Policy Analysis (2024) (Bardach and Patashnik, 2024), which tend toward a linear or sequential approach in the analysis and formulation of policy advice. We examined guidance from jurisdictions such as the UK (HM Treasury 2022), the New Zealand

Policy Project (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2024) and the Australian Government's Delivering Great Policy initiative (The Australian Public Service Academy 2021). We also considered policy guides from expert practitioners (Bromell 2024) models for policy practice developed by individual government departments (Meere 2021), the work of international agencies such as the OECD's recent work with the Irish Government (OECD 2023) and explored models focussed on innovation and problem solving (NESTA 2024). Drawing on this diversity of contributions, we designed a draft of what we felt constituted an effective model containing five core elements critical for the preparation of quality policy advice – the 5 Ds.

The second stage involved an initial round of field testing and feedback. Following feedback, we expanded the prototype 5D model to include the 2 Es: continuous “Engagement” and “Evaluation”. This was an important step in the iterative design process which validated the critical thinking and core principles that underpin the design of our model. This also connected our model with the academic literature where evaluation and actor engagement are well documented aspects of policy analysis work. However, what became evident at this stage was the need for better illustration of the dynamic nature of the model, which led to the production of a video animation of the 5D model in 2022. Over the period 2022, 2023 and into 2024 we have tested the model in various applied situations. Table 1 provides a chronological account of the executive education and university teaching programs where we debated our model with public sector students and practitioners, constituting a third stage validation process.

Our method involved socializing our model with public sector practitioners (mostly at the senior executive level). In these forums we discussed each element of the model and how it supported the framing of quality policy advice. These presentations lasted around 15 to 20 minutes and included watching the animation to emphasize the dynamic nature of the model. We then moved to an open discussion seeking feedback from participants, inviting their critique, and asking whether the model resonated with their experience and current organizational practice. The discussions were supported by collateral explaining the context of the 5D model in the broader policy advice system; namely where the model fitted in the policy infrastructure. These sessions occurred as part of a one-hour masterclass, or a half day or a full day program on public policy and public sector leadership (see Table 1).

We also shared our model through various social and other media outlets to stimulate further feedback from both the academy and practice. Table 2 presents the specific posts and platforms where we invited feedback on the 5D model. Numerical data provides an indicative measure of exposure and engagement.

The final steps in our validation and refinement stage involved inviting targeted critique from the academy. This included a focus group with scholars and senior practitioners from Australia and New Zealand, and the presentation of this work to academic peers at the 2024 International Public Policy Association Workshop. These forums provided greater insight into how the 5D model connects with existing policy literature and current theorizing of policy advisory systems. Before moving to a discussion of our findings, the following provides an outline of the key elements and design principles of the 5D model.

Table 1. Executive education and teaching programs where the 5D model was presented for discussion and critique.

Date	Location	Forum and no. of participants	Jurisdiction/Venue	Public sector experience of participants
21 Sept 2022	Online	Executive MPA program, public policy subject 89 participants	Australia and New Zealand	Mid to late career senior executives with significant public sector experience
9 Nov 2022	Online	Public Service Fale webinar series on Building Policy Capability 16 Pacific Nations 45 participants	Pacific Public Service Commissioners via Public Service Fale	Senior executives, Public Service Commissioners
3 Oct 2023	Online	Executive MPA program, public policy subject 79 participants	Australia and New Zealand	Mid to late career senior executives with significant public sector experience
21 Feb 2024	Online	Pacific Public Sector Leadership Programme 11 Pacific Nations 22 Participants	University of Auckland, New Zealand	Mid to senior level executives
24 Feb 2024	Online	Nepal Policy Leadership Program 18 participants	Nepal	Secretary and Under-Secretaries
21 March 2024	In-person	Undergraduate Public Policy Program 35 Participants	School of Government, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand	Under-graduate students
26 March 2024	Online	Queensland Public Service Commission, professional development Masterclass series 338 Participants	Queensland, Australia	Diverse range of senior public servants from multiple agencies
7 May 2024	Online	Executive MPA program, public policy subject 85 participants	Australia and New Zealand	Mid to late career senior executives with significant public sector experience

Table 2. Social media posts and media platforms used to socialize the 5D model (at may 2024).

Date	Topic/Title of post	Social media platform	Potential reach/distribution
5 Feb 2024	How to deliver great policy advice (apolitical.co)	Apolitical	Potential global audience of approximately 200K public servants across 160 countries.
7 Feb 2024	How to deliver great policy advice: the 5D policy model ANZSOG	ANZSOG website	2,342 views
13 Feb 2024	How do you design and deliver great policy advice	LinkedIn post by author SW	2,672 impressions, 32 reactions, 2 reposts
15 Feb 2024	Introducing the 5D policy advice model (themandarin.com.au)	Mandarin	Predominantly an Australian audience of public servants. Estimated readership of 1.5 million
20 Feb 2024	ANZSOG Post of website article (How to deliver great policy advice: the 5D policy model)	LinkedIn	20 reactions, 2 reposts

4. The 5D model – elements and design principles

The 5D Model has been designed to help strengthen inhouse capability in the management and provision of policy advice by institutionalizing quality processes. In developing our model, we applied some key design principles. The model should be:

- adaptable and transferable. We wanted to build something that could be used in a range of organizations and jurisdictions.
- practical and applicable to the day-to-day work of policy practitioners (noting that ‘all policy is not created equally’) and thus the model needs to be useful for big transformational policy projects as well as everyday transactional tweaks to existing policies and programs.
- designed to provide a framework to anchor related tools and methods. Here we envisaged an opportunity to link tools and methods that underpin the application of policy analysis work such as consultation and engagement guidelines, evaluation protocols (such as those recently espoused by the OECD. (2025), project planning and other relevant templates, as well as quality assurances processes.
- simple without being simplistic, easy to use, and accessible to new public servants as well as seasoned policy leaders (and could be used to guide informal on-the-job training and development of workforce policy capability).
- useful for teaching purposes. We wanted a heuristic that allowed policy advisory processes to be taught in executive workshops for public servants and in the context of postgraduate policy and public administration programs.

Figure 1 presents an illustration of the 5D model. Each decision point is evident, and the elliptic loops aim to capture the continuous interaction of evaluation and engagement. A key challenge for presenting a policy advice model is to capture the complexity, non-linear and often unstructured nature of policy work (Adams, Colebatch, and Walker 2015), through a simple representation. Pairing the static diagram with the video animation was highly effective in capturing both the dynamism and simplicity of our model. The animation of our model can be accessed through the link below.

Video 1. 5D model

A key feature of the 5D model, which is clearly articulated in the animation is that it catalyzes inquiry driven practice and thus for each element we pose critical questions to guide analysis and advisory activity. How each element of the 5D model can be understood and guide inquiry is outlined in further detail below.

Demand

An essential task for developing policy advice is understanding where demand is coming from. Demand for advice may have originated from ministers, feedback from people being affected by a current policy or program, the identification of a strategic organizational or political goal, or the opportunity to do things better. Where is the demand for change coming from and why now? Interest in demand links our model to the ‘first and second’ waves of research on policy advisory systems where demand and supply were noted as important factors impacting the provision of policy advice (Craft and Wilder 2017). Demand is vital given the proximity of public servants to political decision makers. Understanding the political nature of demand (driven by elites, electoral commitments, ideology or powerful

The 5D Policy Advice Model

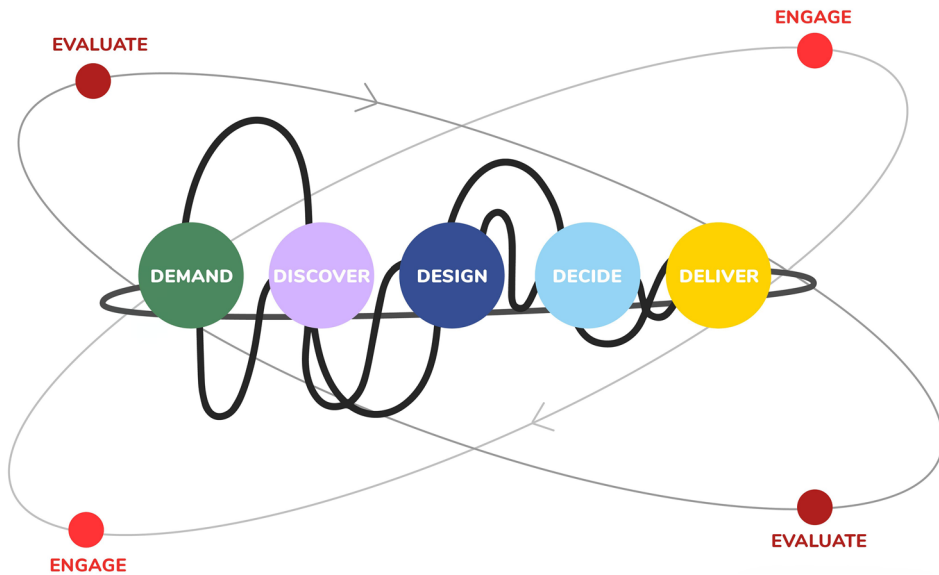


Figure 1. The 5D model of quality policy advice.

institutional interests) provides insight to the underlying dynamics that shape the call for policy advice (Manwaring 2019). Advice needs to reflect an understanding and calibration to the relative authority of the demand source and authorizing environment. Understanding demand and its origin helps identify the resources, skills and expertise needed to develop advice.

Discover

Quality policy advice must reveal a deep understanding of the presenting policy challenge or opportunity. We use the term ‘discover’ to mean the act of collecting evidence, including analysis of quantitative data, published research, critiquing what has been tried before, insights from people’s lived experience, their needs and perspectives, and obtaining feedback from frontline public servants (Washington, 2023a). The key questions to ask when moving to the discovery phase are: what do we know about the problem or opportunity, what do we need to know, and where are the knowledge gaps? The 5D model aims to instill a curious mindset of discovery to reveal multiple perspectives on the challenge and opportunities (Bacchi 2009) rather than limiting options to incremental feasible solutions (Lindblom 1959). It encourages challenging assumptions and bias and an iterative approach to solutions that connects with insights drawn from evaluation and engagement.

Design

This is the process of developing evidence-informed, quality policy advice to design and test possible solutions to challenges, or to innovate from standard or previous

practices. Important questions to ask in this phase concern what methods will be used to design and test solutions and who will be involved? Design activity opens up the policy advisory process to a broader range of actors, experience and expertise. Here our model demonstrates its openness to insider and outsider contributions (Craft and Wilder 2017). The 5D model accommodates a more fluid understanding of the value of information, expertise and experience from diverse sources and seeks to incorporate this into the design of policy advice (including the potential to co-design solutions with people likely to be affected by policy).

Decide

This element gives explicit recognition to the role of policy advice in government decision making. In this context, “decide” directs attention to the extent to which the process of advice preparation, the content, and the presentation of advice supports decision making. The central focus here is the extent to which policy advice helps decision-makers take good decisions. At its most simplistic level this asks whether the policy advice is sufficient to facilitate decision-making. It should also expose the thoroughness and trustworthiness of evidence and analysis that underpins advice and transparently map a pathway of accountability back to original data and stakeholder contributions. The increasing openness of policy advisory systems is well documented in the literature (Craft and Halligan 2017). Ensuring transparency of who influences advice is an important marker of policy quality. Articulating quality standards and measuring advice against those standards is part of the wider policy infrastructure supporting good decision making (Washington 2023b).

Delivery

The decisions of government impact the delivery of services, the rights and entitlements of individuals, communities and firms, or seek to influence social, economic and environmental wellbeing. Policy advisory systems guide this complex decision-making process, including the implementation of those decisions. Quality policy advice articulates options for effective implementation. The delivery element of the 5D model asks how implementation will achieve the policy intent? How are we going to make something happen? Moreover, how do we ensure decisions are implementable and have the desired impact? Considerations of ‘delivery’ direct us toward a range of operational issues including budgets, capability, reach and engagement. It is at these operational points that the 5D model would connect with lower orders of activity including guidelines for cost benefit analysis, project planning, and monitoring and evaluation processes, as well as strategies for communicating and socializing decisions taken.

Engage and evaluate

Engagement and evaluation are presented as continuous and connected activities throughout the policy advice development process. Policy is relational. Maintaining engagement with those affected by policy decisions is crucial for policy success. Policy advice will benefit from external input. For some issues this is critical in the

discovery phase, in other cases stakeholder engagement provides strategic intelligence on implementation, on how decisions will land or how to mobilize critical support. Engagement might involve inviting others into the process as design partners. Policy advice also draws on critiques of existing arrangements; maintaining an evaluation mindset and monitoring performance ensures new evidence and insights support policy adaptation and future policy advice. The two elements of Engage and Evaluate provide an important overlay to the advisory process, draw attention to the dynamic nature of context, and the environment within which policy is made. These dynamics are drawn into each element of the 5D model.

Our model functions within a policy style described by Aubin and Brans as *sense making*; "... a collaborative form of advising which is prospective. It promotes the design and implementation of innovative instruments or a new rationale for public policy" (2021). Our model embeds a process of advice production that is anticipatory and inclusive. It encourages those involved in the design and provision of policy advice to continually revisit assumptions and be open to new and emerging 'evidence' by adopting an evaluation mindset.

5. Findings – is the 5D model useful in practice and in theory?


As noted earlier a critical question of our consultation and research process was to assess the utility of our 5D model in supporting the work of policy practitioners. When presented in executive education forums and university postgraduate teaching programs there was high levels of confirmation of the model's relevance to the organizing and development of policy advice. We initially measured participant interest via three short questions that required a yes/no response. We wanted to know:

- I. if agencies made use of any model to guide their work in the provision of policy advice,
- II. whether the 5D model captured elements of their policy advice practice, and
- III. if they would use the 5D model in their organization to guide staff in the development of policy advice?

Across all forums responses were similar in range with less than half (only 40%) of respondents indicating their agency has some sort of formal guidance or model to follow when developing policy advice. Approximately 90% indicated that the 5D model captured aspects of their practice and the same proportion of participants indicated interest in adopting the 5D model to guide policy advisory work in their agency. On the advice of academic colleagues in our focus group, we were encouraged to move away from simple yes/no questions to a Likert scale that allowed for graded responses. Following this adjustment, subsequent results indicated similar support with 60% indicating their current practices have a high or similar level of alignment with the 5D Model and 90% saying they would implement all, some, or limited elements of the 5D Model. This experience highlights the argument put by Cairney (2021) that models hold great value for practitioners if communicated well and demonstrated to be relevant to their work. Our direct engagement with

practitioners in learning forums and organizational development also confirms the value of active exchange when exploring the utility of concepts, models and new ideas for practice.

Our focus group with academics and senior policy leaders sought critical feedback on how the model relates to policy theory and teaching. This reflected our general commitment to engage and work with others in the co-development of a policy advice model that could bridge the teaching-practice divide. Our academic colleagues confirmed that the model would be a useful addition to their teaching of policy analysis and policy advisory systems.

Feedback received through the broader socialization process on various social and other media platforms was limited. There was some reposting of our articles and a number of supportive reactions (). While reads, views and impressions are useful measures of online reach (over 2K in some cases) such indicators are relatively neutral in providing a sense of utilization of the 5D model. However, anecdotally we have heard that the model has influenced some practice in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (personal comms), while the Irish Government has drawn on the 5D model as a recommended phased approach to policy development and design in their new Policy Handbook (Civil Service Management Board 2024).

6. Conclusion

So, what have we learned and where to next? Our original goal was to design a model of policy advice that connected theory to practice, and practice to theory. In this project we wanted to learn if an inquiry driven model would contribute to the production of quality policy advice and if practitioners considered the 5D model useful. Our results confirmed both research questions. However, more work is needed to understand how to build traction with practitioners, including to understand what might support them to operationalize the model within their teams and organizations. Building a toolkit of methods under the 5D model (to support practitioners) and of theories and frameworks into which the model fits (to support teaching academics) would likely enhance its utility. In our own teaching we position the model as a component of the policy infrastructure and in our advisory work as a component of policy capability improvement programs.

While practitioners agree there is utility in the 5D model, the extent to which this model might drive improved policy quality advice process is more challenging to measure. Indicators of quality include reliability and trustworthiness, thoroughness, inclusion and fairness, and problem-solving capacity (Krick 2018). Quality advice achieves executive and ministerial attention and helps deliver good decisions. These quality characteristics also contribute to policy success, particularly attention to process, operational alignment with the issue of concern, and sensitivity to the political context (McConnell 2010; Luetjens, Mintrom, and 't Hart 2019). Our assumption is that the processes defined in the 5D model align with these characteristics of quality advice. Quality standards and quality assurance processes could usefully be anchored to the 5D model. The development of this material along with a related policy toolkit and teaching aides, will form part of our future work on the development of the 5D model. However, in our work with organizations, we know that adopting the 5D

model also requires some adaptation to context, including to build existing processes (Cabinet manuals, advice templates, quality assurance and peer review requirements) into the guidance for using the model.

This paper presents an appraisal of our progress to ensure the 5D model is practice-ready and used (in practice and in teaching). Our findings to date have relevance for theory development and engagement with practice, as well as insights into the understanding of policy advisory systems. An important finding is the strong appetite amongst practitioners for engagement in the development of theory and conceptual models. Frameworks and models are highly valued by practitioners as ways of building and communicating a shared understanding of how things should happen across complex governing systems. This is encouraging for policy researchers and scholars. We also learned that practitioners are interested in heuristics for guiding practice. This presents conceptual challenges as it tends to orientate theoretical design toward prescriptive models of how things should be done, rather than simply explaining how things occur. The desire to build a scalable, repeatable and useful model to guide policy advice raises design challenges that emphasize appeal and simplicity. The complexity of practice is often lost in efforts to build a simple and memorable model that has operational appeal. Our next phase of work will consider how anchoring the model to policy toolkits and quality assurance processes can help socialize and support the model's utility within broader strategies to ensure consistent and robust policy processes and improvements in overall policy capability.

Notes

1. We use the term 'model' in the tradition of other heuristics referred to as models of the policy process, such as the policy cycle, but present this as an alternative to descriptive models which are useful in their explanatory role but less useful for practitioners seeking guidance for developing policy advice. The model is permissive, rather than prescriptive like Ostrom's Institutional Analysis and Development Framework IAD (2017), although the policy infrastructure into which the 5D fits includes some of the broader institutional and contextual aspects Ostrom's IAD framework for policy design and analysis covers.
2. We recognise there are differences amongst Westminster style systems and thus the administrative application of the 5D model may vary as it is adapted to context and differing pathways for the development and provision of quality policy advice. To date, the 5D model has resonated with at least 3 of different Westminster systems including; Australia, New Zealand and Ireland. Our model was also well received by Nepalese policy leaders when presented to them. This experience suggests the model has appeal and is adaptive to a range of administrative contexts where advice is being prepared for decision-makers.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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