Knowledge Translation vs. Implementation Science for AMH Research

It can take years for research findings to be adopted into everyday practice and impact population health outcomes, if at all (Bauer & Kirchner, 2020). However, attending to knowledge translation and implementation science can help bridge this gap and lead to more effective uptake of evidence-based practices (Grimshaw et al., 2012).

Knowledge Translation

Knowledge translation is the process by which research is created and translated into practice for the purpose of improving healthcare and health outcomes. It is a dynamic process that involves interactions between researchers and knowledge users.

Knowledge translation includes the following activities (CIHR, 2016):

Synthesis	• The aggregation of research findings from multiple studies on a certain topic
Dissemination	• The spreading of research findings through messages that are tailored to specific audiences
Exchange	• Interactions between researchers and knowledge users (such as decision makers, health professionals, patients) that result in mutual learning
Application	• The iterative process by which research findings are put into practice

There are two approaches to knowledge translation (CIHR, 2016):

End of grant KT	• The researcher develops and implements a plan for making knowledge users aware of the research findings from a project
Integrated KT	• Knowledger users are engaged as equal partners with researchers throughout the research process

For more information, contact
amh.knowledgeexchange@ahs.ca

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Implementation Science

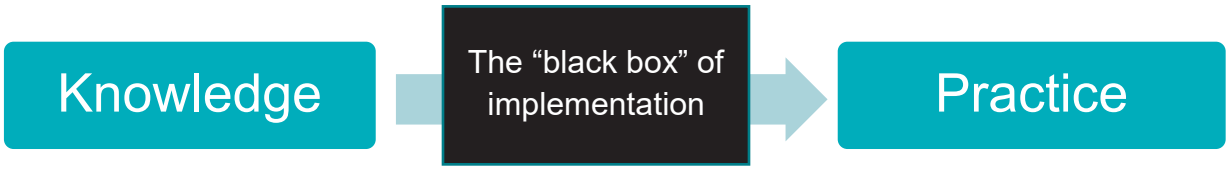
Implementation science is “the scientific study of methods to promote the systematic uptake of research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine practice, and, hence, to improve the quality and effectiveness of health services” (Eccles & Mittman, 2006, p. 1). In other words, implementation science examines factors that affect the uptake of evidence-based interventions into practice. Because implementation does not cover the entire spectrum of knowledge translation activities, it is not the same as knowledge translation.

The four stages of implementation science are (National Implementation Research Network, n.d.):

Exploration	• Identify need for change and potential innovations • Prepare readiness for change plan and decide whether to proceed with implementation
Installation	• Acquire resources and prepare staff for implementation • Develop feedback loop between practice and research
Initial implementation	• Implement and use the innovation for the first time • Monitor and evaluate • Refine the implementation
Full implementation	• Sustain and scale the implementation across different settings

Comparing Knowledge Translation and Implementation Science

Both knowledge translation and implementation science aim to bridge the gap between research and practice. Knowledge translation is about ensuring that knowledge users are aware of and use research findings in their decision-making. Implementation science studies the “black box” between research and practice to understand how evidence-based interventions can be successfully integrated into practice.



What are the barriers and facilitators?

How sustainable is the innovation?

Further Reading

Knowledge Translation:

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