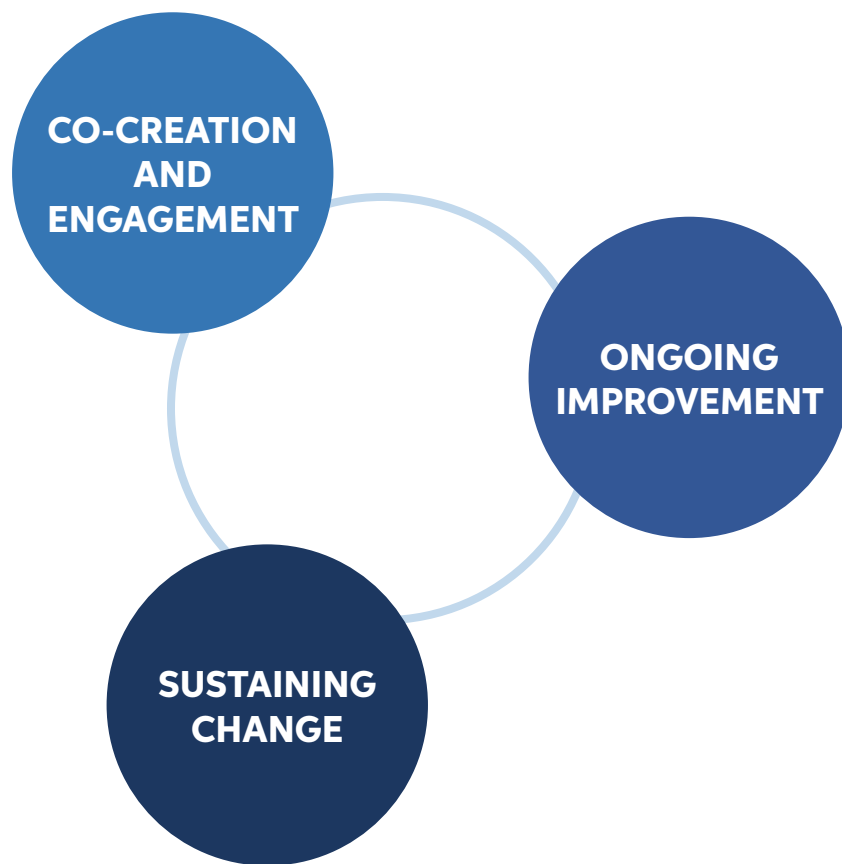


# A Practice Guide to Supporting Implementation

What competencies do we need?



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## Foreword

Our interest in examining the roles and competencies of implementation support practitioners emerges from many years of work supporting government and non-government organisations with implementing evidence-informed practices, policies and programmes, across a range of sectors, countries and continents.

In our work, we seek to build the competency and capacity of staff within these partner organisations so that effective implementation strategies can be developed, applied and sustained beyond our involvement. We also seek to build the competency and capacity of our own staff to provide external implementation support for change efforts undertaken by partner organisations and service systems. Both the organisations we work in, and we, as leaders in these organisations, are therefore interested in a better understanding of what is needed to provide effective implementation support and how these competencies can be built.

We have also worked in partnerships with universities and other organisations in our different countries and settings to create new education and training programmes and qualifications for those working with implementation in practice. When these programmes are being delivered, our students have called for skill development that moves beyond the walls of classrooms and educational institutions, so they are better prepared for working in the field to support the use and scale up of evidenced interventions to improve outcomes for people and communities.

These considerations started our initial thinking, research and consultation about the role and competencies of implementation support practitioners. What began as a small project in 2017, developed into a more comprehensive examination of implementation support, a field that is diverse both in terms of terminology and “schools of thought”.

This practice guide is the result of our collective thinking about how this knowledge can be synthesised and applied in real world implementation support practice in human services. The field is constantly evolving. Since we began work on this collaborative project, we have observed a growing interest in understanding how to better utilise implementation support in the field. This is evident in different service sectors, where professionals request relevant knowledge that can be translated into organisational practice, and among scholars of implementation science, who report increasing numbers of studies assessing how to best design, embed and monitor implementation support in human services.

This is an encouraging trend, which we are proud to be part of. We hope that this guide will be of value to a broad range of agencies and organisations wanting to develop and/or collaborate with implementation support practitioners in different human services.

We would really welcome feedback and reflections on the use of this guide when it has found its way into different settings and contexts, and we look forward to ongoing debate and learning about the practice of supporting implementation.

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We would also like to thank the professionals who support implementation in many countries and sectors who contributed to our thinking and discussions about the competencies needed by implementation support practitioners at workshops, seminars and through informal exchanges over the years.



## Introduction

### **What is the purpose of this practice guide and why did we develop it?**

We need to get serious about building capacity for better implementation.

We can continue to research and develop evidence-informed practices, programmes and policies, and implementation theories, frameworks, strategies and tools, but until we get better at applying them in practice, outcomes will not improve.

To implement *well*, we need professionals with the required competencies to assess, select, tailor and apply a range of implementation frameworks, strategies, tools and approaches – in a way that is appropriate to the specific context and setting. Implementation Support Practitioners play a central role in building these competencies.

This guide identifies the competencies that implementation support practitioners need to support effective implementation and scaling of evidence-informed practices, programmes and policies, to improve outcomes for people and communities.

Implementation support practitioners are professionals who support organisations, leaders and staff in their implementation of evidence-informed practices and policies. They identify, contextualise and improve the use of evidenced implementation strategies in a range of settings. They also build implementation capacity among teams, organisations and systems.

### **Drawing on implementation research and practice**

Implementation can be defined as carrying out planned, intentional activities that aim to turn evidence and ideas into policies and practices that work for people in the real world.

In supporting implementation, implementation support practitioners draw on insights from implementation research as well as practice.

*Implementation research* builds evidence for the types of implementation strategies and approaches that work under certain conditions. *Implementation practice* tailors and applies these approaches and strategies in different context and settings to meet the needs of different communities and people and to achieve positive outcomes.

Together, implementation research and implementation practice form the field of implementation science - the scientific or formal study of how interventions are incorporated into service settings. It seeks to identify specific activities, contexts and other factors that increase the likelihood of successful implementation and lead to improved outcomes for people. The fundamental goal of implementation science is to integrate research and practice experience in ways that improve the outcomes of those being served.

## Why this guide is useful

Identifying and operationalising the competencies needed to effectively provide implementation support brings greater clarity to the roles and functions of professionals who deliver implementation support.

Building the capacity of professionals who provide implementation support can help to develop a skilled workforce that uses implementation best practices in ways that improve outcomes for populations and communities.

Competencies for implementation support practice can be integrated into higher education curricula and training for social work and health care, certificate programmes for professionals working in human services, and ongoing professional development for leaders and practitioners charged with supporting the use of evidence to improve population outcomes.

### This guide aims to:

- Define the role and functions of implementation support practitioners
- Help organisations and teams who provide implementation support to describe their 'implementation support' offer to partners and commissioners
- Cultivate a workforce of implementation support practitioners and create competency-based professional development for them
- Facilitate ongoing reflection and learning about implementation support activities, informing implementation support practitioners' professional development and their implementation practice
- Support communication and feedback between implementation research and implementation practice

We hope that this guide helps to expand the focus from individuals using or learning about a specific implementation framework or model to teams assessing, selecting and making the most of an array of implementation approaches which are available to them.

### How it should be used and by whom

The guide should be of use to anyone interested in developing the competencies of professionals who are facilitating and supporting the implementation of changes in service delivery.

It is designed as a tool for reflection, allowing people to have conversations about the competencies that are fundamental to implementation support practice.

### We hope that this guide will be of use to:

- *Implementation support* practitioners in any country, sector or discipline
- *Education providers* (universities, technical colleges, professional associations) interested in training and developing implementation support practitioners
- *Funders and commissioners* interested in more effective implementation and developing implementation support
- *Organisations and teams* wanting to develop and explain implementation support



# What is Implementation Support?

## Who are implementation support practitioners?

Implementation support practitioners are professionals who support implementation and build implementation capacity in human service organisations and systems. They can be referred to as coaches, improvement advisors, technical assistance providers, facilitators, consultants, mentors, and implementation specialists.

Implementation support practitioners often reside outside the service systems in which they work and are contracted to provide implementation support by an agency or organisation. They also may operate from within a service system, when those systems have internal work units specifically designed to support innovation, implementation, improvement and/or scaling efforts. Implementation support can be delivered through partnerships between professionals residing inside and outside public service systems.

## What is implementation support?

Implementation support includes any activities and processes aimed at assisting leadership and staff of human and social services organisations and systems in implementing, improving, scaling and sustaining evidence-informed programmes, practices and policies to improve outcomes for populations. Implementation support practitioners develop implementation expertise within service systems – i.e. knowledge and skills for selecting, designing and evaluating implementation strategies within specific local contexts.

## What do we mean by principles and competencies?

In describing the competencies that implementation support practitioners need to conduct their work, we distinguish between principles and core competencies.

Principles refer to foundational attitudes with which implementation support practitioners should approach their work, decision-making and interactions with communities, organisations, and stakeholders.

Core competencies refer to the necessary abilities of implementation support practitioners, including the specific knowledge, resources and skills they should bring to bear in their work to effectively support the sustained uptake of evidence-informed programmes, practices and policies.

## The context in which implementation support practitioners work

Contextual conditions are an important factor to consider for implementation support. Context is inclusive of three levels including macro, organisational, and local. Macro context refers to socio-political and economic forces that either facilitate or hinder implementation efforts. Organisational context refers to an organisation's culture and climate that influence the behaviour of individuals and teams. The local context includes activities and relationships within the local setting that can also influence implementation.

Context informs the approach implementation support practitioners take in providing implementation support and may limit as well as strengthen their ability to provide this support effectively. Implementation support practitioners require a deep understanding of local context to make decisions on which frameworks and strategies to select, combine and/or integrate when supporting stakeholders in addressing specific implementation challenges.

Implementation support practitioners' ability to support implementation and ongoing improvement can be influenced by organisational contextual factors, including the learning culture of the implementing site, the ability of stakeholders and organisations to recognise the value of new knowledge and to seek sources of support for implementing a new practice, and the availability of data to inform decision-making.

Similarly, socio-political and economic conditions together with issues of power and motivation at organisational and systems levels can affect efforts to support implementation.

While seasoned implementation support practitioners will be accustomed to complicated, tense and ever-changing contexts surrounding their work, these contexts can be overwhelming and limit the predictability of their implementation support efforts and their sense of efficacy. With this in mind, implementation support practitioners require resilience and an ability to cope with ambiguity, pressure, or lack of control.

### **Implementation support requires fluidity and relational skills**

A guide like this risks being viewed as a checklist of items that can be ticked off, thereby giving the impression that implementation support practice is a technical process that is easily established and managed.

We caution against approaching implementation support roles in this way. Implementation support practitioners need to be able to skillfully select, combine and merge the key principles of implementation support with the necessary core competencies, and to tailor these to the ever changing contexts and settings typical of human services. Professionals supporting implementation emphasise the need for fluidity in how they apply and integrate various approaches to implementation. In this way, *implementation support is not just a strategy or a technique, it is an art.*



When practicing this art (of implementation support), relational skills are essential. For stakeholders to welcome, accept and actively seek support, they must respect and trust the implementation support practitioner who enters their work space, as well as feeling safe in the learning space that is created between them. Such trust and respect is not easily earned and requires implementation support practitioners to be very sensitive to the settings in which they work and to the often diverse needs, values and priorities of their stakeholders.



## Principles and Competencies

The competencies needed by professionals who support implementation can be described in three parts:

- **Principles**  
The six principles which should guide anyone supporting implementation and underpin their day to day work
- **Domains**  
The three domains into which the competencies are grouped
- **Competencies**  
The fifteen competencies needed by the professionals who support implementation

The principles, skills and competencies outlined here are based on research and practice evidence internationally. Evidence about these principles, skills and competencies is still emerging and research in this area is at a relatively early stage.



## Principles

Principles are the foundational *attitudes* with which implementation support practitioners should approach their work, decision-making and interactions with communities, organisations and stakeholders.

**Figure 1:** The principles guiding the work of implementation support practitioners

Principle	What this principle means
Be empathetic	Approach the change facilitation process with regard for others as legitimate, respected, and valuable contributors to the selection and implementation of a programme or practice and associated processes and outcomes. Seek mutual understanding within relationships, and understand how growth-promoting relationships between implementation support practitioners and stakeholders can fuel implementation support.
Be curious	Ask questions, demonstrate authentic interest in how local stakeholders and context will shape implementation processes; engage with different forms of evidence and information across relevant content areas and disciplines; tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity while seeking clarity.
Be committed	Bring patience, resilience, and willingness to challenge the status quo to the process; demonstrate flexibility and agility during implementation setbacks.
Advance equity	Advance equitable implementation by integrating strong equity components, including explicit attention to the languages, cultures, histories, values, assets, and needs of different communities, during all steps of an implementation process.
Use critical thinking	Explore the diverse elements of a situation, examine your own and others' assumptions, assess context and root causes or contributing factors and make conscious choices, that are informed by evidence and data.
Embrace cross-disciplinary approaches	Appreciate and use different ways of knowing and diversity of expertise across disciplines to bring about mutual and transformative learning.

# Domains and Core Competencies

Core competencies refer to the necessary *abilities* of implementation support practitioners, including the specific knowledge, resources and skills they should bring to bear in their work to effectively support the sustained uptake of evidence-informed programmes, practices and policies.

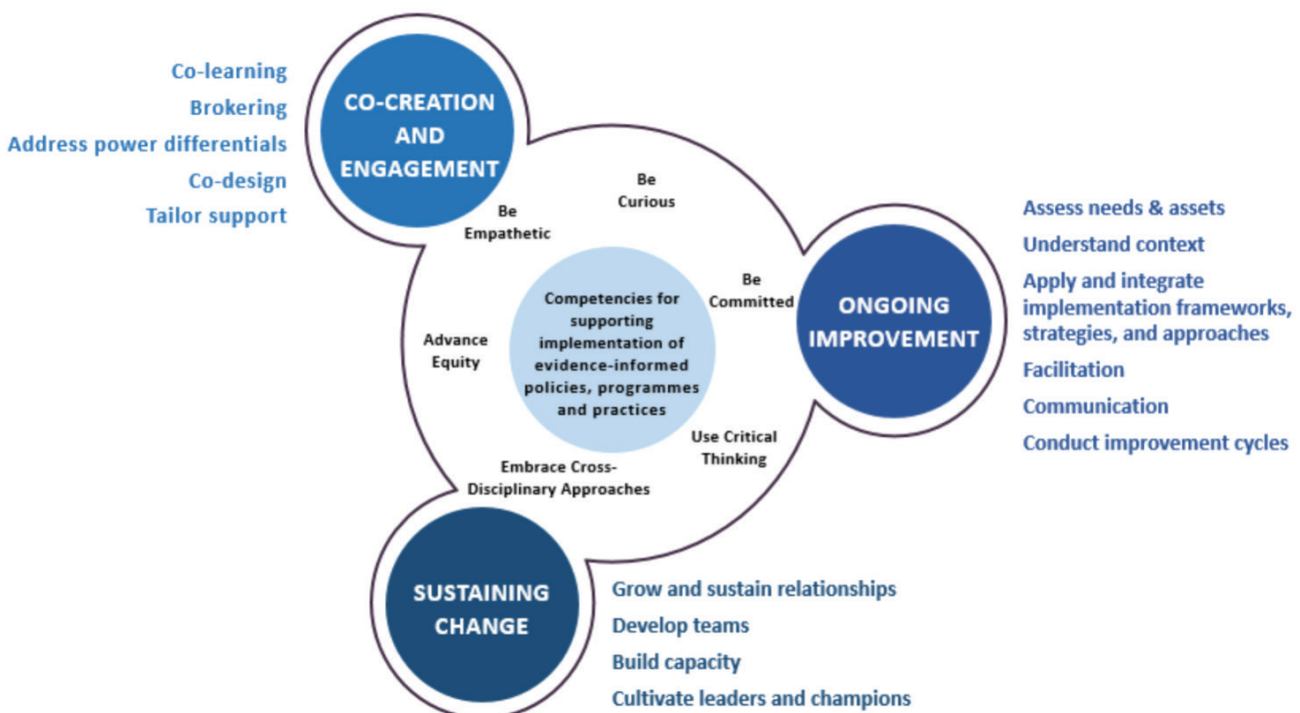
This Practice Guide outlines the fifteen core competencies needed by implementation support practitioners, which can be grouped thematically into three domains:

- **Co-creation and engagement**
- **Ongoing improvement**
- **Sustaining change**

Implementation support practitioners conduct a range of activities as part of their work.

For each of the fifteen core competencies, we outline the key activities which implementation support practitioners should be able to conduct, relating to that competency, and provide some practical, helpful hints in relation to the competency.

**Figure 2: Principles and core competencies of implementation support practitioners**



## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain

Implementation support practitioners promote and facilitate the active involvement of stakeholders in all stages of the design and implementation process resulting in service models, approaches, and practices that are contextualised and tailored to settings. This is to ensure that programmes, practices, and implementation work match the values, needs, skills, and resources of those delivering programmes and practices, systems stakeholders, and service beneficiaries.

### Core competencies that support co-creation include

- Co-learning
- Brokering
- Addressing power differentials
- Co-design
- Tailoring support



### Overview of Co-learning Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

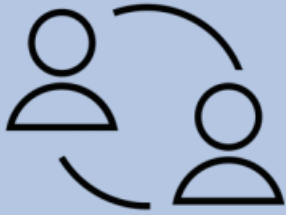
- work collaboratively with systems stakeholders to learn how knowledge on implementation science can be effectively used in the local context.
- actively seek to learn about the culture, history, and current priorities in the local context in order to assess the most feasible and relevant uses of implementation science.
- support learning among stakeholders at the implementing site and recommend specific implementation strategies based on local context and conditions.

### Co-learning - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to the Co-learning competency, include:

- Understand the system and organisational context and culture.
- Create spaces for new ideas to emerge.
- Negotiate and build trust and respect for all perspectives, including those that may be at risk of being excluded from dialogue because of race, ethnicity, language or status.
- Communicate and listen for the purpose of mutual understanding and the collaborative integration of different perspectives and types of knowledge.
- Synthesise diverse perspectives of thought and check for understanding.
- Conduct dynamic and interactive trainings and provide educational materials on implementation science
- Seek other ways to introduce and create readiness for an implementation science informed approach that fits with existing programmes, practices and processes.

## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain



### Helpful Hint - Co-learning

Implementation support practitioners enter the implementation space as a co-learner seeking to understand the priorities of the implementing site(s).

For example, implementation support practitioners support the collaborative development of logic models and implementation plans which enables teams/stakeholders to learn together and agree what they want to achieve (outcomes), the interventions being delivered and the implementation methods.

It is important to involve different disciplines and perspectives in the process. The process is as important as the outputs (the logic model and/or the implementation plan).

## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain

### Overview of Brokering Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Enable knowledge exchange and information sharing among stakeholders to increase understanding of diverse perspectives related to the design and implementation of the programme or practice.
- Pool information and leverage resources to enable decision making across the organisation or service system.



### Brokering - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to the Brokering competency, include:

- Position yourself as a bridge “in between” people or groups that exist in a system and are vital for the success of an implementation
- Identify individuals or groups that are relevant to involve in the implementation but not yet part of it and seek to understand the root causes and contributing factors of that disconnect
- Connect otherwise disconnected individuals or groups in the system by providing advice and serving as a relational resource
- Develop and regularly convene implementation groups and teams with diverse stakeholders
- Promote other network weaving to connect people strategically where there is a potential of mutual benefit
- Source, share and translate evidence and data of relevance to involved stakeholders
- Promote opportunities for stakeholders and team members to engage with others in the use of evidence and data



## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain



### Helpful Hint - Brokering

Implementation support practitioners identify siloes within the service system and find ways to bring stakeholders together across the siloes. For example, an implementation support practitioner may bridge connections between referring agencies and services agencies to strengthen the referral process and access to services for the focus population.

An implementation support practitioner may also connect agencies or practitioners using a novel intervention for the first time with more experienced users from a different organisation or systems to enable collective learning. Brokering can also involve implementation support practitioners liaising between research institutions and practice / services as part of academic-community partnerships.

## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain

### Overview of Addressing Power Differentials Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to address power imbalances between community members and stakeholders in the wider system by:

- Building trust
- Supporting two-way communication
- Cultivating opportunities for mutual consultation
- Identifying accountabilities



#### Addressing Power Differentials - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Position the range of service beneficiary experiences at the center of decision-making and implementation activities.
- Identify the influence that different stakeholders may have on the implementation.
- Pay particular attention to those with inherently greater power to influence the implementation process and those disenfranchised from the implementation process.
- Use facilitation techniques to make power structures visible and to protect all voices in the implementation process.
- Recognise and acknowledge the loss of status and authority that may be implied in an implementation process and can impede buy-in and engagement.
- Seek and gain buy-in from formal and informal leaders to include diverse expertise in team discussions. Develop an evolving 'collective view' or 'shared understanding,' rather than pushing for an artificial consensus which may perpetuate existing power structures.

## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain



### Helpful Hint - Addressing Power Differentials

Implementation support practitioners often need to identify power issues that may impact their ability to provide implementation support and/or others' ability to engage with and gain from this support. Power differentials exist when individuals involved in the implementation support (are perceived to) have greater authority, agency or influence than others.

Implementation support practitioners need to consider whether such differentials exist, and how they can be addressed. For example, by finding ways to gather and use feedback for implementation planning and improvement from all hierarchical roles of an organisation or system, including practitioners as well as senior, middle and frontline leaders. In gathering this feedback, different roles may need to be involved separately to ensure they can speak freely.

Other power differentials to consider when providing implementation support are those between, for example, different professions (e.g. social work, medicine, nursing); service professionals and service users; different gender identities or different ethnicities.

## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain

### Overview of Co-design Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Promote the co-design of practices, programmes and their implementation.
- Facilitate co-design processes among stakeholders at the implementing site, thereby including leaders, practitioners, and people with lived experience.
- Co-design implementation tools, resources, and models through iterative processes and collective sense making.



### Co-design - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to the Co-design competency, include:

- Work with stakeholders to build a strong fit between intervention and implementation context before moving forward with implementation efforts.
- Support collaborative implementation planning and co-development of an implementation blueprint or plan involving all relevant stakeholders.
- Enable the co-design of any tools, products, processes, governance structures, service models, interventions and policies related to the implementation.
- Promote cyclical tests of tools, products and processes among stakeholders to iteratively improve their prototypes.
- Support the co-design and/or modification of specific implementation strategies based on resources and conditions present in the local context.
- Facilitate design-centered activities that have the needs of people with lived experience at the centre, using collective sense-making and negotiation.

## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain



### Helpful Hint - Co-design

Implementation support practitioners should work with practitioners and service users to co-design and develop accessible tools, resources and products that are informed by evidence from research, practice and service users.

Implementation support practitioners may do this by facilitating design meetings where tools and resources are developed in real time, involving multiple perspectives. When these tools and resources are being tested, these stakeholders would also be engaged in gathering feedback on how they experienced and perceived these tools and resources when used in practice.

## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain

### Overview of Tailoring Support Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Help to tailor the implementation strategies used by these stakeholders, based on a deep understanding of local actors and context
- Tailor their own support to implementation stakeholders
- Determine the frequency, duration and intensity of their implementation support based on the needs, goals and context of their stakeholders, and refrain from assumptions that a certain level and type of support is always needed



#### Tailoring Support - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Regularly assess the implementation support needs and assets of different stakeholder groups.
- Agree on the implementation support to be made available to different stakeholder groups, sites and/or other relevant units of support.
- Develop a scope and sequence of virtual and onsite meetings and other activities based on the goals of those supported.
- Accommodate “ad hoc” / “just in time” support needs of stakeholders.
- Regularly assess the effectiveness of the level of your support in matching needs, goals, and context of the implementation effort.
- Work with implementation stakeholders to select, combine and tailor their implementation strategies to meet local needs.
- Continuously promote the adaptability of implementation strategies used by stakeholders.



## Co-Creation And Engagement Domain



### Helpful Hint - Tailoring Support

Implementation support practitioners work with the implementing site to determine the sequence and scope of implementation support. For example, rather than deciding ahead of time that implementation support will consist of a certain number of site visits and virtual events, implementation support practitioners collaborate with the implementing site to decide on the number and timing of implementation support activities.

Other aspects of implementation support that can be tailored are its focus, delivery mode, supporting tools or documentation.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain

Implementation support practitioners help to make organisational learning a core value of the implementation setting.

They support the use of quantitative and qualitative feedback at each stage of implementation through regular stakeholder debriefings, dedicating time for reflection, shared learning and improvements along the way. Ongoing feedback on programmes and practices involves using practical, relevant measures of progress and considering the differential impact of interventions across populations and communities. When data are not available, implementation support practitioners work with services and practitioners to collect and analyse information needed to support decision-making and improvement.

### Core competencies that support ongoing improvement include:

- Assessing needs and assets
- Understanding context
- Applying and integrating implementation frameworks, strategies and approaches
- Facilitation
- Communication
- Conducting improvement cycles



### Overview of Assessing Needs and Assets Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Work with stakeholders to understand population and community assets and needs and the extent to which potential programmes and practices meet identified needs for particular focus populations.
- Value the perspectives of multiple stakeholders when identifying needs and considering potential programmes and practices to address needs and improve outcomes.
- Assess issues of need through an equity lens in order to consider how a programme or practice, and the implementation support provided, can advance equitable outcomes for the different individuals, families and communities that form its focus population.

### Assessing Needs and Assets - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Identify the needs that different stakeholders involved in an implementation want to see met through the change process.
- Support the identification of readily available and potential resources and assets to be utilised and leveraged in the implementation context.
- Help stakeholders understand each other's perspectives and expectations regarding the area of need or opportunity.
- Use data-driven inquiry methods to support 'discovery' processes that holistically consider need, such as assessment data, stakeholder analysis, mapping of existing services, initiative inventory, etc.
- Disaggregate available evidence and data and assess, consider and discuss needs that may exist for particular subpopulations (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, geography).
- Engage people with lived experience in determining needs.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain



### **Helpful Hint – Assessing Needs and Assets**

Implementation support practitioners value a multi-faceted assessment of needs and assets that includes the perspective of multiple stakeholders.

For example, implementation support practitioners may conduct mapping of existing services to reach a common understanding of existing services, good practice and service gaps/needs which are not being met. Implementation support practitioners will also gather information from people with lived experience to determine if the mapping exercise yielded findings that align with the experiences of the focus population, and support the integration of findings for service selection.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain

### Overview of Understanding Context Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Conduct assessments of contextual fit between proposed programmes and practices and the local service settings before moving forward with implementation. Contextual factors that should be considered include:
  - current initiatives and priorities of the site
  - local history and community values
  - organisational capacity to deliver potential programmes and practices
- Link assessing context with considerations of diversity, equity and inclusion. Disparate outcomes and community context cannot be accurately understood without acknowledging structural and institutional racism and other mechanisms of discrimination.



#### Understanding Context - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Involve diverse stakeholders from throughout the system – including those belonging to specific subgroups – in identifying and understanding the implications and consequences of change efforts.
- Use and/or conduct evidence reviews to determine relevance and fit of the proposed intervention(s) / approach(es) with identified needs and assets.
- Assess the contextual fit of the proposed intervention(s)/approach(es) with the values, needs, skills and resources available in the service setting, including in specific subgroups.
- Assess the contextual fit of the proposed intervention(s)/approach(es) with the current political, funding and organisational landscape.
- Continuously identify and respond to changes in the system(s) surrounding the implementation, which affect implementation.
- Identify and support mitigating actions to anticipate and manage risks and assumptions for the change effort (e.g. regarding resources, commitments or buy-in; risks or loss for different stakeholders).

## Ongoing Improvement Domain



### Helpful Hint - Understanding Context

Implementation is influenced by the service system and community context. With this in mind, implementation support practitioners should regularly assess the contextual fit of a specific evidence-informed programme or practice to help implementing sites determine if and how it is likely that the intervention will be sustained in their service environment.

Multiple implementation frameworks provide excellent starting points to think about contextual influences.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain

### Overview of the Applying and Integrating Implementation Frameworks, Strategies and Approaches Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to apply and integrate different implementation frameworks and strategies most suitable for a particular context or setting to support implementation sites in meeting their goals.

In selecting relevant implementation frameworks and strategies, implementation support practitioners use systems thinking, participatory methods, and knowledge management and exchange:

- Systems thinking involves examining how implementation efforts fit within a whole system and choosing appropriate approaches to address potential problems and issues.
- Participatory methods recognise that key stakeholders should contribute to choosing, designing, and using implementation strategies.
- Knowledge management and exchange includes summarising and synthesising how a range of implementation strategies can address critical implementation barriers and advance implementation goals.



### Applying and Integrating Implementation Frameworks, Strategies and Approaches - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Remain up to date on evidence developed through implementation research and practice.
- Remain up to date on knowledge about implementation frameworks, models, theories, and strategies.
- Educate stakeholders about the current best evidence on implementation frameworks, strategies and approaches.
- Include all relevant stakeholders in the selection, combination and co-design of implementation strategies and approaches.
- In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, assess and discuss the appropriateness of using implementation frameworks, strategies and approaches in different contexts and settings, including with particular subgroups.
- Support the selection, application and integration of the range of implementation frameworks, approaches, tools and resources that are best suited for the local context of service and policy settings.



## Ongoing Improvement Domain



### **Helpful Hint - Applying and Integrating Implementation Frameworks, Strategies and Approaches**

Implementation support practitioners explore the benefits of different implementation frameworks, models and strategies with implementation teams and governance structures to address specific implementation goals.

Part of the tailoring process for implementation support involves developing a unique package of implementation strategies to meet the unique needs of the implementing site.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain

### Overview of Facilitation Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Enable implementation-related problem solving, that is participatory, involves supportive interpersonal relationships and recognises a need for improvement.
- Facilitate meetings with the following goals in mind:
  - ensuring full participation of all relevant stakeholders.
  - encouraging all stakeholders to share their perspectives.
  - enabling mutual understanding among stakeholders to accept the legitimacy of one another's needs and goals.
  - developing inclusive solutions that emerge from the integration of everybody's perspectives and needs.
  - promoting shared responsibility of stakeholders to implement proposals they endorse and to give and receive input before final decisions are made.



### Facilitation - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to the Facilitation competency, include:

- Create welcoming and engaging spaces for all participants in meetings and other facilitation activities, recognising that participants may require different kinds of support to feel welcome and participate in facilitation processes.
- Support a communication protocol and process that facilitates interactions among stakeholders.
- Support the continuous and systematic identification of barriers to implementation among different stakeholders.
- Enable the identification of stakeholders required to develop adequate strategies for solving implementation challenges.
- Serve as formal and informal facilitators as determined by an analysis of the challenge and its context.
- Support a balance of divergent and convergent thinking among team members, depending on the type of challenge faced.
- For easily named and easily solved challenges (technical challenges), support stakeholders to evaluate alternatives, summarise key points, sort ideas into categories, and exercise judgement.
- For complex challenges with no easy solution (adaptive challenges), support stakeholders to generate alternatives, free flow open discussion, gather diverse points of view, and suspend judgement.
- Ensure that the facilitation method used matches the challenge in focus (e.g. structured facilitation, free flowing group discussions, etc.).
- When needed, respond to emergent discussions or challenges with ad hoc, nimble facilitation.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain



### Helpful Hint - Facilitation

Implementation support practitioners lift up the expertise and experience of the stakeholders at the implementing site to help solve implementation challenges. One of the ways they do this is through facilitation.

The facilitator's job is to support everyone to do their best thinking and practice. By supporting everyone to do their best thinking, implementation support practitioners enable group members to search for inclusive solutions and build sustainable agreements.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain

### Overview of Communication Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Support communication between stakeholders at every stage of implementation. Communication should include what is working, what is not working and how those conclusions were drawn.
- Facilitate communication themselves. Support implementation teams to communicate and use timely feedback loops with key stakeholders.
- Be the primary messenger of implementation progress and challenges in the early stages of implementation, serving as respectful and authentic translators of implementation goals and decision points
- Simultaneously seek to build the capacity of different implementation stakeholders to fully develop and deliver an “audience-based” implementation communication.



## Ongoing Improvement Domain

### Communication - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to the Communication competency, include:

- Work with stakeholders to develop communication protocols designed to:
  - intentionally engage stakeholders
  - communicate progress and celebrate implementation success
  - report systemic barriers that are preventing or hindering implementation
  - report on actions taken to resolve or address implementation challenges
  - revisit past decisions and agreements periodically to ensure that solutions are still appropriate.
- Support the development of different communication protocols for different target groups, which specify communication goals, the method and frequency of communication, who needs to communicate, how effectiveness of communication will be measured, and how communication will consistently be improved.
- Recognise and respond to differences in communication needs across different stakeholders involved, e.g. due to different organisational roles, implementation expectations, involvement and responsibilities.
- Help implementation stakeholders to recognize and respond to differences in communication needs among focus populations through the implementation. These differences may be due to, for example, varying levels of language proficiency and literacy, different gender-, education-, or culture-based norms and preferences etc.
- Encourage stakeholders to regularly communicate with and gather feedback from actors within and outside the implementing system to understand how implementation processes are perceived. As part of this process:
  - Support effective communication and feedback loops among practice, supervision, management, and leadership levels of the system (i.e., vertical feedback loops that support communication up and down a system).
  - Support effective communication and feedback loops among service partners, advocacy groups, training networks, representatives from the focus population, and other collaborators (i.e., horizontal feedback loops that support communication across system sectors).
- Help to identify local communication barriers or complications and work with relevant implementation stakeholders to resolve these challenges.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain



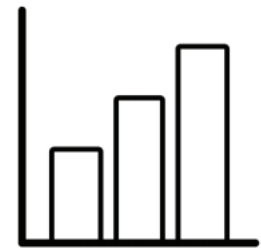
### Helpful Hint - Communication

Communication is important in terms of both information exchange and creating shared understandings.

With both of these objectives in mind, implementation support practitioners seek to build the capacity of implementing sites to communicate internally and externally about their implementation successes and challenges. One way they do this is by helping implementing sites develop communication protocols that address when communication is needed, by whom, why, and in what format.

Implementation support practitioners may also support leaders in developing their implementation communication aimed at ensuring that quality implementation and active engagement in implementation activities is expected, supported and rewarded.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain



### Overview of Conducting Improvement Cycles Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

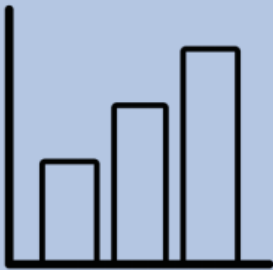
- Use data to purposefully prepare and reexamine implementation processes and continuously improve practice, organisation and systems changes.
- Conduct cyclical tests of change aiming to iteratively improve the implementation process.
- Enable an implementation team and stakeholders to value and use both the anticipated and unexpected learnings of iterative cycles.

#### Conducting Improvement Cycles - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Facilitate the ongoing testing and improvement of tools, products, processes, governance structures, service models, and policies of relevance to implementation efforts.
- Help to identify, and gather relevant quantitative and qualitative data about the progress and quality of implementation activities and outcomes.
- Ensure that different stakeholders have access to relevant, valid and reliable data on how the programme or practice and accompanying implementation strategies are functioning to guide decision-making along the way.
- Support the development of processes and structures for the routine collection and analysis of these data.
- Promote the collection and use of data suitable to understand the differential impact of interventions and their implementation on different focus populations and communities.
- Develop stakeholders' capacity to continuously assess and use data for decision-making about the ongoing planning, implementation, and outcomes of a programme or practice through modelling, instruction and coaching.
- Support the development of structures that ensure that stakeholders regularly dedicate time to reflecting on or debriefing about available data throughout an implementation as a strategy to promote shared learning and improvements along the way.
- Support implementation stakeholders in their data-based decision-making, including the prioritisation of needs and challenges, and the development of concrete solutions to identified problems.
- Help to create feedback loops that connect leadership with frontline service, and policy with practice and/or research, and ensure that improvements made during implementation are communicated to all stakeholders.

## Ongoing Improvement Domain



### Helpful Hint - Conducting Improvement Cycles

Implementation support practitioners help leaders and teams develop processes for gathering and understanding information about what is helping or hindering implementation efforts. This often involves deciding on monitoring and evaluation processes.

For example, implementation support practitioners may help to identify administrative data already existing in the organisation or system, and assess its usability as indicators of implementation progress or quality. Implementation support practitioners may also need to source valid and reliable instruments developed to measure such progress.

The work with improvement cycles also involves helping to define the intervention or implementation changes needed to optimise the ongoing work.

Central to this improvement work is dedicated time, allowing stakeholders to pause and reflect throughout the implementation process. Intentional reflection and reexamination of implementation processes often do not happen without the explicit support of an implementation support practitioner.



## Sustaining Change Domain

Programmes and practices are sustained when the core elements are maintained or delivered with integrity after initial implementation support has been withdrawn, and adequate capacity exists to continue maintaining these core elements.

Implementation support practitioners support the sustainability of programmes and practices by helping communities to develop a shared vision and mutual accountability, and by facilitating existing relationships, problem solving and resource sharing. They also help to identify, understand and address the dynamic changes that occur over time in the use of interventions/approaches, the characteristics of the practice settings, and in the broader system that establishes how services are delivered.

### Core competencies that support sustaining change include:

- Growing and sustaining relationships
- Developing teams
- Building capacity
- Cultivating leaders and champions

### Overview of the Growing and Sustaining Relationships Competency

Implementation support practitioners recognise relationships as foundational to implementation work and spend time building affiliations, making personal connections, and recognising themselves as outsiders to the implementation setting.

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Grow and sustain diverse, authentic, respectful and trusting relationships with stakeholders to guide and support implementation and systems change efforts.
- Support **two types of relationships**:
  - the relationship *between* the implementation support practitioner and key stakeholders involved in implementation; and
  - the relationships *among* the systems and community stakeholders, including consumers, who have a stake in the implementation effort.
- Build **two types of trust**:
  - **Intrapersonal trust** - the belief that the implementation practitioner is reliable, competent, and committed to the change effort on behalf of the organisation they are supporting.
  - **Interpersonal trust** - the perception of the implementation practitioner and their stakeholders that they are in a collaborative and reciprocal relationship pursuing the same aims.



## Sustaining Change Domain



### Growing and Sustaining Relationships - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Build trust with others by modeling transparent action and accountability.
- Seek out relationships with implementation stakeholders from all aspects of the system.
- Engage in ongoing self-assessment and diagnostic assessment of relationship strengths and weaknesses.
- Encourage and make use of feedback to strengthen relationships.
- Regulate distress in relationships by creating space for stakeholders to discuss challenges and dispute assumptions when conflict emerges.
- Seek to demonstrate value to the stakeholders involved in implementing.
- Enter the implementation space with humility as a learner, recognising that local actors have important expertise and experience to contribute to the implementation process.
- Demonstrate commitment and persistence in the face of complex challenges.
- Have difficult conversations with stakeholders and be open to feedback.
- Show kindness and vulnerability.
- Demonstrate empathy.

## Sustaining Change Domain



### **Helpful Hint – Growing and Sustaining Relationships**

Implementation support practitioners know that implementation takes place through trusting relationships.

Implementation support practitioners build trust through honest listening, using feedback, demonstrating commitment, providing credible information, showing vulnerability, and staying in difficult situations.

When trusting relationships exist, information is more readily exchanged and multiple stakeholders, including the implementation support practitioner, can exert influence on the implementation process.

## Sustaining Change Domain



### Overview of the Developing Teams Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Develop and coach implementation teams that will be responsible for a change effort.
  - An **implementation team** is a group of stakeholders that oversees, attends to, and is accountable for facilitating key activities in the selection, implementation, and continuous improvement of a programme or practice.
- Ideally, teams should be established at every level of a programme or system, or to target different aspects of an initiative.
- Develop strategies for stakeholder leadership through developing teams and including multiple actors and perspectives, including the focus population, in activities such as implementation planning, communication, problem solving, and data-driven decision-making.

#### Developing Teams - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Help to identify relevant implementation team members among those involved in the implementation.
- Facilitate the development of clear governance structures for implementation teams, e.g. through team charters or agreements.

- Support teams to perform the following core functions:
  - select, operationalise, tailor and adapt interventions
  - develop operational processes and resources for building staff competency
  - identify, collect, analyse and monitor meaningful data
  - engage leadership, staff and stakeholders in using data for improvement
  - build capacity for sustainment, and
  - build cross-sector collaborations that are aligned with new ways of work.
- Support the development of effective team meeting processes including the establishment of consistent meeting schedules and standing agendas.
- Ensure teams have support from leadership for their roles and functions.
- Help to develop communication protocols to support feedback loops among multiple, linked implementation teams for a single initiative.
- Develop processes for the continuous assessment and improvement of team functioning, including gathering feedback from team members.
- Ensure that implementation teams provide opportunities for members to learn and grow through participation on the team.
- Work to enhance team cohesion and trust among team members.
- Help to manage conflict among team members.

## Sustaining Change Domain



### Helpful Hint – Developing Teams

Implementation support practitioners help to develop teams, ensure that team meeting processes are structured and effective, and build the competency of team members to support implementation.

They may do this by supporting the development of a team charter and agendas for team meetings.

Implementation support practitioners often facilitate team meetings in the early stages of implementation to explicitly support team development and ensure that team members have the opportunity to learn and contribute during team meetings. Over time, implementation support practitioners seek to transition facilitation of team meetings to local leaders and champions.

## Sustaining Change Domain

### Overview of the Building Capacity Competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Increase the knowledge, skills, motivation, and attitudes of leaders, staff, and key stakeholders to achieve their implementation goals.
- Pay attention to all types of capacity (psychological, behavioral and structural) at all levels of the system (individual, organisation, network, and system), including:
  - **Intervention/approach-specific capacity:** The knowledge, skills, motivation and attitudes about a specific intervention or challenge, such as understanding a particular research-supported programme.
  - **General capacity:** The knowledge, skills, motivation and attitudes required for a fully functioning organisation or system, e.g., filled leadership positions or a human resource department or unit.
  - **Analytic capacity:** The knowledge, skills, motivation and attitudes to gather information about a problem, analyse patterns and dynamics, and reflect critically on root causes and potential solutions.
  - **Adaptive capacity:** The knowledge, skills, motivation and attitudes to adjust actions and strategy in response to analysis.



### Building Capacity - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Prepare stakeholders for necessary changes, model or simulate the change that will be implemented prior to implementation
- Work with stakeholders to assess capacity strengths and needs related to the implementation.
- Provide or secure training needed for stakeholders and partners to gain capacity, and connect with others who can provide training, modeling and coaching.
- Model the use of knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes, and practices for stakeholders to demonstrate application in a real-world setting.
- Coach stakeholders' use of knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitudes, and practices in their daily work so that partners can gain confidence and competency.
- Identify and help to change and/or implement organisational processes and structures required to develop capacity for implementation (e.g., human resources, technology).
- Support stakeholders in identifying potential future external and internal challenges to implementation (related to, for example, finances, policies or staffing) and to develop strategies for building sufficient capacity to meet these.
- Promote collaboration and partnerships as a way to build and expand capacities (e.g. through the use of community-academic partnerships, learning collaboratives, etc.).

## Sustaining Change Domain



### Helpful Hint – Building Capacity

In building capacity, implementation support practitioners enhance the implementation knowledge, skills and attitudes of others – be it individuals, teams, organisations or systems. They do not take on the implementation work themselves. Instead, they support others in doing implementation.

At the **individual and group level**, this means enabling stakeholders to see educational and skill building activities as safe, relevant and beneficial. Educational and skill building activities should mirror the conditions under which stakeholders normally conduct their work, and include elements of behavioural modelling, making it possible for stakeholders to try out changes they want to introduce in their work environment.

At the **organisational and system level**, implementation support practitioners help to develop mechanisms, for example, situational cues, that enable new knowledge to be applied and new behaviours to be practiced. They also pay attention to the resources needed (time, equipment, finances) to follow through with intended changes and to the support structures available to stakeholders in the systems in which they work – for example, supervisors, mentors or peer support.

Implementation support practitioners regularly follow-up on capacity building activities, assess whether additional capacities are needed, and how these might be met.

## Sustaining Change Domain

### Overview of the Cultivating Leaders and Champions competency

Implementation support practitioners should have the competency to:

- Support formal leaders to be implementation leaders who work across organisation and system boundaries and silos.
- Foster leadership behavior among all relevant stakeholders involved in an implementation and help to create space for new and emerging implementation leaders.
- Cultivate implementation champions at multiple levels within and outside the implementing system and organisation.
  - Champions have the ability to influence the opinions and behaviors of others.
  - They feel a sense of ownership over the implementation effort, have deep knowledge of the people and workflow impacted by change, and demonstrate grit and tenacity in the face of setbacks. They are persuasive to a range of stakeholders and demonstrate an ability to understand different perspectives.

### Cultivating Leaders and Champions - Key Activities

The key activities which implementation support practitioners conduct, relating to this competency, include:

- Identify existing leadership roles of relevance to implementation efforts.
- Work and communicate with relevant formal leaders involved in the implementation to define, understand and develop their role and capacity as implementation leaders (e.g. through the use of appreciative inquiry or reflection techniques).



- Develop processes and structures for regularly debriefs with leaders central to implementation efforts.
- Support leaders to access data and information required for them to stay abreast of implementation work and the decisions they should be involved in.
- Identify emerging leaders in or around the implementing system and consider how they may be further involved in and developed through implementation efforts (e.g. through the use of power analysis or systems mapping tools).
- Support emerging leaders to share responsibilities and develop their confidence and competency (e.g. by co-facilitating meetings, co-supervising staff etc.).
- When leadership transitions occur, work with stakeholders to provide planning, continuity, analysis and support as needed to ease the transition.
- In collaboration with implementation stakeholders, identify champions within and outside the implementing system with a potential to positively influence the implementation efforts.
- Support stakeholders in developing strategies to contact and engage these champions in relevant ways throughout the course of the implementation.
- Ensure stakeholders regularly review championship roles to assess whether these are being cultivated as intended, are operating as desired, or if any losses in championship have occurred. If challenges are identified, facilitate problem solving as needed.



## Sustaining Change Domain



### Helpful Hint – Cultivating Leaders and Champions

Implementation support practitioners foster leadership among their stakeholders. They work with designated leaders, i.e. those in charge of implementation, to ensure that clear implementation leadership is present in an organisation and system. They also develop distributed leadership across a multitude of stakeholders to ensure that intended changes can be supported and progressed where and whenever needed.

Implementation support practitioners help leaders understand how they can best support implementation efforts, e.g. by displaying knowledge, support and engagement in relation to implementation efforts, or by signaling what behaviors will be expected, supported and rewarded in their organisation or system. They also help leaders and champions be informed about ongoing implementation work and outcomes and may provide concrete advice on how to progress work.

Implementation support practitioners contribute to developing champions by role modelling leadership behaviors, e.g. by being professional, accountable or committed. They also identify opportunities to lead, and invite stakeholders at all levels of an organisation or system to deepen their engagement in different aspects of implementation.

## Dilemmas when Supporting Implementation

Supporting implementation is not free of dilemmas. Some of the dilemmas emerge because the role of the implementation support practitioner itself is still a fairly new one. Commonly acknowledged standards that describe key functions and responsibilities of implementation support practitioners rarely exist, leaving it up to the people in those roles, and their organisations, to define the scope of their role and work.

Other dilemmas relate to the varying expectations of the implementation support practitioner from different stakeholders, which can be hard to meet simultaneously.

Common dilemmas faced by individual implementation support practitioners, or by organisations wanting to work with or develop these practitioners, are:

- The role of the implementation support practitioner requires high levels of expertise and experience – but currently, the pathways for their training and professional development are few and far between. Organisations and systems may therefore need to develop their own training programmes or developmental strategies for implementation support practitioners.
- Optimal working conditions for implementation support practitioners include role clarity, opportunities for continuous learning and support from others, and clear career pathways – but few organisations and systems have experience with where and how to position, support and develop implementation support practitioners. Establishing and integrating this role, or collaborating with implementation support practitioners, may therefore need to occur on a “trial and error” basis, potentially creating working conditions that are not very clear.
- Implementation support practitioners are often expected to simultaneously fulfil supportive as well as performance monitoring functions. Monitoring practitioners’ fidelity data may be one responsibility, and providing training or supporting

problem solving might be another responsibility. Meeting such potentially competing demands can create tensions and make it difficult to build the trust required for implementation support to be effective.

- The ability of implementation support practitioners to operate as change agents, alongside the stakeholders they support, requires access to tools, resources and influence that can facilitate true change. In many cases, access to resources, tools and influence needs to be provided by stakeholders. However, given the blind spots and inertia that characterise many individuals, organisations and systems, some stakeholders may respond slowly to efforts from implementation support practitioners to change behaviours. They may even deny access to the required resources, thereby preventing implementation support practitioners from facilitating the change that they requested.

Some of these dilemmas may be solved by gathering more experience with the role of implementation support practitioners, by developing and testing training and support models, and by documenting this experience in ways that can help to build a stronger and more unified knowledge base over time.

Other dilemmas require the organisation or system using or establishing implementation support roles to think hard about their intended scope, purpose, and responsibilities. Role clarity is key because it helps to align expectations. If it is not possible to have clarity about the implementation support practitioner role from the beginning, then regular check-ins may be necessary to assess whether the role descriptions and expectations need to be adjusted or refined over time.

As part of this process, it is important to keep in mind that establishing or utilising a new role requires learning and adjustment on both sides – that of the implementation support practitioner and that of the supported organisation or system. Integrating a new role is an adaptive challenge which requires everyone involved in the process to become part of the solution.

## Reflective questions for professionals supporting implementation

Professionals supporting implementation can use the questions below to reflect on the content of this guide and how it applies to them, and decide what they might want to do to further enhance their own competencies and practice.

The questions are designed to enable implementation support practitioners to reflect on their own practice and identify the aspects of their practice they want to develop or improve.

### 10 Questions for you to reflect on

1. How would you describe your own implementation support practice?
2. What principles drive your interactions and decisions when providing implementation support?
3. What competencies do you rely on to support people, organisations and systems to change?
4. What have you learned about providing implementation support that you carry with you?
5. Which of the principles resonate most with you? Are there other principles which guide your implementation support work?
6. Which of the competencies do you feel most confident about?
7. What 2-3 competencies would you like to develop further over the next 1-2 years?
  - What resources are available to you to develop these competencies?
  - Who can you learn from?
  - What are the next steps for you in terms of developing these competencies?
8. How might you use the principles and competencies outlined in this guide to facilitate reflective practice for yourself and others who provide implementation support?
9. If you were coaching an implementation support practitioner, what would you ask?
10. What practices or approaches could you share with others?
  - How can you best share these practices or approaches?

## How we developed this guide

The work on this guide began in 2017 as an internal research and development project between two organisations providing implementation support in the USA and Ireland/Northern Ireland. It later turned into an international research project, informed by implementation practice and by systematic reviews of the relevant literature, involving a range of international stakeholders.

To frame an initial, preliminary set of competencies, we conducted a pragmatic literature review covering areas such as technical assistance, team science, community organising, network development, intermediaries, and co-creation and co-production.

The competency areas emerging from this work informed initial discussions with staff of the two intermediary organisations in the USA and Ireland/Northern Ireland, helping us to understand which competency areas were perceived to be useful in providing implementation support. Based on this input, we developed an early draft of the 'Implementation Specialist Practice Profile' (NIRN, CES, 2018). This document was then vetted by the same stakeholder groups in facilitated workshops.

Subsequently (2018-19), we conducted an international survey of implementation support practitioners working in intermediary organisations in Europe, the USA, Canada and Australia. The goal was to validate the content of the competencies identified in the 'Implementation Specialist Practice Profile'.

Simultaneously, a team involved with the European Implementation Collaborative conducted a systematic integrative review of the literature on implementation support practitioners, their role and competencies, and the strategies they use.

A number of journal articles outlining the findings from the different strands of this work have been or are being published. This guide brings together the findings from this work.



## Resources and Further Reading

A range of online resources are available to implementation support practitioners, to help them navigate the field of implementation science and prepare for and provide implementation support. The following represents a selection of these resources.

**Websites** focused on the use of implementation frameworks and theories:

- National Implementation Research Network: <https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu>
- The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research: <https://cfirguide.org/>
- The Dissemination & Implementation Models Webtool: <https://dissemination-implementation.org/index.aspx>
- The EPIS Implementation Framework: <https://episframework.com/>
- Normalization Process Theory: <http://www.normalizationprocess.org/>
- The RE-AIM Framework: <https://www.re-aim.org/>

**Collections of resources** for dissemination, improvement and implementation work curated by different institutions:

- U.S. National Library of Medicine: [https://hsric.nlm.nih.gov/hsric\\_public/topic/implementation\\_science/](https://hsric.nlm.nih.gov/hsric_public/topic/implementation_science/)
- King's College, London, U.K.: <http://www.kingsimprovementscience.org/>
- Centre for Behaviour Change, University College London, U.K.: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/behaviour-change/resources>
- Centre for Effective Services, Ireland: <https://www.effectiveservices.org/resources/implementation>

### Training Resources

- The Training Institute for Dissemination and Implementation Research in Cancer (TIDIRC) – An Open Access 6-Module Online Training: <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/is/training-education/TIDIRC-open-access>
- Regular Updates on Implementation Training Opportunities from The Consortium for Implementation Science: <https://news.consortiumforis.org/>

### Scientific Journals

- Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate & Practice: <https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/tpp/ep>
- Implementation Science: <https://implementationscience.biomedcentral.com/>
- Implementation Science Communications: <https://implementationscience.biomedcentral.com/>
- Implementation Research and Practice: <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/irp>

### Implementation Networks

(operating in the English language)

- The European Implementation Collaborative (EIC): <https://implementation.eu/>
- The Global Implementation Society: <https://globalimplementation.org/>
- The Implementation Network of Ireland and Northern Ireland: <https://www.effectiveservices.org/work/implementation-network-and-initiative>
- The U.K. Implementation Society: <https://www.ukimplementation.org.uk/>
- The Society for Implementation Research Collaboration: <https://www.societyforimplementationresearchcollaboration.org/>

## Resources and Further Reading

Listed below is a selection of current academic articles that informed the production of this guide and/or examine questions about how to support the development of practitioners' implementation competencies.

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## Resources and Further Reading

- Metz, A., Albers, B., Burke, K., Bartley, L., Louison, L., Ward, C., Farley, A. (revise & re-submit). Implementation Practice in Human Service Systems: Understanding the Principles and Competencies of Professionals Who Support Implementation
- Moore, J. E., Rashid, S., Park, J. S., Khan, S., & Straus, S. E. (2018). Longitudinal evaluation of a course to build core competencies in implementation practice. *Implementation Science*, 13(Article 106). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-018-0800-3>
- Mosson, R., Augustsson, H., Bäck, A., Åhström, M., Schwarz, U. von T., Richter, A., Gunnarsson, M., & Hasson, H. (2019). Building Implementation Capacity (BIC): A longitudinal mixed methods evaluation of a team intervention. *BMC Health Services Research*, 19(Article 287). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-019-4086-1>
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