

Symposium 3 – #EIE2021

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Implementation Support Practitioners – What is their role, and what competencies do they need?

Aim

Within the field of implementation, multiple terms exist to describe the role of professionals who help others in their work to adopt and implement evidence in practice: Facilitator, knowledge broker, coach or consultant are just a few examples. This diversity may create confusion and hamper research progress, pointing to the need to

1. Consolidate the highly diverse terminology in the field – through the term “Implementation Support Practitioner” (ISP).
2. Develop and refine a program logic for the role of implementation support practitioners, through a systematic scoping review exploring what is known about the knowledge, skills and attitudes instrumental for the work of implementation support practitioners (ISPs).
3. Outline ISP core competencies and validate these based on a survey administered with an international sample of ISPs.

Focus

This symposium will contain three elements:

1. Findings from a systematic, integrative review informing a program logic that (a) introduces the role of the implementation support practitioner, (b) outlines ISP knowledge, skills and attitudes assumed to be required to effectively support real world implementation practice, (c) and details mechanism of change anticipated to enable individual and organisational behaviour change supportive of implementation
2. Findings from a study using an exploratory sequential mixed methods design and exploring how an international group of implementation support practitioners perceived and suggested to refine a preliminary set of competencies proposed to be central to the work of ISPs
3. A practice guide developed based on (1) and (2) aiming to inform the work of agencies and organisations with an interest in building their own and/or utilising others’ implementation support capacities.

Discussion

We will discuss how the role of ISPs could be developed to support meaningful and feasible implementation practice in human services, and how ISPs can benefit implementation practice and research. ISP dilemmas will be another discussion topic.