

# Using Implementation Strategies and Fostering Buy-In

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U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



VA Quality Enhancement Research Initiative  
EVIDENCE INTO PRACTICE

**EPIC QUERI**

VA Evidence, Policy, and Implementation Center

# Disclosures

The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Veterans Affairs or the United States government.

# **OUR VISION: A Role for Everyone in Implementation Science**

# Let's Take a Poll!

How much knowledge of implementation strategies do you have?

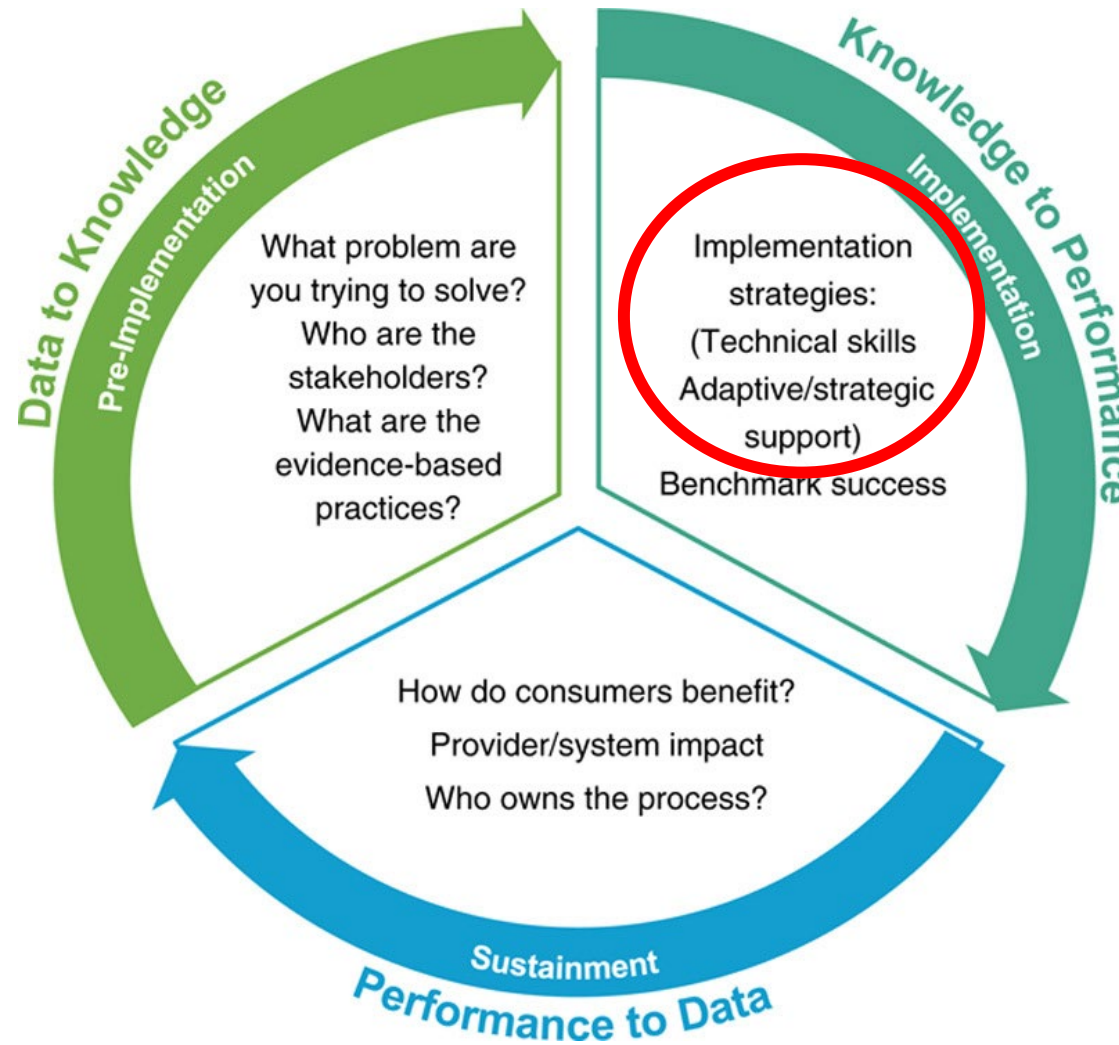
- **None**—I'm just learning about them now for the first time
- **A little**—I've heard about them before, but have never had any instruction or training
- **A moderate amount**—I've read about them, and know some concepts, but I've never applied them to my work
- **A great deal**—I have used implementation strategies in at least one project

# What Will You Get From This Course?

You are going to have a roadmap of how to implement any innovation in your workplace!

**No matter where you sit, SOMETHING needs improving. If you could, what would you improve, and what would you need to do improve it?**

# QUERI Implementation Roadmap



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Kilbourne AM et al, Quality Enhancement Research Initiative Implementation Roadmap, Medical Care: October 2019 - Volume 57 - Issue - p S286-S293 doi: 10.1097/MLR.0000000000001144

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# Co-Morbid Depression and Diabetes in Rural Settings

Remember Rose?

She's a nurse working with Veterans who have both depression and diabetes.

She wants to offer a coaching program in primary care to help these Veterans.



(based on [Cully et al, 2014](#))

# From last week, we now know:

- The problem Rose is trying to solve
- What stakeholders to involve
- What practice/intervention she is going to use
- How theory can help her think about the ingredients for successful implementation
- How health equity might factor into what she wants to do



# What are Rose's next steps?

## Now we need to think about:

- What will help Rose to make this happen?
- How can she enlist and engage stakeholders in making this happen? Getting them to “buy in”?

***Rose needs implementation strategies!***

## When defining implementation science, some very non-scientific language can be helpful...

- The intervention/practice/innovation is **THE THING**
- *Effectiveness* research looks at whether **THE THING** works
- *Implementation* research looks at how best to help people/places **DO THE THING**
- Implementation strategies are the stuff we do to try to help people/places **DO THE THING**
- Main implementation outcomes are **HOW MUCH** and **HOW WELL** they **DO THE THING**

[Curran, G.M. Implementation science made too simple: a teaching tool. \*Implement Sci Commun\* 1, 27 \(2020\)](#)

## In other words...

- Strategies are methods or techniques used to enhance the adoption, implementation, and sustainability of a clinical practice or program (Curran et al., 2012)
- They can help employees and sites improve care especially when faced with organizational constraints (e.g., limited funding, competing demands)

## Strategies can help VA!

- Strategies help VA sites and regional networks achieve High Reliability Organization (HRO) transformational and VHA performance goals through better consistency and spread of effective clinical practices, especially across different service lines



## What are some types of implementation strategies?

- Opinion leaders/champions
- Facilitation
- Stakeholder engagement
- Performance monitoring/feedback
- Formative evaluation
- Education
- Clinical support tools
- Technical assistance
- Training/coaching/supervision
- Quality improvement

## What are some types of HRO strategies?

- Develop leadership
- Support a culture of safety
- Build and use data systems to measure progress
- Provide training and learning opportunities for providers and staff
- Implement process improvement

(Sculli et al, 2022)

Sculli GL, Pendley-Louis R, Neily J, Anderson TM, Isaacks DB, Knowles R, Young-Xu Y, Gunnar W. A high-reliability organization framework for health care: a multiyear implementation strategy and associated outcomes. *Journal of patient safety*. 2022 Jan 1;18(1):64-70.

Powell BJ, Waltz TJ, Chinman MJ, Damschroder LJ, Smith JL, Matthieu MM, Proctor EK, Kirchner JE. A refined compilation of implementation strategies: results from the Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change (ERIC) project. *Implementation science*. 2015 Dec;10:1-4.

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# There are a lot to choose from! More than 70!



# Nine categories of implementation strategies





## Some things to consider

- Review possible strategies and think about what will support your change effort
  - What's feasible, within your resources and timeline?
- Usually, we use more than one!
  - Education is almost always needed...but is never sufficient on its own! (We may know or learn what to do, but that doesn't mean we do it!)
- Think about **who will be responsible** for the strategy
  - For example, who is going to train people, provide technical assistance?
- **When and how often** will you need to use the strategy?
  - Only at the beginning? Throughout?
- **How intense** does the strategy need to be?

# One strategy we **ALWAYS** need: stakeholder buy-in!

- It's hard to make changes on our own
  - Teams help make change happen!
- The changes we want to make sit within a broader organizational context
  - How does the change relate to organizational priorities? (if it doesn't, it will be tough to achieve...)
- We usually need resources (funding, space, technology, people's time, etc.) to make change happen
- We don't want this change to be temporary if it works
  - What do we need to plan for sustainability?

# Some suggestions for stakeholder buy-in!

- Be realistic about what you're trying to achieve in a given timeframe
- Identify and enlist stakeholders FROM THE BEGINNING!
  - Let people know what you're trying
  - Be respectful of what will and will not work in terms of their involvement (ask!)
- Figure out how your plan aligns with other people's/organizational goals and priorities
  - Why should they care about what you're trying?
- Keep stakeholders posted about how it's going (within reason, and strategically)
- Share your results, even if they're not 100% favorable

**What else have you found to be helpful in getting and maintaining buy-in?**

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**Let's brainstorm:  
What strategies might be helpful for Rose?**

# Some possible strategies for Rose to consider:

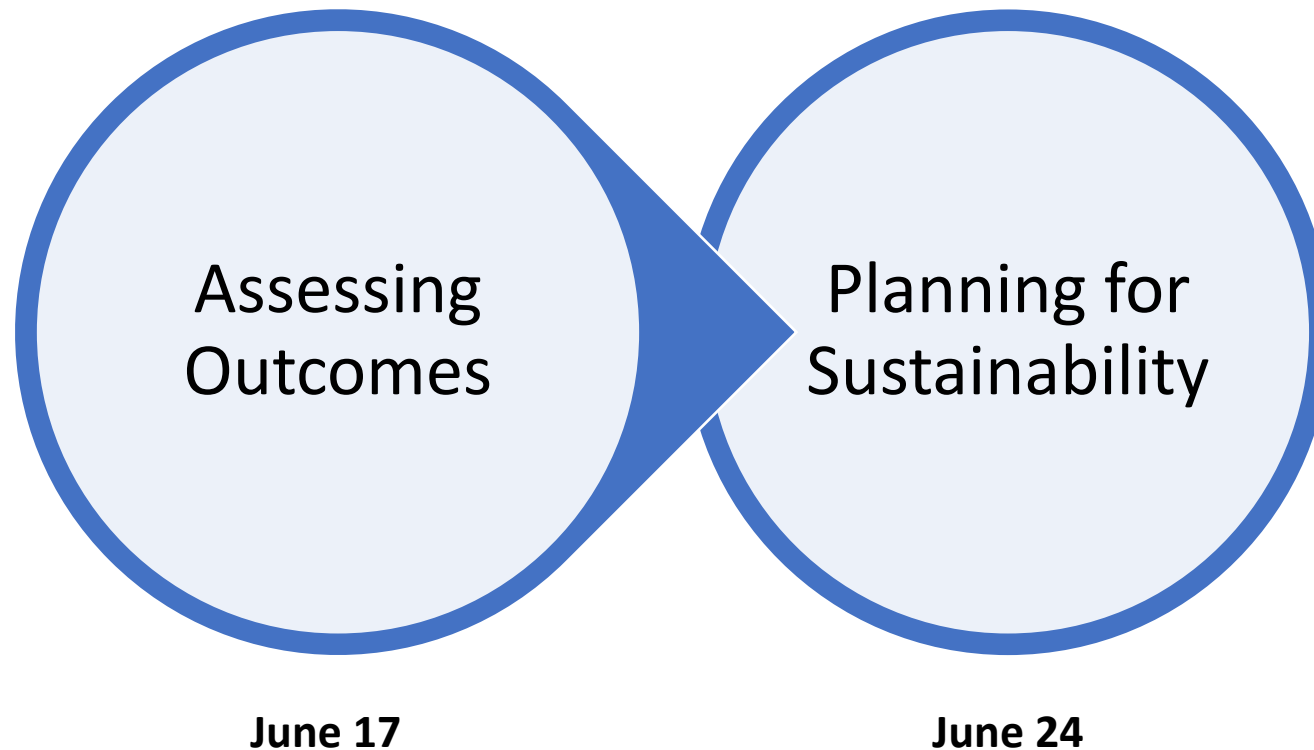
- Stakeholder engagement (whose support does she need? What does she need in terms of support?)
- Training & education (she can't be the only person delivering her coaching program!)
- Opinion leader/champion (who can help to foster excitement for the program, obtain resources?)
- Clinical support tools (track what's being done with whom and when!)
- Formative feedback and performance monitoring (how is it going? How do we know whether it's working?)
- **What else?**

**Good news!**  
**VA QUERI offers lots of support for learning  
different strategies!**

**Check out the VA QUERI Learning Hubs:**  
**[https://www.queri.research.va.gov/training\\_hubs/](https://www.queri.research.va.gov/training_hubs/)**

**Next steps for Rose and for us:  
What processes and outcomes do we want to  
measure, and how do we do that?**

# What We Aim to Achieve in Implementation Science





# Using Implementation Science to Move Innovations into Practice in VA Health Care Settings

- Evaluating Implementation Process and Outcomes
  - Dr. Allen Gifford, June 17
- Planning for Sustainment
  - Dr. Sara Landes, June 24

# Your Implementation Roadmap—Complete it During Each Session!

## Pre-Implementation

- ✓ Problem to solve
- ✓ Stakeholders to engage
- ✓ Best practices to use

## Implementation

- ✓ Implementation strategies to overcome challenges to uptake
- Outcomes to assess
- Adaptations to make

## Sustainment

- Ownership of the process
- Benefits to Veterans
- Tracking progress
- Impacts on Veterans, clinicians, system

# Thank you and Questions

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