

Implementation Summit: Scalability, Spread, and Sustainability

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

On February 27th, 2024, the first DCRI Implementation Summit on “Scalability, Spread, and Sustainability” brought together different stakeholders, including academic researchers, insurance payers, professional societies, health systems, research funders, journal editing boards, national quality programs, and the pharmaceutical industry, to explore ways to improve implementation of evidence-based therapies for cardio-kidney-metabolic disease across the U.S healthcare system. Three major questions were asked and addressed during the Summit: 1) what works in implementation 2) what would it look like if each stakeholder prioritized implementation 3) what are actionable steps that can be taken to align stakeholders and scale implementation? This meeting brief summarizes the key themes and discussions had during the Implementation Summit.

KEY TAKEAWAYS AND THEMES

- **Alignment of Stakeholders:** The summit stakeholders identified potential areas of alignment, levers to pull, and places to start, including the need for better measurement of quality metrics, data transparency to drive care forward, the use of advocacy to remove administrative regulatory barriers to accelerate implementation, and establishing adequate implementation incentives across stakeholders. Improving alignment of payment with better use of guideline-directed care is essential.
- **Enhance Dissemination of Effective Implementation Strategies:** Dissemination and sustainable uptake of relevant research findings is essential to drive implementation. This may be achieved by increasing publications of implementation science in high-impact journals. Improving dissemination also includes embedding implementation innovations and strategies into clinical practice guidelines to inform adoption and uptake at the provider and the health system level. When disseminating efforts into the community, it is essential to use effective and trustworthy communication strategies.
- **Involve Community Partners in Implementation Efforts:** To increase and enhance sustainability, it is essential to collaborate and engage with patients and communities to co-design trials best suited for rapid and successful community uptake. Community health workers and care coordinators have been underused in implementation efforts, yet they can inform sustainable, high-value implementation efforts to improve care.
- **Fund, Design, & Produce Impactful Implementation Research:** The field of cardiology is rich in evidence; however, more is needed to advance and to guide implementation in health systems. First, funding from both private and public sources must be increased to support the creation of trials that inform how to scale intervention in common health care settings. In addition, implementation strategies must be considered earlier in clinical development to promote ease of uptake into communities and health systems. Finally, we must create, expand, and fund implementation consortia including professional societies and health systems to measure and improve care across healthcare systems.
- **Train the Current and Next Generation:** Not only should we invest in the education and training of the next generation of implementation scientist experts, but we also must support the creation of a standardized curriculum teaching the foundational principles of implementation science throughout the spectrum of medical education including medical school, graduate medical education, and continued medical education.



SELECTED ACTION ITEMS

- Create an implementation science consortium with health systems and professional societies
- Promote the integration of implementation science training and education in medical school and graduate medical education training
- Develop and test pilot programs of op-out strategies to promote use of evidence-based medicine within electronic health records
- Encourage professional societies to include more recommendations regarding implementation strategies in guidelines
- Call on the reconvening of the National Heart Lung, and Blood Institute Implementation Science Work Group to review evidence from published cardiovascular implementation science literature and identify evidence-based strategies that have proven to enhance the adoption and implementation of clinical practice guidelines in certain populations

For more information, please visit <https://dcri.org/insights-and-news/insights/implementation-science>.

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