#198 - Moving beyond theory: Understanding implementation choices and decisions

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Objectives/aims
Implementation science is an applied field of research that produces knowledge of mechanisms for changes in practice. This knowledge is often distilled through theories, models, frameworks (TMF) and the development of discrete implementation strategies to inform implementation practice. However, choosing a TMF can often appear arbitrary, excluding key perspectives considered within the scope of implementation efforts. Using digital health technologies in healthcare settings as a case study of the implementation of a complex intervention in a complex system, we examined the use (or lack of use) of theoretical approaches and methods to inform implementation and the translation factors that influence their use in practise. Thus, this research sought to 1) explore the perspectives and identify the experiences of thought leaders in health services research, implementation science, and health informatics in the development, adoption, and translation of digital health solutions in health care settings and 2) identify the translational factors influencing the development, adoption, and translation of implementation approaches to digital

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health solutions in health care settings. As such, this study contributes to summit topic 3 (what works and how to do it: evaluating implementation and impact).

Methods
Semi-structured interviews were conducted with health service-specific decision makers for digital health initiatives study from five Australian hospitals and global subject matter experts in the field of implementation science, health economics, public health, or translational health services research from high-income English-speaking countries (specifically England, United States of America, New Zealand and Canada). Specifically, interviewees were asked about how they used implementation theories, models, and frameworks during the planning, implementation or evaluation of complex health interventions in healthcare settings including computerised clinical decision support systems in hospital settings. Interview findings were deductively analysed, and themes were co-constructed using an interpretive analytical approach.

Main findings
Reporting of findings was guided by the Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research checklist. The total sample of 20 participants included digital health researchers, implementation scientists and health services researchers. Three themes and corresponding subthemes were identified in the analysis: Theme #1 Equipping the frontline, Theme #2 sustaining implementation cycles and Theme #3 Planning and effort. Exploration of these themes prompted discussion on the institutionalisation of implementation support practitioners and implementation scientists, establishment of practitioner-researcher co-creation spaces or "hubs" for cooperative implementation projects, identification and clarification of system challenges from practitioners and reflection on researchers as implementation facilitators.