**PAPER NUMBER #451**

**Implementation science and economic analysis: not so strange bedfellows to build a case for sustaining changes to health services**

**Presenting Authors**

Dr Sonya Osborne, and Dr Hannah Carter

**Affiliation**

Australian Centre for Health Services Innovation at Queensland University of Technology

**Country of residence**

Australia

**Objectives/aims**

Australia spends almost $6 billion on health and medical research each year; however, researchers claim an average 17 year gap to convert just 14% of research into benefits for patients. Implementation science focuses our attention on answering not only what works in the real world, but also how and why. Nevertheless, these answers are not always sufficient to convince decision-makers to allocate the scarce health care resources necessary to fund innovative changes to health services. In this presentation, participants will apply a simple return on investment model to help generate a more compelling business case for needed resources to increase sustainability of effective innovations in health.

**Methods**

We employed a health services approach to evaluate 23 individual projects exploring integrated care models of service delivery; all funded through a state government innovation scheme. While each project was different is scope and setting, they shared common evaluation components to assist with an overall evaluation of the funding scheme. The evaluation approach combines implementation science and economic evaluation to assess not only what works, for whom and why (effectiveness, acceptability, and sustainability) but also cost consequences or value for money (economic and social return on investment for the patient, the population and the health service).

**Main findings**

The intent of the individual projects are to demonstrate improvements in health service delivery within Queensland, Australia. By pursuing a system-wide approach with a focus on the local priorities that the individual projects address, the aim is to deliver sustainable integrated care initiatives. Findings from this mixed methods evaluation approach, incorporating the most appropriate type of economic analysis, will not only provide data appealing to multiple stakeholders at different levels of the health service but also a summary of evaluation measures for the entire funding scheme.