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The Role of Facilitation in an Evidence-based Clinical Fellowship Program

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What is facilitation

- > Facilitation has emerged as a mechanism for strengthening the uptake of evidence into clinical practice.
- > Defined as *'a technique by which one person makes things easier for others.'* (Harvey & Kitson, 2015, p.2)
- > Also described as a *'goal-oriented, context-dependent social process for implementing new knowledge into practice or organisational routines.'* (Berta et al., 2015, p. 7)

Clinical Fellowship Programs

- Clinical Fellowship Programs are a common means to provide practitioners with professional education and development.
 - Offer protected time, and provide access to resources and mentoring support



Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Evidence-based Clinical Fellowship Program

- > The program aims to build capacity in evidence implementation, seeks to establish a strong network of policy and clinical leaders across the world, and provides support and motivation to clinicians to enable them to become leaders in evidence-based practice.
- > Key component: **FACILITATION**
- > Consists of three stages: Stage 1 – Intensive training week; Stage 2: Conduct of an evidence implementation project; Stage 3: Intensive training week



Gaps in current knowledge about facilitation

- > Our understanding of *how, why, and under what context* is facilitation effective (or not) when embedded in a clinical fellowship program is poor.



Aims

- > To document features of facilitation in the JBI Clinical Fellowship Program
- > To explore the views and perspectives of clinical fellows and their assigned facilitators regarding facilitation in evidence implementation, 'what works' and 'what doesn't work', and how the facilitation might be improved to achieve better implementation outcomes.

Methods

- > Ethics approval: Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Adelaide (Approval Number: H-2017-191).
- > Research design: Sequential explanatory mixed methods

Phase	Procedure	Outcomes
Quantitative Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic survey to JBI clinical fellows (n=284) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numeric data
Quantitative Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive statistics
Connecting Quantitative & Qualitative Phases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sampling based on maximum variation principle Developing interview questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview participants Interview protocol
Qualitative Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual interview Focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text data
Qualitative Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coding and thematic analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Codes and themes
Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretation and explanation of the quantitative and qualitative results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Implications for practice and research

Results

- > Quantitative Component: 43 responded to the survey
- > Qualitative Component: 16 participants for individual interview; two focus groups



Quantitative Component

- > ‘Planning for change’, ‘implementing and managing change’, and ‘monitoring progress’: clinical fellows > assigned facilitator
- > ‘Putting structures and systems in place to manage the change’: assigned facilitator > clinical fellows

Qualitative Component

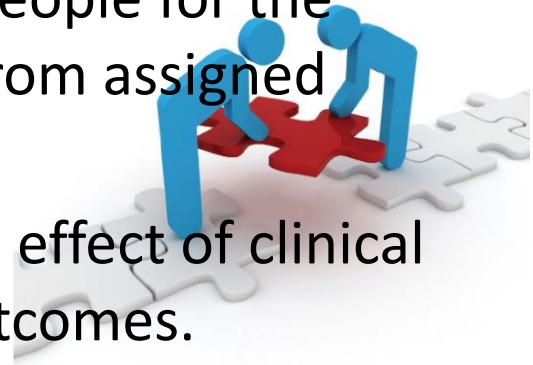
- > Facilitation consists of external and internal facilitation activities
- > External facilitation is not a one-size fits all process
- > Characteristics of effective facilitators
- > How external facilitation in a clinical fellowship program might be improved

Integration of Quant and Qual

- > Survey showed facilitation in a clinical fellowship program context is a *collaborative effort* – this was validated by the individual and focus group interviews.
- > Assigned facilitators provide support and assistance to clinical fellows, who in turn, support the evidence implementation project within their local organisation.

Conclusion

- > Facilitation involves a strategic partnership between clinical fellows and assigned facilitators, supporting an integrated approach to evidence implementation.
- > Study findings can guide the delivery of clinical fellowship programs, particularly in identifying the right people for the facilitator's role; can also clarify expectations from assigned facilitators and clinical fellows.
- > Future research should focus on evaluating the effect of clinical fellowship programs on practice and health outcomes.



References

- Harvey G, & Kitson A. Implementing evidence-based practice in healthcare: a facilitation guide, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York; 2015.
- Berta W, Cranley L, Dearing J, Dogherty E, Squires J, Estabrooks C. Why (we think) facilitation works: insights from organizational learning theory. *Implement Sci.* 2015;10:141.

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