Implementation Models, Theories & Frameworks

Dynamic Sustainability Framework

The Dynamic Sustainability Framework is a process model used to understand and guide the long-term sustainment of evidence-based interventions within complex health systems.

Type

Process Model

Purpose

To explore and explain how evidence-based interventions can be maintained within fluctuating health-system contexts, rather than assuming static fidelity. The Dynamic Sustainability Framework positions sustainment as a dynamic process, to facilitate ongoing fit with ecological and organisational contexts.

Elements

- Dynamic fit over time
- Continuous learning and adaptation
- Evolvability and fidelity balance
- Multilevel and dynamic context
- Integration with implementation outcomes

Use with

- RE-AIM
- Pragmatic, Robust Implementation and Sustainability Model (PRISM)
- Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)
- Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, Sustainment (EPIS)

Strengths and Limitations

STRENGTHS

- Portrays health systems as dynamic, complex, and adaptive.
- Emphasises evolvability and iterative adaptation.
- Provides a coherent lens to integrate sustainability with broader implementation outcomes and to guide ongoing planning, measurement and adaptation.
- Includes equity considerations in sustainability planning.
- Compatible with multiple implementation theories and tools.

LIMITATIONS

- Focused on dynamics and fit rather than prescriptive strategies – offers limited concrete guidance on specific implementation actions or steps.
- Needs to be paired with more explicit planning tools for actionable use.
- Measurement of continuous sustainability and evolvability remains methodologically challenging.

See it in practice

A theory-informed, rapid cycle approach to identifying and adapting strategies to promote sustainability: optimizing depression treatment in primary care clinics seeking to sustain collaborative care (The Transform DepCare Study) (Moise et al., 2023).

Find out more

Sustainability of public health interventions: where are the gaps? (Walugembe et al., 2019).

Adaptability, Scalability and Sustainability (ASaS) of complex health interventions: a systematic review of theories, models and frameworks (Sun, Booth, & Sworn, 2024).

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