

Implementation Models, Theories & Frameworks

Normalisation Process Theory (NPT)

Normalisation Process Theory (NPT) is a sociological framework that explains how new practices become embedded in routine healthcare. It focuses on the social and organisational processes that support or hinder the integration of new ways of working. NPT helps researchers and clinicians understand, plan, and support the adoption of complex interventions in everyday practice.

Type

Sociological Implementation Theory

Purpose

To provide insight into how healthcare interventions can be effectively integrated into routine practice. It identifies the mechanisms that enable or impede translation of evidence into sustained, real-world use.

Elements

NPT comprises four interrelated constructs:

- **Coherence** – how individuals understand the purpose, meaning, and value of a new practice
- **Cognitive Participation** – the engagement, commitment, and involvement needed to drive implementation
- **Collective Action** – the resources, roles, and collaborative work required to put the practice into use
- **Reflexive Monitoring** – the ongoing appraisal and evaluation of the practice, and how feedback informs improvement.

Use with

Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)

Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF)

Strengths and Limitations

STRENGTHS

- Provides a comprehensive view of the social processes involved in implementing complex interventions
- Emphasises long-term sustainability, not just initial adoption
- Flexible and applicable across a wide range of healthcare settings and interventions

LIMITATIONS

- Its complexity can make it challenging for practitioners seeking clear, step-by-step guidance
- Effectiveness may vary across organisational contexts, requiring attention to local factors
- Limited qualitative measures make evaluation of NPT constructs more difficult

See it in practice



[How can end of life care excellence be normalized in hospitals? Lessons from a qualitative framework study \(Noble et al., 2018\).](#)



[Refer-to-pharmacy: a qualitative study exploring the implementation of an electronic transfer of care initiative to improve medicines optimisation following hospital discharge \(Ferguson, Seston, & Ashcroft, 2018\).](#)

Find out more



[An Introduction to Normalisation Process Theory](#)

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