EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Implementation Research: Synthesis of the Literature
National Implementation Research Network
University of South Florida
2005

STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION

EXPLORATION AND ADOPTION
The purpose of exploration is to assess the potential match between client needs, evidence-based practice, program needs, and community resources.
Phases: identify the need for an intervention; acquire information about the intervention; assess the fit between the intervention and client needs; prepare the organization, staff, and resources by mobilizing information and support

PROGRAM INSTALLATION
Once a decision to implement has been made, action shifts to preparing to implement. The context is preparing to actually do things differently. Structural supports to put the program in place are addressed including: funding, human resource strategies, materials acquisition, policy development, reporting frameworks, and outcome expectations. Program installation is really about start-up!

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION
Implementation requires change, and change never occurs simultaneously or evenly. Implementation requires change in the overall practice environment – changes in skill levels, organizational capacity, and organizational culture. These changes demand education (professional learning), practice (feedback and coaching), and time to mature (Adults require 24 attempts).

FULL OPERATION
Full implementation occurs once the new learning becomes fully integrated into practitioner, organization, and community practices, policies, and procedures. When the change is acknowledged as "accepted practice", you have full operation and implementation.

INNOVATION
Once the change has been implemented with fidelity, individual practitioners begin to make user adaptations to improve the use of the change strategy. This is an important phase as individual practitioners seek to improve on what they have implemented.

SUSTAINABILITY
Often after 2 – 4 years of implementation, leaders turn their attention to what needs to be done to sustain the change effort. People leave and need to be replaced. Leaders, funding streams, and program requirements change. Sometimes support changes as political alliances shift requiring a new strategy to sustain financial and political support. Sustainability is about growing effectiveness and stability in the context of a changing world.