IMPLEMENTATION
knowledge and news

trustees wanted!

Advance notice - Be part of a busy group committed to growing and supporting the implementation field in the UK.

Do you work in practice, or policy, or research with an implementation or improvement focus?

The UK-IS Board is seeking colleagues from within the Society membership to join us as new Trustees. We're looking for people with a strong commitment to evidence-informed implementation or improvement, some familiarity with emerging thinking about good practice in this growing field, and above all a keen enthusiasm for supporting those who work in it, whatever sector they are in. We're looking for creative and energetic colleagues at any stage of their career who are prepared to be hands-on and who can help us widen the representation on the Board and take the Society forward into 2020 and beyond.

Positions will be formally advertised in the New Year, but in the meantime, if you think you may be interested in the role, contact the Chair for an informal chat at dghate@cevi.org.uk

Check out the current board members on our website **here**

Welcome to the Summer 2020 edition of Implementation Knowledge and News. And what a summer (and spring) it has been so far….

A lot of our members work on the front line of social care and health, and we know many of you have been exceptionally busy managing the demands of keeping services running, in some shape or form, whilst social distancing has been in force.

Implementation Week 2020 – scheduled for July - was an early casualty among the many events that were cancelled as the country went into lockdown, and we're sad not to be holding some of the face to face events we planned, including informal networking as well as high quality learning events. However, we have been able to take advantage of the growing familiarity with on-line events to set up a series of topical small-group discussions on Zoom hosted by our Board members on how we UK-IS members are observing and experiencing the crisis from our perspective as implementation practitioners, researchers and students. We've had some really interesting and thought-provoking conversations so far, across disparate sectors (proving that our boundary-spanning membership policy really does work!) and it has also been a great way to meet one another in spite of the restrictions. See below for details of what's happened so far and what's still to come before the summer recess. And stay tuned for further activities as we start to move out of lockdown.

Deborah Ghate, Chair.

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Reflect & Refuel

UK-IS Reflect & Refuel

During June and July, the UK-IS is holding a series of discussions with members exploring different aspects of implementation in relation to how our world has changed and continues to change since the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Held every Thursday at 12:00-12:45, these themed sessions provide an opportunity for members to have an informal discussion on some of the pressing topics today relevant to implementation practice and science.

If you've not had chance to join the sessions, here is a summary of the discussions to date:

- What happens to stakeholder engagement and user or patient involvement in the context of rapid or crisis-related work? **Hosted by Professor Annette Boaz**

- How are practitioners and managers in front-line services actually using implementation science or know-how in the current environment? **Hosted by Claire Burns**

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opportunities

COVID-19 Research Programme
The Health Foundation has launched a new research programme, which seeks to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in two distinct areas: (1)how health and social care service delivery has changed in light of COVID-19, (2) the impact of COVID-19 on health inequalities and the wider determinants of health. Between £100k–£200k per project is available for a duration of up to 12 months. The call is now open.
More …

THIS Institute Senior Fellowship
These Senior fellowships are an opportunity for an established researcher in a senior academic role to undertake a 'visionary, field-changing sabbatical' for 6-12 months. Applications close on 22 July.
More …

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Reflect & Refuel

discussions to date continued from cover......

- What kind of leadership (systems- command and control- compassionate- etc) and what attributes of leadership have been most effective during the crisis? Hosted by **Dr Deborah Ghate**

- How are practitioners and managers in front-line services actually using implementation science or know-how in the current environment? **Hosted by Emma Ross** *(to read snippets of this discussion, please turn to page 3)*

- How has (or hasn't?) knowledge and evidence from the field of implementation science been mobilised in responses across services and settings during the Covid-19 crisis? **Hosted by Dr Tom Jefford**

Upcoming Refect & Refuel sessions: Book now!

Thursday 2nd July, 12:00 - 12:45
Discussion focus: During the Covid-19 global crisis, the need to respond rapidly and effectively to many different co-occurring and equallypressing needs during the pandemic has highlighted – possibly never before so clearly – how whole systems interact to create implementation challenges as well as opportunities. Has the pandemic made us think any differently about cross-systemic implementation, given the multiple levels at which responses have to be made?
Host: Dr Andrew Walker from the Health Innovation Network

Thursday 9th July, 12:00 - 12:45
Discussion focus: What practical use have formal implementation theories and frameworks been during the crisis? Could they help us exit the crisis more gracefully than we entered? Have they helped us focus more clearly on the right targets?
Host: Professor Nick Sevdalis, Director, the Centre for Implementation Science, Kings College London

To support a productive, informal discussion, the sessions are limited to 12 spaces.
If you'd like to participate in any of the upcoming discussions, please sign-up via:
admin@ukimplementation.org.uk
(Because of space limitations, please don't book a space unless you intend to attend)

Reflect & Refuel

The R&R discussions have proved so popular that we're thinking of continuing them after the inaugural series has closed.

If you have a topic you'd like to propose, and if you'd like to offer to host such a discussion, please get in touch. Hosting requires you to prepare some informal opening remarks to get the discussion going, and light chairing to help keep the conversation on track.

Please contact our Administrator Penny at admin@ukimplementation.org.uk with your ideas!

Please forward all submissions for the next issue to the Society's Knowledge Resources Officer, Andrew Walker, by 18th September 2020 at admin@ukimplementation.org.uk
Submissions are welcomed from members and non-members alike

Reflect & Refuel
s n i p p e t s

Snippets from R&R discussions #1: How are practitioners and managers in front line services actually using implementation science in the current climate?

On June 18th, UK-IS Board member Emma Ross, mental health nurse and Programme Manager in Leeds Children and Family services with responsibility for a range of MST services as well as several innovation projects, hosted an R&R session on front line practice and implementation science learning, during the pandemic.

Here are just a few of the themes that emerged for Emma from the discussion, (not necessarily in order of importance):

- It was clear that many services in many different places are facing the same/similar challenges around how to do their work effectively at the moment – have we thought enough about how implementation science can help?

- The constraints of the current social distancing rules create new barriers to evidence based work 'as usual' - and most particularly to building effective relationship based work

- There is huge pressure across services to 'do' new and different things in response to the crisis without any clear understanding, planning or reviewing

- How working in an emotionally–charged and driven response system may not easily align with rational or logical or planned approaches – how can we build this in to the usual 'science-based' approach of IS?

- Members are worrying about the cost implications of the COVID crisis and that some good services are now potentially at risk of decommissioning as the need to save costs grows (all the more so since some thought that costs had barely been considered in the initial response to the crisis, so a time of reckoning post-Covid was imminent)

- …But at the same time (never waste a good crisis!), some thought that decommissioning processes offer a definite opportunity to apply an IS-lens, possibly for the first time in some services

- Some observed that where teams already had some grounding in IS, teams were much more likely to try and make sense of events and processes, and more likely to slow down the 'doing' process just enough to incorporate a more planful, evidence-grounded approach in the midst of the crisis response. This was proving to be both 'containing' and 'focusing' for workers under stress.

- Perhaps that's a main contribution of an IS approach - the drive to analyse and understand what's happening, and to ask why, and how existing knowledge can help - even when work is being done under exceptional pressure and at exceptional speed. We hope so!

- So participants thought there was definitely an increased role for implementation science as we come out of the COVID-19 period – but we wondered how to capitalise on this most powerfully?

Follow us on Twitter - @UK_ImpNet
We tweet and re-tweet regularly in between bulletins with news or comment on national and international developments, events and jobs in implementation science and practice.

Group Memberships - did you know that as well as welcoming individual members, the UK Implementation Society offers discounts for groups of five or more members joining together?

In 2018 we welcomed 7 members from Leeds Rethink team, and 22 members from CELCIS at the University of Strathclyde in 2019.

If you have colleagues who would like to benefit from membership in 2019, contact:

admin@ ukimplementation.org.uk

Bloggers Required

The UK-IS blog page is a great place to get your thoughts and observations about implementation science and practice into the public domain.

Contact our Commissioning Editor for Blogs, Mark Pearson at: admin@ ukimplementation.org.uk

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knowledge resources

Handbook on Implementation Science
Edited by Per Nilsen, Department of Health, Medicine and Caring Sciences, Linköping University, Sweden and Sarah A. Birken, Department of Implementation Science, Wake Forest University. The Handbook on Implementation Science bring together a wealth of knowledge from some of the leading figures in implementation science. It provides an overview of origins of the field, theoretical approaches, key concepts, perspectives, and methods. *More …*

Implementation Science 3.0
Bianca Albers, Aron Shlonsky and Robyn Mildon edit this book, which provides a multidisciplinary, international, and applied perspectives on implementation science. It draws from fields of social welfare, public health, education, and psychology to explore topics that include, the factors associated with effective implementation, organisational context and readiness for change, implementation theories, models, and frameworks, measuring implementation and implementation at scale. *More …*

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upcoming events

meetings, seminars, talks, call for abstracts, conferences...

Many of the key conference and events for implementation and improvement have either been postponed or moved online. We provide the latest update on these events.

NIHR Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) East of England Implementation Seminar Series – Organised by NIHR ARC East of England, this is a series of open seminars where internationally renowned speakers discuss different aspects of implementation research. Upcoming seminar include Professor Glenn Robert speaking about experience based co-design in implementation (2 July) and Professor Carl Mary discussing the practical implications of Normalization Process Theory (6 Aug). *More…*

Health Service Research UK Conference, Online
1-3 July 2020 - The HSR UK conference has moved online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and all of the conference content will be freely available. They will be livestreaming plenary sessions and making all sessions and research presentations available to watch on their YouTube channel and site. *More…*

International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare, Sydney
7-9 June 2021 – The Spring and Summer Forums in Copenhagen and New Delhi have been postponed. The next planned meeting is in Sydney in 2021. The call for abstracts is now open. *More…*

3rd UK Implementation Science Research Conference, Online
17 July – Hosted by NIHR Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) south London, this is the only research conference dedicated to implementation science in the UK. The conference is moving online and will have key notes by Jessica Read (Deputy chief midwifery officer, NHS England), Dave Taylor (The Patients Association), and John Ovretveit (Director of research for the Medical Management Centre at the Karolinska Medical University in Sweden and Professor of health improvement, implementation, and evaluation). *More…*

The European Implementation Event 2020, Rotterdam
27-28 May 2021 - The EIE2020 will bring together individuals and organisations engaged in synthesising, translating, adopting and implementing evidence in human service practice and policy. The theme for the conference is 'Crossing Borders – Overcoming Boundaries: Implementation for a new decade'. *More…*

Evidence and Implementation Summit 2021 (EIS 2021), Sydney
30-31 March - EIS 2020 is a forum for sharing the latest research in evidence synthesis and implementation science and exchanging practical strategies that will best support the effective uptake of evidence in practice and policy. The call for abstracts is open until 23 August. *More…*

The 20th meeting of the Implementation Network of Ireland and Northern Ireland, Queens University Belfast/online
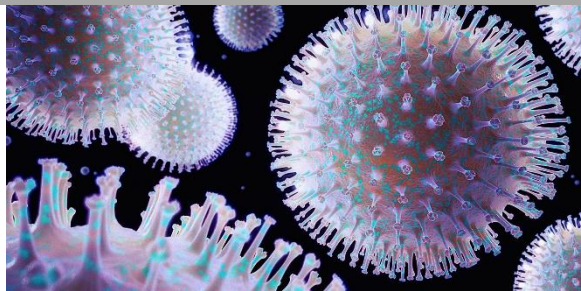15 October 2020 - The theme of the meeting will be: Implementation at a time of crisis. Speakers from a range of sectors will address the following issues: Implementation facilitators and barriers during the Covid-19 pandemic, Unintended consequences (such as for vulnerable communities, children and young people etc.), What can be sustained in the longer term.

THIS Space 2020, Online
25 Nov 2020 - Connection and community are more important now than ever. THIS Space is an annual event for people interested in the study of healthcare improvement to come together to meet, share and connect. THIS Space aims to provide a focus for knowledge sharing in healthcare improvement, stimulate innovation and fresh thinking, help researchers to develop the habits, knowledge, skills, and experiences to support their professional growth, connect colleagues from across different disciplines who share a common goal, and be a means of accelerating the development of the field of the study of healthcare. *More…*

IKN perspectives

Implementation and improvement science (I&IS) in a time of crisis

UK-IS member **Andrew Walker (Implementation Science Lead, Health Innovation Network)** discusses two articles (both open access) that provide useful, practical lessons on combining quality improvement and rapid assessment within an implementation science approach, and **Kirsty Doull (Acting Permanence Lead and Permanence Consultant, CELCIS, University of Strathclyde)** contributes a practice example from Scotland showing how new practices developed in response to restrictions on 'business as usual' during the crisis have proved unexpectedly effective and sustainable.

As implementation and improvement researchers and practitioners, many of us are involved in the COVID-19 response. We are supporting service transformation and/or its (rapid) evaluation, and are presented with the challenge of putting the 'theory' into practice.

The COVID-19 crisis has seen a rapid mobilisation of knowledge to support the transformation of the health and social care system as it responded to an unprecedented volume of people needing care and the wider knock on effects across social care. As difficult as the crisis has been for individuals, society and health and social care, it presents a real opportunity to use approaches and evidence from implementation and improvement to inform the rapid transformation of services and the implementation of innovation in a way that is more efficient, effective, and sustainable. I&IS has the potential to facilitate and accelerate service innovation and sustainable evidence-based transformation more widely and in the long-term. In particular, the crisis has presented a unique opportunity to allow us to capture insights, in real time, into the impact of specific implementation and improvement interventions.

We have observed in the last few months that I&IS can support the immediate response to and recovery from COVID-19 via rapid cycles of improvement. These approaches can help negotiate the challenges that arise at multiple levels: stopping crisis- specific innovations, amplifying new approaches that improve care, letting go of practices that were (already) not fit for purpose, and restarting aspects of 'usual care'. In addition, the response to COVID-19 can provide key insights into perennial questions in implementation and improvement science. For example, we can observe and learn what happens when key barriers are removed. We can learn to negotiate the delicate balance between transformation at pace and scale and maintaining quality and safety.

Work by Bijal Balasubramanian and colleagues (2015) describes a learning evaluation model that combines approaches from quality improvement and implementation science. Using it as part of the implementation of the Advancing Care Together (ACT) initiative across multiple sites, they collected qualitative and quantitative data to conduct real-time assessment of implementation and service transformation whilst also assessing changes in local context. The principles underpinning this approach are (1) to collect data and describe changes made by healthcare organisations and how changes are implemented that are relevant to healthcare organisations involved; and (2) to support healthcare organisations use data for continuous service improvement and transformation. The authors provide a helpful figure that clearly visualises their approach of building infrastructure for data collection, collected and syntheses qualitative and quantitative data in rapid cycles, to provide feedback to stimulate learning and improved implementation of the ACT programme.

A more recent (a very timely) paper by Laura Holdsworth and colleagues (2020) outlines that use of rapid assessment procedures for implementation research within the context of patient quality and safety in intensive care (ICU). With its origins in humanitarian crisis, the rapid assessment procedure (RAP) is particularly relevant to the situation with COVID-19. The approach aims to contextually rich data on short timelines to explore the 'how' and 'why' behind organisational practices and

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implementation. The authors outline five core features of the approach:

- Use of mixed methods - typically using qualitative data (interviews, focus groups, document review, and observations) and quantitative data collected via secondary analysis and/or surveys

- Rapid timeline - start to finish is weeks to months

- Participation by the population of interest in planning and implementing the research

- Team approach to the research process – to accelerate the data collection and analysis process

- Iterative cycles of data collection and analysis

To balance the speed of analysis with rigour, templates are used in the analysis to chart the data against themes derived from existing implementation frameworks (e.g. RE-AIM and CFIR) that are well defined and have an underpinning evidence-base. This also allows more rapid and direct linkages to relevant, wider literature.

Practice perspective – Using a rapid cycle approach to deliver children's services during COVID-19: The Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) programme

Many of the local authorities and agencies involved in the Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE) programme - a quality improvement programme aimed at reducing drift and delay in permanence planning and decision-making for looked after children - recognised that quality improvement could be used to capture data and evidence from new innovations to practice and service delivery as a result of COVID-19.

There was a recognition that care planning, permanence planning and decision-making in respect of looked after infants, children and young people could not stop due COVID-19. Rather, technology was utilised to varying degrees to ensure participation and engagement of children, families, carers, and agencies.

Some local authorities did this with ease, with one noting that no formal review of a child's care plan or approval panel had required to be cancelled as a result of COVID-19. All meetings are now being conducted by telephone or video conferencing. One local authority for example noted that the use of video conferencing for one decision-making forum had resulted in 100% attendance from carers - as opposed to only approximately 33% attendance when they took place face to face. The collection of this data, together with positive feedback from participants, has led to this local authority already deciding that these meetings will be conducted via video conferencing even after the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Another local authority was concerned that telephone conferencing which had to be introduced during the pandemic for the panel for the approval of prospective adopters was unnecessarily daunting for prospective adopters, who might not know all the other participants. Consequently, through testing cycles, the authority is now developing a process of sending prospective adopters an introductory video, biography, and a photo of each panel member before the panel. This was informed by qualitative data collected from all participants (which was collected at pre-meetings and de-brief meetings so as to ensure that data collection did not become onerous).

Crucially, feedback from children and young people was gathered on these changes. One young person said that they felt able to join their Review meeting for the very first time as they felt more comfortable doing it by telephone, with the support of a trusted professional, rather than in person. As a result, this local authority, like many others, is now strongly considering offering telephone and video conferencing rather than an invitation to attend in person. They hope this will enable children and young people to participate more fully in such crucial meetings about their care plans.

Using rapid cycles of testing and data collection in this way, leaders can be clear that they have the evidence required to elevate new innovations that were born out of necessity as a response to COVID-19 to the status of 'core components' of positive practice that will be enshrined as "business as usual" post-COVID-19. There has also been recognition that quality improvement approaches can be used to provide a framework for evidence-gathering and evaluation even on unplanned change ideas - and that the necessity of being forced to be creative in service delivery has led to changes that were never before thought possible now becoming integrated into daily practice.

For more information about PACE and the work of CELCIS contact: celcis@strath.ac.uk

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do you want access to other resources like this?

Are you interested in improving the effectiveness of services using the latest knowledge from the globally developing field of implementation science and practice? If so **Join the UK Implementation Society.**

The Society was formed by an independent group of researchers, practice leaders, and policy professionals working in academia, central and local government and the third sector. It is one of a number of similar groups developing across the world.

The Society is for people who want to be part of a multidisciplinary learning community working towards the implementation of more effective services for people and communities. We are building a range of activities and resources to bring people together and develop the field in the UK.

Members have access to these opportunities:

- Meet and share learning with others working in policy, practice, and science across a wide range of services to people

- The option to be listed in the UK Implementation Society Online Directory of Members

- Reduced fees for learning and networking events, seminars and conferences both virtual and physical, at different locations around the UK

- Access and contribute to online and other resources including publications, learning resources, links and information on relevant events and developments in implementation science and practice around the world

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SUBMISSIONS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

Please forward all submissions for the next issue to the Society's Knowledge Resources Officer, Andrew Walker, by
18th september 2020
at admin@ukimplementation.org.uk
Submissions are welcomed from members and non-members alike

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about us

Across the world, scientists, policy makers, funders and practitioners recognise that there is an implementation gap between what we know about effective services, and how we deliver them in practice.

In social care and in health and education as well as in other areas of services for people, the fields of implementation, improvement and innovation science and p actice are rapidly developing, aiming to pool knowledge and knowhow in order to bridge this gap more quickly.

The UK Implementation Society (UK-IS) is working to promote, increase and sustain knowledge and understanding of the science and practice of effective implementation. We bring together professionals and students working to share cross-disciplinary learning to address the implementation gap. UK-IS is funded entirely by donations and subscriptions.

Contact us at
admin@ukimplementation.org.uk

To join and for more information on the Society visit:
www.ukimplementation.org.uk