



UK IMPLEMENTATION SOCIETY

Building capacity, sharing learning, and connecting professionals in implementation, improvement and innovation in services to people

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

In public service, *implementation* refers to the process of putting a service, a policy, or a set of practices into application so that they achieve their intended outcomes to provide socially significant benefits to individuals and society. Across the world, scientists, policy makers, funders and practitioners recognise that there is an *implementation gap* between what is known about effective services, and how they are delivered in practice. In social care, health, education and many other areas of services for people and communities, the related fields of implementation, improvement and innovation science and practice are developing rapidly, aiming to pool knowledge and know-how in order to bridge this gap more quickly. *Implementation science* (also called improvement science in health circles) is the systematic study and testing of implementation processes and innovations in order to expand the knowledge base about 'what works'. Implementation *practice* is how we use that knowledge in the design and delivery of services on the ground.

The UK Implementation Society (UK-IS) grew out of the *UK Implementation Network (UK-IN)* which was launched in 2014 by a group of professionals working in human services policy, practice and research in the UK. The Network began first to develop structures for working together and sharing cross-disciplinary learning to address the implementation gap. In 2017, in recognition of the evolution of our field in the UK and globally, the Network became a Society and Registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The UK Implementation Society intends to promote, increase and sustain knowledge and understanding of the *science* of implementation in public benefit services, and to advance *practice* in applying this knowledge on the ground, especially in the particular contexts of UK services and systems.

2. Purpose

The object of the CIO is:

The advancement of the science and practice of implementation for the public benefit, by

- championing and promoting knowledge about the importance of high quality implementation for improving outcomes from services;
 - building understanding of effective implementation by collating, developing and disseminating knowledge resources on implementation science, practice and policy;
 - building capacity and skills by supporting, organising and hosting learning, training and education on implementation;
 - establishing mechanisms, structures and networks that facilitate connections and share learning between those working in the field;
 - supporting the development of the evidence base on effective implementation of services to people;
- and
- supporting the mobilisation and application of implementation evidence and knowledge in policy and in practice in other appropriate ways;

where:

Implementation refers to the process of putting a service, a policy, or a set of practices into application so that it achieves its intended outcomes to provide socially significant benefits to individuals and society;

Implementation science is the systematic study and testing of implementation processes and innovations in order to increase knowledge about what is effective;

and

Implementation practice is how we use that knowledge in the design and delivery of services for the public benefit on the ground.

3. Activities

The Society will support its object over time through the following efforts and activities:

- Establishing mechanisms, structures and networks that facilitate connections and share learning between those working on the implementation and improvement of human services, across scientific, research, policy-making, commissioning and funding, and practice communities**
 - connecting people and organisations in the UK implementation community of interest and practice, through establishment and maintenance of such mechanisms as directories of members; on-line discussion platforms; learning and networking events and meetings; newsletters, information bulletins, social media, magazines and journals
 - connecting members with other national groups including those serving improvement and innovation science and practice professionals; with international collaborations with similar

aims; and other implementation and improvement interest groups across the world as these develop.

ii. Collating, developing and disseminating knowledge resources on implementation science, implementation practice and implementation policy

- developing and making available new resources on implementation and improvement topics (Knowledge Digests, gateway resource packages, bibliographies, fact sheets, summaries, briefings, toolkits) and collating, distributing and promoting existing resources
- encouraging collaborative knowledge development and research projects across the membership
- supporting and contributing to the design, planning and content of national and global collaborations in implementation and improvement science and practice and related fields
- publishing newsletters, information bulletins, blogs, magazines and journals on implementation and improvement-relevant topics.

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iii. Advocating for, championing, and promoting knowledge about the importance of high quality implementation for better outcomes from services

- through our website and events; by contributing to debates and public and professional discussions; by responding to calls for evidence and consultations; and by producing and disseminating commentaries, briefings and other knowledge resources on implementation topics.

iv. Promoting understanding about the mobilisation and application of implementation evidence and knowledge in policy and in practice

- building collaborations; offering advice and consultancy; and signposting to high quality sources of evidence and best-practice know-how within and outside our membership, including advice to organisations, institutions and bodies working to improve services to people.

v. Supporting, organising and hosting learning, training and education on implementation

- holding and supporting seminars, conferences, lectures, workshops and other educational and training events on implementation and improvement, using physical and on-line platforms; hosting on-line discussions on topics of relevance; and contributing to events run by others.

vi. Building the evidence-base in the UK for better implementation of services to people

- supporting members of the Society to develop proposals for new research in pursuit of a methodologies and more developed knowledge-base that reflect the specific contexts of UK services and systems
- supporting, seeking and holding funding for, the conduct of new empirical research and testing in the field of implementation and improvement science and practice.

4. Intended influence and stakeholders

In the UK, the Society intends to influence a wide range of public service stakeholders to take account of and use knowledge from implementation and improvement science and practice in their work. Stakeholders are considered to come from all sectors - public, voluntary and private - and include: service and programme developers; service delivery organisations; practitioners and clinicians; service managers; commissioners, policy makers, and funders; inspectors and regulators; educators and students; researchers; and other support and improvement initiative working for the public benefit.

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The Society recognises that the study of implementation and improvement crosses multiple disciplines and that its practice occurs at multiple levels. Understanding implementation therefore necessarily embraces many sources of knowledge, which include know-how and insights from policy makers, commissioners, practitioners and users of services, as well as the best available evidence from robust scientific research.

5. Intended impact and outcomes

The overarching impact of the Society will be to contribute to improved services for people in the UK, achieved by sharing learning, building capacity for effective, evidence-informed implementation policy and practice by supporting those engaged in implementation and improvement work. In pursuit of these goals the Society aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- i. a clearer conceptualisation of implementation and improvement constructs and terms, and more consensus around what 'effective implementation' means in a UK context
- ii. a more developed knowledge-base for implementation policy and practice that reflects the specific contexts of UK services and systems
- iii. improved recognition and understanding amongst stakeholders of the importance of effective implementation for improving services to people
- iv. improved familiarity amongst stakeholders with the learning emerging from implementation, improvement and innovation science and practice
- v. stronger skills in, and more capacity for, effective implementation across a range of sectors at operational and strategic levels
- vi. promotion by funders and service commissioners of policies and practices likely to lead to more effective implementation
- vii. better understanding of how to achieve systems-based based improvement in services to people and communities
- viii. greater availability of funding for empirical research on implementation themes, including scientific research using the most robust methods

- ix. the development and active use of appropriate methodologies for studying, evaluating and supporting implementation

We intend to measure our effectiveness over time by monitoring changes in recognition and use of implementation learning by key stakeholders. The metrics by which the Society's success will be measured may include those listed in Annex A.

6. Governance

From 2017 the UK Implementation Society was established as a not-for-profit professional society and as Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) regulated by the Charity Commission in England and Wales (Registered Charity 1175244). It is governed by a Board of up to twelve Trustees, led by the Chair. Trustees are drawn from academic institutions, public service practice bodies and independent organisations. Officers for the Society including Treasurer and Secretary are appointed from amongst this group. The Society retains the paid services of an accountant and an administrator (admin@ukimplementation.org.uk) to assist the Board.

7. Membership and beneficiaries

The Society actively seeks to serve as a bridge between implementation, improvement and innovation science and their application in practice and in policy, encouraging a wide and inclusive membership across disciplines and sectors. Membership will be available by application, and will be open to any *bona fide* individual working in implementation or improvement science or research, policy, or practice in services for people or communities, and who subscribes to the Society's Principles, as set out in Annex B and in the Membership Register. Members will have access to resources developed for the Society and reduced fees for events and networking meetings, amongst other things. In addition, some activities and events of the Society will be open to non-members.

8. Funding

The Society is not for profit and will be funded from a variety of sources. These may include membership subscriptions; revenue from events and publications; and grants and donations.

9. Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed regularly and at least every three years by the Trustees.

Date of last review of these Terms of Reference: October 2017

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Annex A

List of indicators by which the UK Implementation Society will measure its effectiveness

Short term

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- How stakeholders contribute to the Society, and how they use it to access knowledge and expertise. Evidenced by (for example) traffic to and downloads from the website; contribution to learning events, knowledge resources and other activities of the Society; and attendance at and feedback about events; readership of bulletins and other publications of the Society
- Growth of membership of the Society year on year across all sectors including academics, policymakers and practitioners
- Citations from the Society website and other resources that the Society may produce

Longer term

- Increasing representation of UK-based contributors in the implementation and improvement knowledge base
- Increasing knowledge of how implementation determines effective services and interventions on the part of UK-based practitioners and policy makers
- Increasing availability of skilled implementation support and technical assistance for service providers and practitioners in the UK
- Increasing requirements by journals and other influential publications regarding implementation theory, data and analysis

Annex B

Principles of Subscription to Membership of the UK Implementation Society

The UK Implementation Society aims to build a shared learning community across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We welcome those who actively contribute to that mission. Members do not have to reside in the UK but must have an interest in, or be working for, better services to people in the UK. Members agree to subscribe to the nine principles below.

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Members of the Society:

1. Support and promote effective approaches to the implementation of services to people by improving existing services and supporting innovation, with the ultimate goal of achieving better outcomes from services
2. Are committed to high quality implementation as a key component of effective services that promote human wellbeing
3. Recognise that effective implementation and improvement is evidence-informed, drawing on and integrating the best available knowledge from scientific research with practice experience, policy know-how and service-users' experiences
4. Work across a wide diversity of fields, including practice, service design, policy and planning, commissioning and funding, philanthropy, and research and science, and are committed to building a shared learning community that bridges sectors, disciplines and areas of professional practice
5. Share learning and expertise in implementation science, policy and practice and help to build a resource and support base for members and others
6. Contribute actively to the Society wherever possible, for example through sharing learning, participating in and assisting with development of the Society's activities
7. Refrain from promoting any specific party political, commercial or personal interests through the medium of the Society
8. Undertake not to make any public communication on behalf of the Society without the prior approval of the Chair
9. Undertake to observe these principles and not to bring the Society into disrepute

To join the UK Implementation Society, download an application form at www.ukimplementation.org.uk