The Science and Practice of Quality Improvement: Developing Capacity to Make a Difference

IOM Workshop on Quality Improvement

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Goals

- Problems with Quality Improvement Research - why it’s not contributing to systems change
- Modest proposals for advancing the science of implementation and the usefulness of QI research
State of the Art – QI Research

- Single organization samples
- Opportunistic not systematic
- Imprecise measurement of QI intervention
- No replication of studies
- Short duration studies
- No explicit consideration of context
- No explicit consideration of cost
Bottom line:

We have inconsistent information about what works, when it works, where it works, or what it costs.
The Problem Context

- Current reimbursement system does not pay for quality
- Consumers are unable to distinguish between good and poor quality
- Fragmentation of motivation and effort by providers, employers, consumers, plans
- Little consideration of implementation
Implementation: the influence of content, context, and process

**Content**
- Triability
- Innovation type
- Evidence interpretation and packaging

**Process**
- Opinion leaders, change champion
- Systemic processes (e.g., supervisory practices, quality improvement)
- Organizational learning

**Context**
- Internal:
  - Organizational culture
  - Organizational structure
  - Practice setting characteristics
  - Local stakeholders (e.g., attitudes and behaviors)
  - Resources
- External:
  - Networks
  - Regulation
  - Economic (e.g., reimbursement)
  - Competition
Attacking the Problem at Multiple Levels

- Policy
- Regional/community
- Inter-organizational
- Organizational
Life Cycle of Quality Improvement
Capacity Building for Implementation Research

- Funding - investment in the science of implementation
- Multi-disciplinary teams
- Make implementation part of the intervention
- Bring in users of intervention/innovation
- Long term studies
- Cost-effectiveness