

Dedicated management oversight and use of implementation teams are essential for the implementation of an evidence-based practice (EBP; Fearing, Barwick, & Kimber, 2014). The structure and process of the implementation team can vary depending on the agency's capacity and the team may change as the focus shifts throughout each implementation phase (See: [The Critical Role of Implementation Teams and their Evolution through EPIS](#)). Due to their critical nature, implementation teams should be fully prepared prior to engaging in implementation. The purpose of this resource is to highlight some important considerations for systems and organizations to think about before they form an implementation team.



Team Membership - Fixsen, Blasé, & Van Dyke (2011) state that “any implementation team should consist of individuals who: (a) know interventions from a practice point of view, (b) are skillful users of implementation methods, and (c) are thoroughly engaged in continuous quality improvement cycles in all aspects of their activities.” If possible, utilize an existing agency team with members who have similar backgrounds and roles in the agency. Furthermore, consider adding additional stakeholders to the implementation team, such as partner agencies, parents or youth (CEBC Resource: [Supporting Client Involvement in Implementation Teams](#)).

Leadership Involvement – Leadership involvement is an essential element for successful EBP implementation (Moullin, Ehrhart, & Aarons, 2017). Metz et al. (2015) recommend that implementation teams include diverse and cross-sectional leadership so that teams can establish “new ways of organizing to address complex problems, talking about issues, making decisions, and relating to one another.” They also propose specific leadership competencies for implementation teams, including:

Diagnosing Situations	Managing Self	Energizing Others	Intervening Skillfully
Distinguish technical vs. adaptive issues	Comfort with uncertainty and conflicts	Engage all including nontraditional voices	Make conscious choices
Understand competing, yet legitimate perspectives	Understand personal strengths and challenges and how others perceive you	Work across sectors, Inspire collective process	Give the work back, Raise the heat and hold the pressure
Test multiple interpretations and points of view	Experiment beyond comfort zone	Create a trustworthy process	Speak from the heart, Act experimentally
Identify who needs to do the work	Choose among competing values	Start where they are and speak to loss	

Source: Metz et al. (2015)

Implementation Team Competencies – Metz and colleagues (2015) identified core competencies of successful implementation teams (see following table). Some potential team members may not have the ideal level of knowledge or experience for implementing an EBP. These gaps in a team's

competencies need to be identified and professional development opportunities should be planned to help educate team members.

Developing Team Structure	Knowing and Applying the Intervention	Knowing and Applying Implementation	Knowing and Applying Improvement Cycles	Knowing and Applying Systems Change
Represent the system	Assess <i>fit</i> of intervention with local context	Develop infrastructure	Institutionalize feedback loops	Demonstrate knowledge of system components
Provide accountable structure for moving forward	Demonstrate fluency in strategy	Conduct stage-appropriate work	Use data for decision making, problem solving, and action planning	Use skills for system building and increased cross-section collaboration
Develop MOU, Communication protocols	Operationalize intervention as needed	Use adaptive leadership skills	Functionally engage leaders	

Source: Metz, Bartley, Ball, Wilson, Naom, & Redmon (2015)

Implementation Team Models – Some implementation research has developed and tested implementation team models for rolling out and scaling up an established EBP. Below is a list of some of these team models. Agencies may be interested in adopting an existing team model, depending on their local context and needs.



- Cascading Dissemination Model (Chamberlain et al., 2012) – Program developer provides training and supervision to a cohort within county system. Host agency/county then provides training and supervision to a second cohort within the county/agency.
- Community Development Team Model (CDT; Sosna & Marsenich, 2006; Saldana & Chamberlain, 2012) – Program adopters engage with purveyor/developer and receive instruction in how to implement the practice. The CDT model uses a peer-to-peer network of agencies/systems in order to problem-solve implementation barriers together with the assistance with a CDT facilitator.
- Interagency Collaborative Team Model (ICT; Hurlburt et al., 2014) – Similar to the CDT model, the ICT model emphasizes collaboration among stakeholders and staff at the system level and utilizes a local “seed” team to model and support the new program with on-going fidelity. The ICT model utilizes the Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, Sustainment framework (EPIS; Aarons, Hurlburt, & Horwitz, 2011) to guide the selection & implementation process.

Additional Resource for Implementation Team Planning:

Permanency Innovations Initiative Training and Technical Assistance Project. (2016). *Guide to developing, implementing, and assessing an innovation. Volume 1: Teaming and Communication Linkages*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/guide-developing-implementing-assessing-innovation>

- This resource includes an overview of implementation teams, a team structure assessment tool, ideas and tools for building a team and team charter, and a quiz on teams and communication.

References

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