CESH | Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Health

Skill – Adapt to local context

[↗] **Skill – Assess & manage barriers & facilitators**
[↗] **Skill – Stakeholder communication and engagement**

What (does adapt to local context entail?)

Adapting your intervention or altering it to the local context so it better suits the end-users and environment.

Why is it important to adapt to local contexts?

Suppose you have conducted research and your findings show that there is a much easier and useful approach to handle a certain health problem. Naturally, you would like to share this information and help people change the way they are doing things. However, when you try to implement it into the selected setting it is not received well by the target users. Another scenario may be that you have had a successful intervention and then want to scale up by implementing the same intervention in a different context, but the result is not as successful as expected from previous experience. What could the problem be?

The problem in these two situations is the assumption that research findings or interventions are a 'one size fits all' that can be implemented in all situations without adaptions. Your research findings or intervention may be difficult to implement in real world contexts and you will need to consider the end-user in all different settings to customize the knowledge.

Interventions are only successful when they are appropriate to the context and accepted by the end-user. So, taking time to adapt the knowledge is crucial for success. By spending the time adapting your research or intervention you can improve adherence and acceptance by the users, increase involvement and improve your connection with stakeholders, show respect for another culture and build trust and collaboration – which can also be useful in the future. If you do not adapt your knowledge there is a risk that either the knowledge will never be received by the relevant stakeholders, or the uptake won't be successful.

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How should you think about adapting to local contexts?

In order to be able to adapt the knowledge you will first need to understand your local context – please look at tool *"assessing the local context"* for more information on this crucial step.

It is important not to remove or change essential components of your findings or intervention, so it affects the result. You will need to identify which components of your intervention or practice that can and cannot be changed. Then you can start adapting the components that are not essential for successful results. As in almost everything else regarding translating evidence to practice you cannot do this alone. It is crucial to involve stakeholders in the local context.

Before you start adapting you can ask yourself a few questions:

- Should this evidence or intervention be adapted?

- Is it your role to lead the adaption or should perhaps someone more involved in the setting do so?

- Are you ready to be taking on the adaption?

- Is your target group ready?

Depending on the answers you may be ready to start the adaption!

Here are some shortlisted tools that can help you on your way to adapting interventions to the local context.

TOOL: [Toolkit for Modifying Evidence-Based Practices to Increase Cultural Competence](#)
By: Samuels, J., Schudrich, W., & Altschul, D. at Research Foundation for Mental Health.

This is a toolkit providing organizations a structured method for modifying Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) to better meet the needs of the cultural groups they serve. Toolkit has four phases: 1) Working with Communities, 2) Selecting an EBP, 3) Modifying EBPs, and 4) Implementation Issues.

TOOL: [Knowledge to Action Framework](#)
By: RNAO

This is a comprehensive toolkit including two major parts; The knowledge creation process and the action cycle that includes seven steps that moves knowledge into practice. This toolkit shows the process of knowledge translation and provides tips and tools on how to move knowledge to action. The action cycle consists of the following steps (look closer at step 2):

1. identifying the problem or issue that you want to change, selecting knowledge to address the problem/issue, and determining the gap between knowledge and practice

2. adapting the knowledge to your context

3. assessing barriers and facilitators to knowledge use

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4. selecting the right implementation strategies to make changes in your setting

5. monitoring knowledge use

6. evaluating outcomes

7. sustaining the change/use of knowledge

TOOL: [The ADAPTE Process: resources Toolkit for Guideline Adaption](#)
By: The ADAPTE Collaboration

This provides a systematic approach to adapting guidelines produced in on setting for use in a different cultural and organization context. The adapt process can be used by different groups such as researcher, policymakers, developers etc. The process consists of 3 stages; Set-up Phase, Adaption Phase and Final Phase.

TOOL: [Engaging persons with lived experience](#)
By: RNAO

This is part of the leading change toolkit (same as the Knowledge to Action framework above) and brings up important aspects such as determining if your team is ready to engage people with lived experience, why it is important to do so and how you can go about engaging them in an appropriate and effective manner. Overarching emphasis of this toolkit is on the importance to involve the right stakeholders when adapting your evidence to the local context.

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