4.1 Facilitate implementation

What?
Facilitating implementation addresses how the new product/service is introduced or initiated into practice to improve the chances of success, which oftentimes requires facilitation. Facilitation is therefore a technique a person or an organization uses to offer others the support required to change their attitudes, habits, skills or ways of thinking and working.

Why?
This phase is important in order to seamlessly translate evidence based research findings or innovations into adoption and use in a sustainable manner. Sustainability in this context refers to the maintenance of health benefits over time. It is thus important that users, such as health care staff understand, own and are motivated to bring about the required changes by facilitating them specifically in the initial phase.

How?
Promoting Action on Research Implementation in Health Sciences framework (PARiHS)
We propose the PARiHS framework which provides a way to implement research into practice. It highlights three factors that determine research use, namely evidence (E), context (C) and facilitation (F). "Specifically, the PARiHS framework proposes that successful implementation of research in practice is a function of the relation between the nature of the evidence, the context in which the proposed change is to be implemented and the mechanisms by which the change is facilitated".

In other words; SI = f (E, C, F), where SI=successful implementation, E=evidence, C=context, F=facilitation and f=function of.
Steps for applying the tool

Evidence
This is meant to assess the nature and strength of the evidence and its potential for implementation.
- Translate and adapt the research evidence so that it makes sense in the local context.
- Involve the target users in any necessary decisions concerning the evidence
- Make use of existing data such as the user or local community stories, knowledge of the organizational culture and evaluation data to beef up the evidence.

Context
This refers to the environment or setting where the proposed change is to be implemented.
- Take time to understand the prevailing culture, leadership roles and the organization's approach to evaluation.
- Indicate the relevance of the innovation to the organization
- Ensure that the innovation fits into the organizational structures and procedures as this influences adoption (organizational fit).
- You need to prepare, appropriately allocate, target and manage adequate resources for the required implementation activities.
- Take care to select the most appropriate implementation strategies.

(for Context – use your insights from tool 1.4)

Facilitation
Facilitation is the type of support needed to help people change their attitudes, habits, skills, ways of thinking and working. The role of the facilitator in this case is to help people understand what they have to change and how to change it in order to achieve the desired outcome.

The facilitator can take a 'doing for others' role (more discrete, practical, technical and task driven) or an 'enabling and empowering' role that is developmental and seeks to mentor and support others in their learning and change processes. It all depends of the nature of the innovation and the context.

Important to note is that:
- Facilitation skills are acquired or developed through experiential learning and getting facilitation competencies. Therefore training is paramount.
- Facilitation is a knowledge translation strategy which must be carefully implemented.
- Facilitation seeks to mentor and offer support to others in their learning and change processes.

As a facilitator or organization facilitating implementation, here is what you need to know about the facilitation role.
- Personal characteristics- As a facilitator you should have the appropriate skills, knowledge and attributes
- Role characteristics- As an organization ensure that the facilitation role is clear
- Facilitation style- As a facilitator, your facilitation styles need to be flexible and variable. In addition the style should be consistent and appropriate.
However, the success of your implementation will be dependent on how strong or weak your evidence, context and facilitation is. Below is a table showing examples of weak and strong sub elements. These can be good pointers in your chase to successful implementations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Sub-elements</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Weak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Research evidence</td>
<td>RCTs, evidence-based guidelines</td>
<td>Anecdotal, descriptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clinical experience</td>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>Expert opinion divided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patient preferences and experiences</td>
<td>Partnership with patients</td>
<td>Patients not involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Learning organization, patient-centered</td>
<td>Task driven, low morale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Clear roles, effective organization</td>
<td>Poor organization, diffuse roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Routine audit and feedback.</td>
<td>Absence of audit and feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>Characteristics (of the facilitator)</td>
<td>High respect, credibility, empathy</td>
<td>Low respect, credibility, empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Clear roles</td>
<td>Lack of role clarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Flexible, consistent</td>
<td>Inflexible, sporadic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resources/Sources:
1. PARiHS framework for implementing research into practice: [https://www.nccmt.ca/knowledge-repositories/search/85](https://www.nccmt.ca/knowledge-repositories/search/85)

Additional models that can be used to facilitate evidence based implementation
3. [https://impsciuw.org/implementation-science/research/frameworks/](https://impsciuw.org/implementation-science/research/frameworks/)
6. RE-AIM (Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation, Maintenance) and CFIR (Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research)