Implementation Science Training Impact and the Translational Science Benefits Model

Center for Public Health Systems Science at the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis

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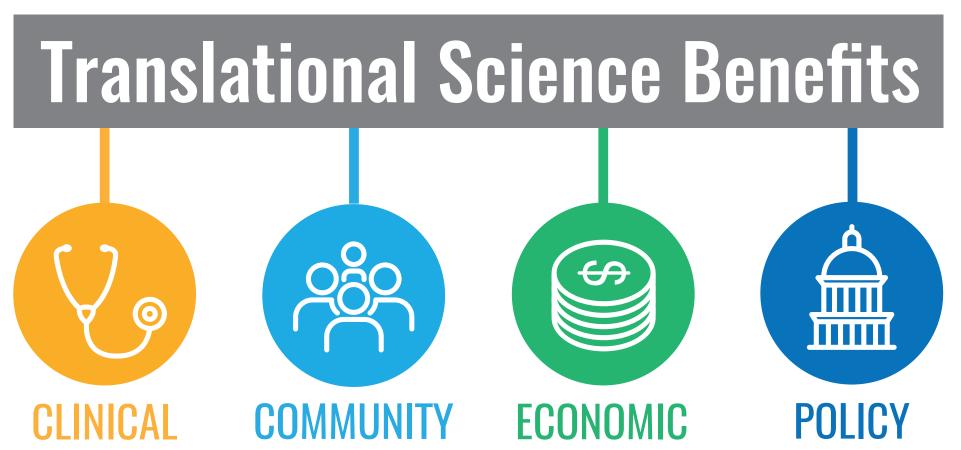Laura Brossart
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A NEW FRONTIER IN IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

Demonstrating the impact of implementation science and its training presents a new frontier for the field, but operationalizing downstream impact is challenging. Implementation science training programs have typically focused on demonstrating traditional metrics (*e.g.*, resulting grants and publications after participation) rather than the broader impacts of participants' research projects. The **Translational Science Benefits Model (TSBM)** offers a new approach for evaluating and disseminating the impact of research.

The Translational Science Benefits Model

Developed in 2017, the TSBM identifies 30 tangible benefits that demonstrate the impact of science in the broader community across four domains:

- **Clinical**: the adoption and implementation of new tools and procedures in clinical settings
- **Community**: the enhancement of healthcare or community and population well-being
- **Economic**: commercial or financial improvements
- **Policy**: the involvement with the policy process or formal adoption into policies, legislation, or governmental standards

Translational Science Benefits

CLINICAL COMMUNITY ECONOMIC POLICY

translationalsciencebenefits.wustl.edu

Accompanying the TSBM framework, the **Translating for Impact Toolkit** includes a set of nine tools to plan, track, and demonstrate impact within these domains.

TRAINING IMPLEMENTATION SCIENTISTS TO MEASURE IMPACT

The TSBM and tools provide a structure and language to train implementation scientists to prioritize and promote translational impact. In late 2020, we launched a TSBM training module for a cohort of fellows from the Implementation Research Institute (IRI), a mentored training network for implementation scientists. IRI is a 2-year national and international training institute in mental health implementation science that is supported by a National Institute of Mental Health R25 grant and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

IRI
Implementation Research Institute

Institute of Clinical and Translational Sciences

Center for Public Health Systems Science
Brown School

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TRAINING COMPONENTS

IRI fellows were selected from a competitive applicant pool of researchers demonstrating interest in implementation science. The TSBM training for the IRI cohort included three phases:

Impact 101 Workshop

- TSBM experts introduced the fellows to the TSBM and discussed the importance of planning for impact
- Fellows were briefly introduced to the Translating for Impact Toolkit

Dissemination Workshop

- Participants explored three TSBM tools to disseminate research impact:
- Roadmap to Impact: a planning document to guide integration of impact throughout their research activities
- Case Study Builder: a step-by-step tool to create their own impact case study
- Impact Profile: an editable template designed to provide a concise version of the case study more appropriate for certain audiences

Case Study Consultations

- Six fellows were selected to complete the full Case Study Builder and receive individual feedback from a TSBM expert
- Fellows completed final case study drafts and Impact Profiles with guidance from TSBM staff

IMPACT CASE STUDIES

IRI fellows developed six impact case studies and six impact profiles documenting the demonstrated and potential impact of their implementation science projects.

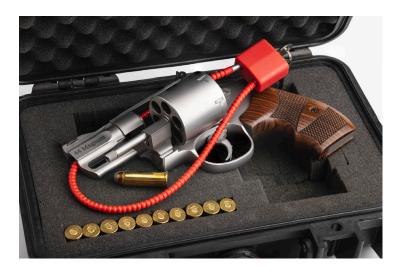### Developing Communication Strategies to Reduce Addiction Stigma

Beth McGinty, PhD

The Stigma Lab developed effective messages to communicate with healthcare providers, the public, and policymakers to reduce addiction stigma.

Preventing Youth Suicide and Injury by Implementing a Secure Firearm Storage Program in Pediatric Primary Care

Rinad Beidas, PhD

The S.A.F.E. Firearm Program gathered input from pediatricians, parents, and the firearm community to identify ways to increase firearm storage counseling in pediatric primary care.
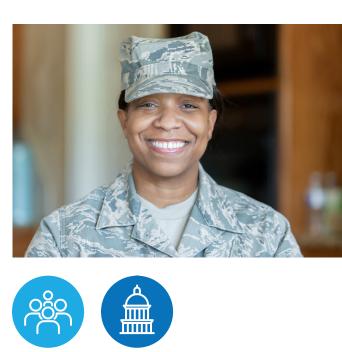
Disseminating Evidence about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Jonathan Purtle, DrPH, MPH, MSc

Dr. Purtle and his team framed messages and dissemination materials about ACEs in different ways and tested policymakers' engagement with the materials and support for evidence-based ACE policies.

Increasing Access to Preventive Telehealth Services for Women Veterans

Erin P. Finley, PhD, MPH and Alison Hamilton, PhD, MPH

EMPOWER 2.0 will expand access to telehealth, evidence-based, preventive lifestyle and mental health services for women Veterans in rural and urban-isolated areas.

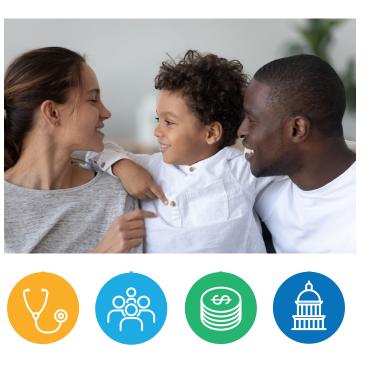### Improving the Physical Health of Adults with Serious Mental Illness (SMI)

Leopoldo J. Cabassa, PhD

Bridges to Better Health and Wellness connects Hispanics with SMI who are at risk for cardiovascular disease to primary care services, and Peer-Led Group Healthy Lifestyle Balance delivers healthy lifestyle interventions through supportive housing agencies.

Providing Integrated Support to Prevent and Treat Parental Substance Use

Lisa Saldana, PhD

The Families Actively Improving Relationships (FAIR) program integrates substance use and mental health treatment with case management to address housing, employment, and parenting skills into a single intervention.

FINDINGS

The case studies showcase the impact of the IRI training institute fellows' work, and of the institute itself as a mentored network. The case studies demonstrated clinical, community, economic, and policy benefits of IRI training that analysis of publication, grant application, or survey data would not have revealed.

CLINICAL — 3
COMMUNITY — 12 / 9
ECONOMIC — 1 / 4
POLICY — 6 / 5
■ demonstrated ■ potential

- Across all six case studies, the IRI fellows identified 40 translational benefits (22 demonstrated benefits and 18 potential benefits) spanning all four TSBM domains.
- TSBM training helped participants conceptualize their impact, think more broadly about the benefits of their research, and develop a language for talking about impact with non-academic audiences.

IMPLICATIONS FOR D&I

Training the next generation of clinical scientists to prioritize and promote translational impact in their work now is essential to enhance the visibility and impact of implementation science. Including TSBM impact training in an implementation science training institute revealed three key lessons for the field:

- **Integrating impact into implementation science training is important to build researchers' understanding of downstream impact, especially early in their career.** Earlier and greater focus on impact will help to normalize consideration of translational impact, complementing traditional metrics such as publications and grants in the evaluation of individuals, projects, and programs.
- **Future implementation science training should include training on impact earlier in the research process.** Participants reported that selecting benefits was challenging, especially for projects in early development stages. Impact planning tools like the *Roadmap to Impact* may help researchers conceptualize impact before communicating about project results.
- **TSBM training can help move implementation science research toward achieving and demonstrating impact.** TSBM tools help create dissemination products that spread awareness of project innovations to audiences beyond academia, particularly implementers who are most likely to play a role in achieving and sustaining downstream impacts (*e.g.*, policymakers and practitioners).

Contact

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The **Translating for Impact Toolkit** is now available for researchers to pilot test. Visit our website at translationalsciencebenefits.wustl.edu to download the toolkit.