

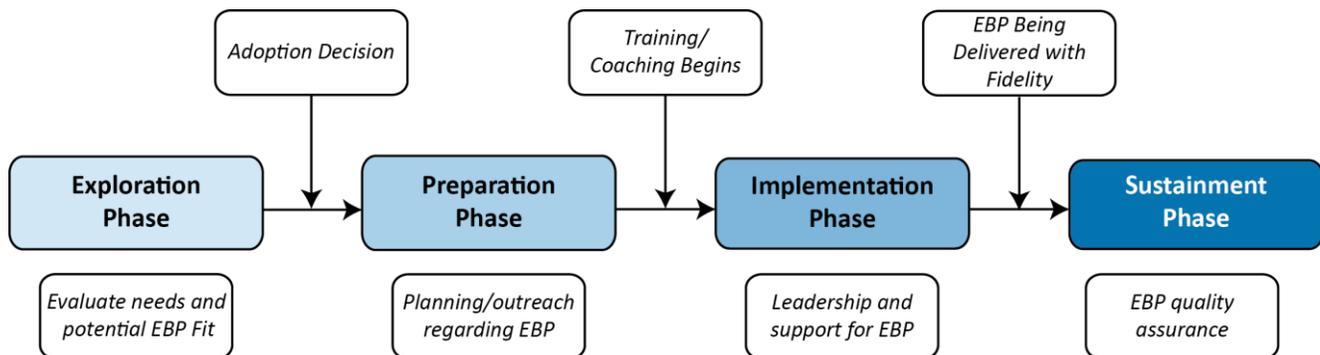
Article

Aarons, G. A., Hurlburt, M., & Horwitz, S. M. (2011). Advancing a conceptual model of evidence-based practice implementation in public service sectors. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research, 38*(1), 4-23. doi:10.1007/s10488-010-0327-7

Summary

This paper describes the EPIS (Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, Sustainment) framework of the evidence-based practice (EBP) implementation process, derived from existing literature, and applies the framework to public sector services. The EPIS Phases include:

- **Exploration Phase** – Potential implementers consider what evidence-based practices might best solve a clinical or service problem, while also considering opportunities or challenges in the outer and inner contextual factors.
- **Preparation Phase** – Implementers plan for integrating the evidence-based practice into the existing system, including a realistic and comprehensive assessment of implementation challenges.
- **Implementation Phase** - The adopted practice is implemented. This is where the rubber meets the road and the implementers will find out if their work during the Preparation Phase addressed the major issues.
- **Sustainment Phase** – The intervention is engrained in the organization, including stable funding and ongoing monitoring and/or quality assurance processes.



The EPIS framework examines influences on implementation at two levels: outer and inner contexts. The outer context represents larger, often external, factors that can either support or slow implementation, such as federal, state, county or local policies, funding and mandates, and organizational relationships. The inner context represents what is happening within a community or organization that is implementing an EBP, such as staffing, policies and procedures, and organizational culture and climate. The full article is available for download [here](#).

Implications

Agencies looking to start up new programs and practices need to designate key staff members and family representatives to oversee and drive the selection and implementation process. Implementation efforts require careful attention to influences like the organizational climate (e.g., turnover, leadership involvement, training availability) and external factors (e.g., mandates, licensing, regulations). Organizational leaders play an important role in securing the necessary resources to operate the EBP and also creating a positive organizational culture, which can impact the sustainability of the new program or practice.