**What is an implementation team?**

A core group of people, like YOU and your team, who do the **work of implementation** to support the use of a well-defined and usable program, practice, or innovation. These teams **develop** and **sustain** capacity to make sure the intended outcomes of the program, practice, or innovation are realized.

**Research** shows that programs, practices, or innovations that have competent implementation teams demonstrate **increased efficiency** and are more likely to achieve outcomes.

The work of implementation teams requires knowledge, skills, and abilities that are **often available in staff already**, but not commonly used deliberately.

**What do implementation teams do?**

- **Ensure implementation**
  - Assess and create ongoing “buy-in” and readiness
  - Set up and sustain implementation drivers, the **core components** of implementation
  - Monitor the fidelity of implementation to the program, practice or innovation and related outcomes
  - Create and monitor an action plan, solve problems and build sustainability

- **Engage the community & key stakeholders**

- **Create supportive environments** that lead to positive outcomes
  - Effective Intervention
  - Effective Implementation
  - Enabling Contexts
  - Positive Outcomes

**How many people should be on the implementation team?**

**3-5 people**

**Why not more or less?**

- 3-5 is a sustainable size for a core team.
- Larger teams may find it difficult to meet and communicate consistently.
- Smaller teams may find the workload to be too heavy and can lose momentum if there is staff turnover.

Adapted with permission by Maria Guzmán-Rocha and Stephanie Perkowski, YMCA of the USA. Materials and Concepts Developed by The National Implementation Research Network and/or Adapted by Y – USA used with permission under Creative Commons. [http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/](http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/)
YOUR IMPLEMENTATION TEAM
should include implementation team members who:

Are subject matter experts

They are leaders who, for example, are fluent in the practices or interventions being implemented and understand what it takes to implement these well. They know what supports are available through the practice or intervention and what supports need to be put in place and supported at the program and organizational levels to promote leader competencies. e.g. Frontline Staff, Site Director.

YMCA Leadership competencies:
- Change Leadership
- Functional Expertise
- Communication & Influence
- Inclusion
- Volunteerism

Know and use change management processes

They are well-versed in the key components of change management and implementation. They understand that implementation happens in stages and that there are appropriate activities for each stage. They are able to assess their strengths and areas of growth around implementation, in particular the key components of capacity and infrastructure that influence a program’s success. e.g. Program Director/Supervisor.

YMCA Leadership competencies:
- Change Leadership
- Functional Expertise
- Communication & Influence
- Critical Thinking & Decision Making
- Program/Project Management

Are comfortable using improvement cycles

They make good use of improvement cycles (Plan-Do-Study-Act, Assess-Plan-Improve, etc.), usability testing, and communication practices to continually improve the quality of implementation, the innovation, and the overall system. They continually identify and address challenges and areas of growth for effective implementation and achieving positive outcomes. e.g. Program Director/Supervisor, Program Leadership.

YMCA Leadership competencies:
- Functional Expertise
- Innovation
- Critical Thinking & Decision Making
- Developing Self & Others
- Program/Project Management

Promote and participate in change at the organizational level

They work at multiple levels of the organization to create supportive environments, cultures, policies, guidelines, data systems, and funding streams. These leaders are not just focused on the current phase of the work, they are also building organizational capacity and focusing on long-term sustainability. e.g. Program Leadership, Organization Leadership.

YMCA Leadership competencies:
- Change Leadership
- Engaging Community
- Philanthropy
- Collaboration
- Communication & Influence