

Reflecting upon long term success: a new approach to assessing sustainability in Quality Improvement initiatives

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Primary aim: Improve health outcomes and patient experience and to deliver value locally and to the wider NHS

To achieve this: Develop a comprehensive systematic approach to improvement which is transferable and generalizable across the
NHS

Working in collaboration with: Patients, communities, health and care services, healthcare professionals, academics, universities, third sector, industry...



The Sustainability Challenge

- Many improvement initiatives don't have a lasting impact on care.
 - **2004:** only 1/3 achieve long term success and show evidence of spread.¹
 - **2012:** Improvement projects do not maintain all aspects originally implemented with fewer than half continuing interventions at high levels of fidelity.²
 - **2015:** Quality improvement program associated with improvement, but the effects not sustained over time.³

Background

- The NHS III Sustainability Model⁴ was used by project teams from 2008-2013.
- Feedback from teams indicating difficulty in understanding and applying the tool.⁵

Aim: Develop a practical, user-friendly approach for teams to reflect upon sustainability and promote long term success of their projects.



Doyle et al. *Implementation Science* 2013, **8**:127
<http://www.implementationscience.com/content/8/1/127>



RESEARCH

Open Access

Making change last: applying the NHS institute for innovation and improvement sustainability model to healthcare improvement

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Abstract

The implementation of evidence-based treatments to deliver high-quality care is essential to meet the healthcare demands of aging populations. However, the sustainable application of recommended practice is difficult to achieve and variable outcomes well recognised. The NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement Sustainability Model (SM) was designed to help healthcare teams recognise determinants of sustainability and take action to embed new practice in routine care. This article describes a formative evaluation of the application of the SM by the National Institute for Health Research Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care for Northwest London (CLAHRC NWL).

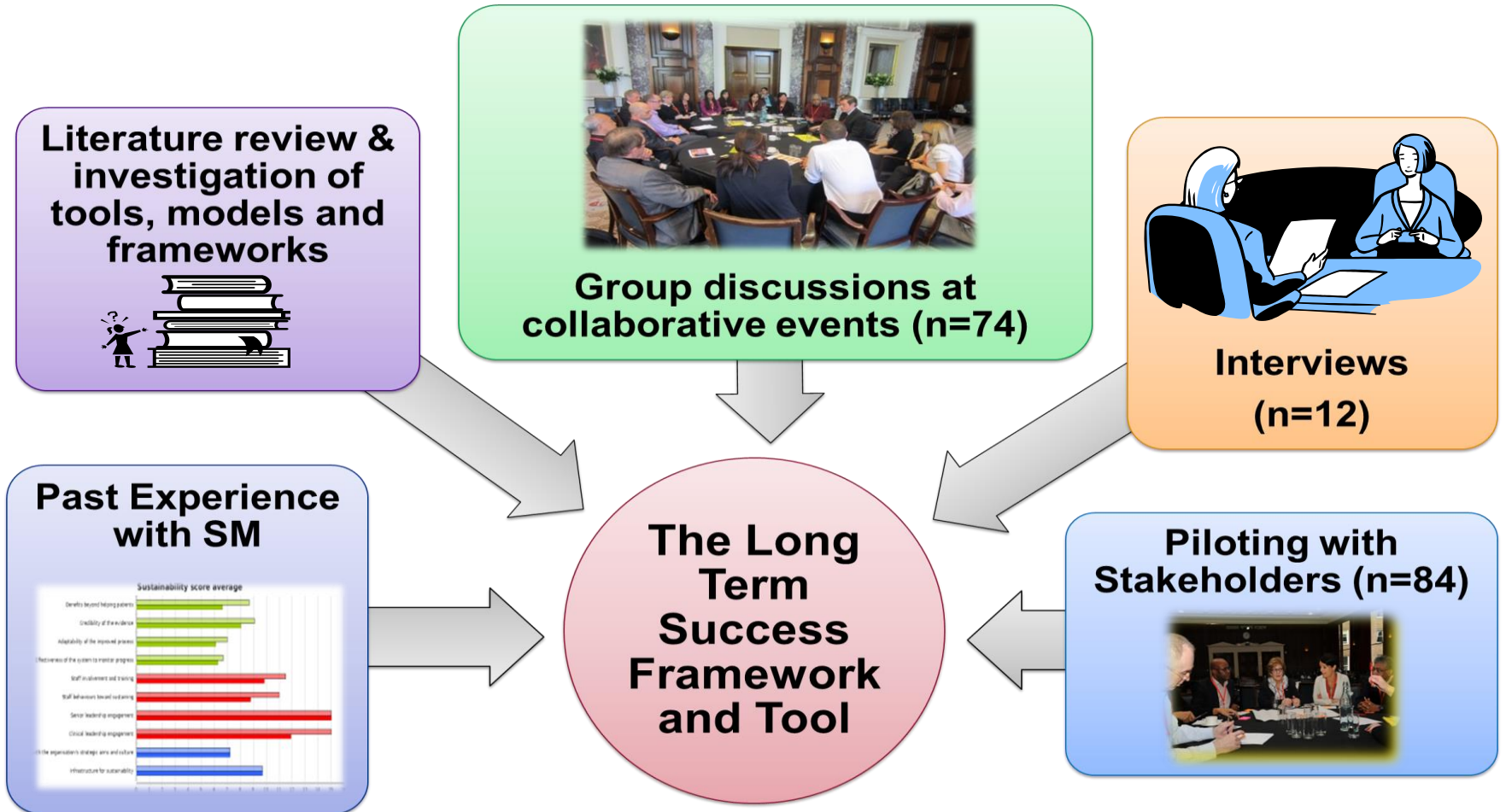
Data from project teams' responses to the SM and formal reviews was used to assess acceptability of the SM and the extent to which it prompted teams to take action. Projects were classified as 'engaged,' 'partially engaged' and 'non-engaged.' Quarterly survey feedback data was used to explore reasons for variation in engagement. Score patterns were compared against formal review data and a 'diversity of opinion' measure was derived to assess response variance over time.

Of the 19 teams, six were categorized as 'engaged,' six 'partially engaged,' and seven as 'non-engaged.' Twelve teams found the model acceptable to some extent. Diversity of opinion reduced over time. A minority of teams used the SM consistently to take action to promote sustainability but for the majority SM use was sporadic. Feedback from some team members indicates difficulty in understanding and applying the model and negative views regarding its usefulness.

The SM is an important attempt to enable teams to systematically consider determinants of sustainability, provide timely data to assess progress, and prompt action to create conditions for sustained practice. Tools such as these need to be tested in healthcare settings to assess strengths and weaknesses and findings disseminated to aid development. This study indicates the SM provides a potentially useful approach to measuring teams' views on the likelihood of sustainability and prompting action. Securing engagement of teams with the SM was challenging and redesign of elements may need to be considered. Capacity building and facilitation appears necessary for teams to effectively deploy the SM.

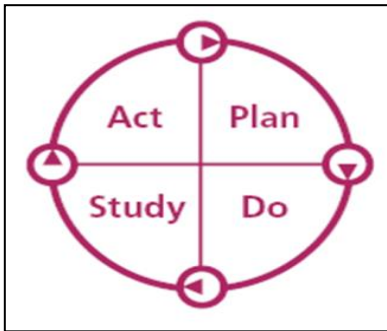
Keywords: Sustainability, Implementation

Methods

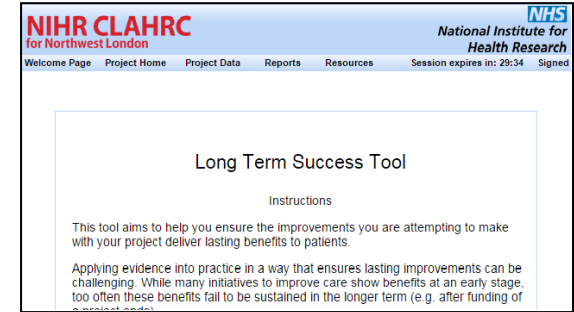


Results

The Long Term Success Approach



Team members reflect upon factors and enter ratings on WISH

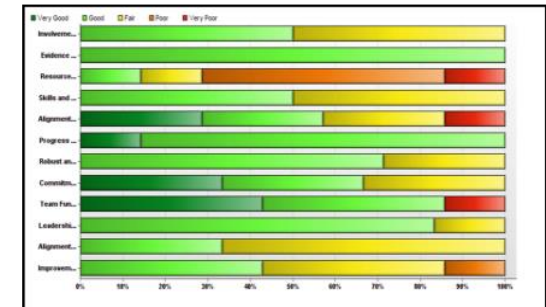


Take action to mitigate risks

Ratings collated for team and overall report produced



Team discussion and planning



Factors for Long Term Success

People

Involvement

Skills & capabilities

Leadership

Team functioning

Commitment to the improvement

Practice

Robust and adaptable processes

Progress monitored for feedback and learning

Evidence of benefits

Resources in place

Setting

Alignment with organisational strategies and priorities

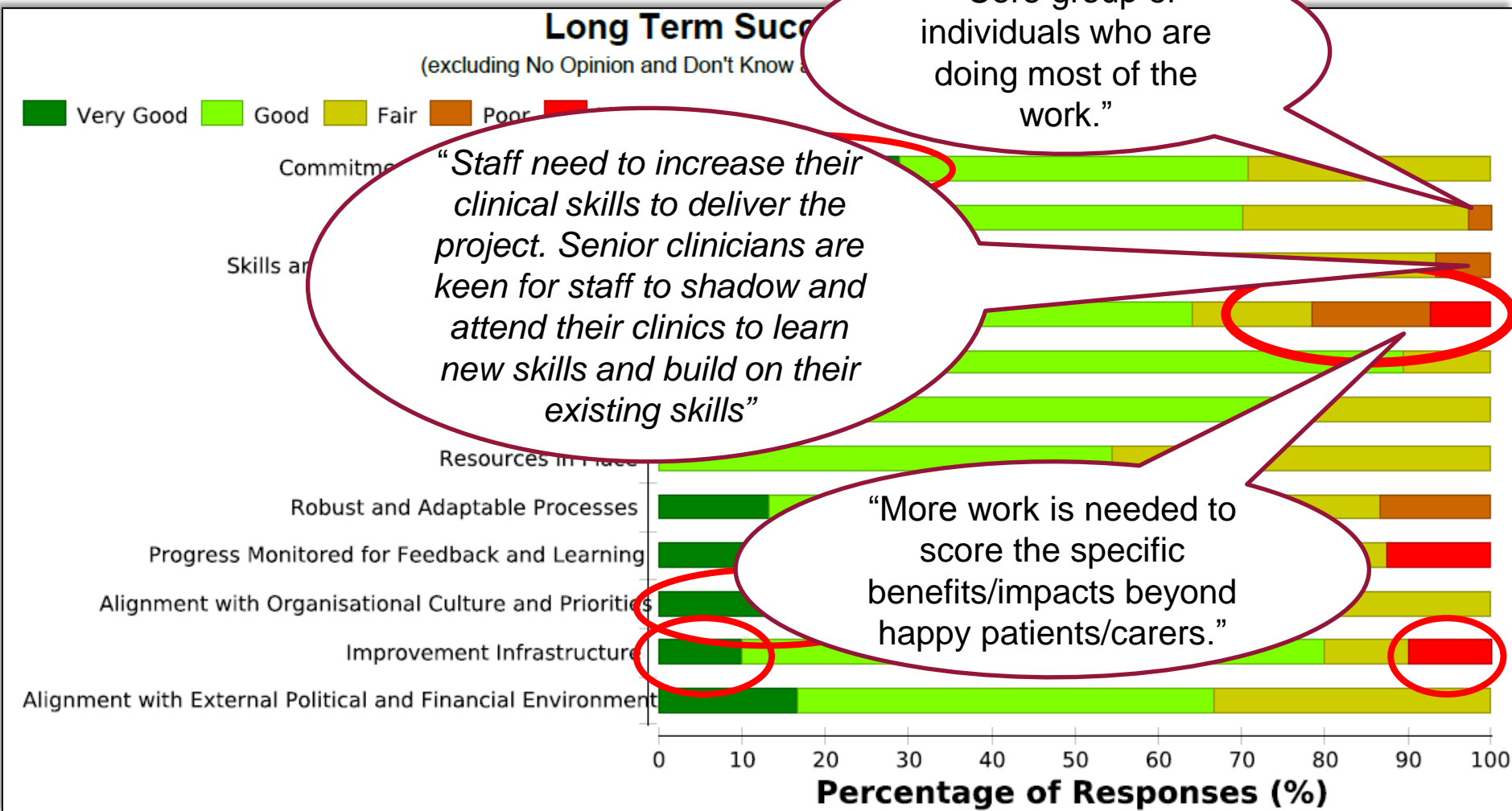
Alignment with political & financial environment

Support for Improvement

Use in Practice

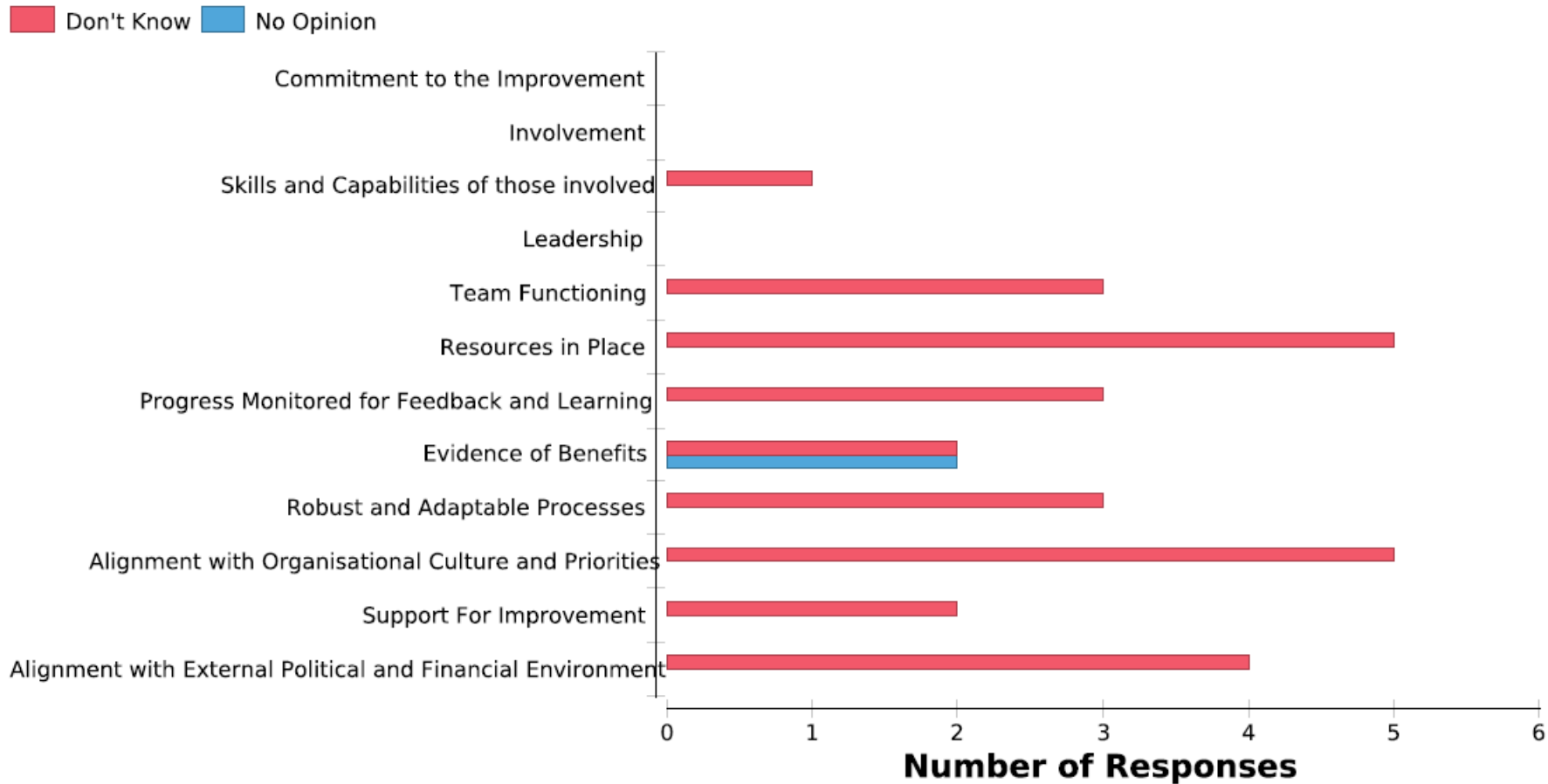
- 4 CLAHRC Northwest teams, 23
Unscheduled care teams across Scotland
- 184 scores
- 3 consecutive data points to date
- Data collection to continue quarterly for
project duration

Team Ratings



I don't know/No opinion

Number of No Opinion and Don't Know Answers



Limitations

- Building a simple method for very complex issue
- Finding a balance
- Measuring for improvement, not judgement

Bottom Line

- Consider sustainability early and regularly
- The long term success approach provides a mechanism for teams to reflect, communicate, plan and act to improve their chances of sustaining improvements
- The approach builds on past work and experience and addresses issues identified by working with stakeholders
- The development process has reinforced the importance of designing a tool not only for stakeholders but with stakeholders

References

1. NHS Modernisation Agency. Complexity of sustaining healthcare improvements: what have we learned so far : Research into Practice report 13. 2004.
2. Stirman SW, et al. The sustainability of new programs and innovations : a review of the empirical literature and recommendations for future research. Implement Sci. BioMed Central Ltd; 2012;7(1):17.
3. Williams L, et al. A cluster-randomised quality improvement study to improve two inpatient stroke quality indicators. BMJ Qual Saf 2015.
4. Maher L, Gustafson D, Evans A. Sustainability Model and guide. Coventry, UK: NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement; 2005.
5. Doyle C et al. Making change last: applying the NHS institute for innovation and improvement sustainability model to healthcare improvement. Implement Sci. Implementation Science; 2013;8(1):127.