

## Implementation Science Collaborative (ISC) FAQ

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### What is the ISC?

The ISC is a [cross-sectoral team](#), coordinated by the Alberta Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research Support Unit (ASPORU), and dedicated to increasing the quantity and quality of embedded implementation science in scale, spread, and sustainment initiatives in healthcare. Our local and international implementation scientists provide methodological support for innovation teams who are considering building implementation science components into their initiatives.

The ISC is not a funding body and does not provide direct support via embedded researchers. Rather, it provides methodological insights for teams who are prepared to conduct implementation science themselves. If you do not already have funding, we can provide support in your grant application development.

### Why focus on embedding implementation science?

There is increasingly strong evidence showing that implementation science improves the successful scale, spread, and sustainment of change.<sup>1</sup> By engaging in implementation science with the ISC, teams strengthen their implementation methods while conducting strong science themselves. In turn, ISC-supported teams help to build knowledge and contribute to our understanding of what implementation methods work for whom, and in which contexts and settings.

### What initiatives does the ISC support?

The ISC supports health system innovation teams leading scale, spread, and sustainment initiatives in Alberta that have moved past the pilot phase. For innovation teams in planning phases, we can help identify embedded implementation science opportunities within their initiatives. We can also work with teams that have already identified implementation science questions to strengthen their methods for answering those research questions.

### Who has access to ISC support?

The ISC supports health system innovation teams from any sector provided that teams meet the following screening criteria:

- 1) Teams are committed to building answerable implementation science questions into their initiatives that are co-designed or endorsed by patients and other groups impacted by the implementation. If your innovation team does not have patient or other party

input, the ISC can facilitate conversations between you and our patient, health system, and academic members to explore endorsement.

- 2) Innovation teams will work with the ISC to develop implementation science questions that advance our system towards the quintuple aim (i.e., improve patient experiences, improve provider experiences, improve patient/population health outcomes, ensure value for money, and/or improve equity, diversity, and inclusion in health care delivery).

### How do I access ISC support?

If you are interested in ISC support, first email [Stephanie Brooks](#), the ISC manager. She will organize a free initial assessment for service from an implementation science expert at AbSPORU who will work to maximize research and implementation support for your team. This is an exploratory conversation to learn more about your innovation, confirm your eligibility for ISC support, and identify how we can best serve you. In addition to the methodological guidance provided by the ISC, you may also be eligible for additional AbSPORU research supports (e.g., data services, patient engagement support).

### What should I expect from ISC support?

Throughout your time with the ISC, you will receive support from up to three different groups ([learn more about group membership here](#)):

- 1) First, you will be invited to discuss your initiative with the ISC Working Group, a team of local health system and academic researchers who will work with you to develop and/or refine your implementation research question(s). This multi-disciplinary team is especially valuable for their local insights that can help ensure that your research is rigorous, practical, and applicable to the broader health system.
- 2) Members from the Working Group will bring representatives from your team to a meeting with the ISC Steering Committee, made up of 25 leaders from different health sectors and academic institutions in Alberta. This meeting is to approve ongoing support from the ISC. These meetings are set to ensure that the proposed embedded implementation science questions align with health system priorities and to identify additional collaboration opportunities.
- 3) If your proposed embedded implementation science is approved by the Steering Committee, ISC organizers will coordinate meetings between your team and different members of the ISC Scientific Advisory Board. This board is made up of a dozen international implementation scientists with world-class expertise who make themselves available to strengthen implementation science methods for ISC-supported initiatives.

### How much does ISC support cost?

The initial assessment and all ISC supports (i.e., potential meetings with the Working Group, Steering Committee, and Scientific Advisory Board) are free of charge. Additional AbSPORU supports identified may require a fee for service, but some are free for eligible clients. All potential costs for these additional services will be discussed with you at your initial assessment.

## References

1. Braganza MZ, Kilbourne AM. The Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) Impact Framework: Measuring the Real-world Impact of Implementation Science. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. 2021;36(2):396-403.

Please Note: If you read through this FAQ and feel that you are not eligible for ISC support, we have other supports available to you! If you are interested in embedding implementation science into your work, or if you are interested in learning more about how to conduct implementation science, please browse [absporu.ca](https://absporu.ca) for more training and consultation opportunities developed to support you in your implementation planning, evaluation, and science. If you have any further questions, please email [Stephanie Brooks](mailto:Stephanie.Brooks@absporu.ca).