Overview of Translational Research in Long Term Care

Linda S. Noelker, Ph.D

Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging
Cleveland, Ohio

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Defining Translational Research

• Activity that translates new knowledge, mechanisms, and techniques generated from scientific research into new devices, interventions, programs, and services designed to improve the long term care of older adults

• Multidisciplinary in nature

• Integrates scientific discovery with application in long term care settings
History of Translational Research

- First cited in PubMed in 1988
- NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award Program (CETA) in 2006
- NIH “Bench to Bedside Awards”
Types of Translational Research

• T1 (Translational Block 1): transfer of new knowledge from basic research in the laboratory into the development of new methods, drugs, devices to diagnose, treat, and/or prevent disease

• Biomedical research (interface between science and clinical medicine)

• Focus of NIH and the Clinical and Translational Science Award Program (CETA)
Types of Translational Research

- T2 (Translational Block 2): translation of research (efficacy and effectiveness studies) into the application of the device, program, service, or intervention in long term care settings
- Requires an understanding of implementation science
- Very little funding committed to T2 relative to T1
- Still evolving; no satisfactory term and definition
Types of Translational Research

- Proposed T3 (Translational Block 3): practice-based research to produce systematic reviews and practice guidelines
- Production of training manuals, program protocols, designation of essential components for fidelity to intervention, and components that can be changed (reinvention)
Barriers to T2 and T3 Research

• Quirkiness, unpredictability of human behavior
• Changing and unpredictable conditions of the real world
• Organizational inertia
• Resistance to change by humans and organizations
• Resource constraints
What makes for successful translation into LTC settings?

- Device or intervention has demonstrated efficacy and effectiveness across a wide range of research studies in diverse types of LTC settings with diverse populations
- Essential components are clearly identified
- Opportunities for “reinvention” (changed or adapted to make it work better in a given setting)
- Trainer and program manual
- Cost analysis/resources needed
- Network for dissemination and implementation
Dissemination & Implementation in LTC Settings

- Target “motivated” LTC settings
- Identify effective marketing strategies
- Find novel delivery mechanisms that make adoption easier/less costly
- Investigate recruitment and program attrition
- Allow for reinvention
- Plan for sustainability
- Establish ongoing communication between providers/practitioners and researchers (study innovations arising from practice community)
Research Agenda for Innovation & Improvement in LTC Settings

• Efforts at culture change & effects on residents, families and staff
• Workforce innovations for improved job outcomes
• Interventions for better care transitions
• Best practices for end-of-life and mental health care
• Structures & operation of LTC settings that foster and sustain innovation
• Special populations delivering & receiving care
• New and emerging types of residential care
Conclusions

• New area of endeavor
• Limited funding
• Changing environment
• Advocacy & education
• Special Interest Group, journal or journal section


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Thank you!

Questions or comments?

Inoelker@benrose.org

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