

Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity (EPIC)

Legislative Update (CRS 24-33.5-514)



July 2017

Division of Criminal Justice
Colorado Department of Public Safety
700 Kipling Street
Denver CO 80215
<http://dcj.epic.state.co.us/>



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Prepared by:

Ty Crocker, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Shelley Siman, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Aaron Stewart, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Diane Pasini-Hill, EPIC Manager
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Stan Hilkey, Executive Director
Colorado Department of Public Safety

Joe Thome, Director
Division of Criminal Justice

Diane Pasini-Hill, EPIC Manager
Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity

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Introduction

Background and Purpose of the Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity (EPIC) Resource Center

At its inception in October, 2009, EPIC was funded through a federal Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) for \$2.1 million dollars for the primary purpose of building capacity among five state agencies for the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs). EPIC was originally housed in the Colorado Department of Public Safety's (CDPS) Executive Director's Office as an initiative of the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice. The EPIC Resource Center was created as a collaborative, comprehensive effort to systematically enhance the knowledge, skill base and capacity of justice system professionals in evidence-based practices (EBPs). In April, 2013, the Colorado State Legislature passed HB13-1129, placing EPIC within the Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) in CDPS (*see Appendix A for EPIC's organizational chart*). The mission of EPIC is to collaborate with justice partners using research-informed approaches to improve outcomes in Colorado communities. This report serves to fulfill the requirement for a center status report every three years per 24-33.5.514(4).

For the first several years of the project, EPIC worked exclusively with the following legislatively identified collaborators: Department of Corrections (both facilities and parole), The Office of Behavioral Health within the Department of Human Services and their affiliated agencies, the Division of Probation Services within the Judicial Branch, and the Office of Community Corrections within the Division of Criminal Justice and the associated community corrections facilities. The work focused on developing agency staff capacity to integrate selected evidence-based practices and principles into their daily interactions with individuals in the justice system using structured components from implementation science. These included Motivational Interviewing, assessment and case management systems (Level of Supervision Inventory and the Ohio Risk Assessment System [Colorado Department of Corrections' Colorado Transition Accountability Plan], and Colorado Community Correction's Progression Matrix), cognitive behavioral interventions (primarily Thinking for a Change), and Colorado Community Corrections sanctions and incentives model, the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART). EPIC has recently expanded its scope of partnerships to include wider array of agencies serving justice-involved or at-risk populations and has opened its approach to a Request for Services model for agencies interested in EPIC services, paving the way for wider expanse of impact across the system.

Once a request is received, an internal committee reviews the requests and meets with submitting agencies to determine the fit of the project for implementation services. Upon agreement, a scope of work and Memorandum of Understanding are drafted to move forward with the work.

Report Organization

This report begins with an executive summary and is then organized as follows: Section One gives a brief overview of implementation and evidence-based practices; Section Two describes EPIC's milestones and

accomplishments since the last legislative reporting period; Section Three discusses EPIC's sustainability approaches and corresponding data; and finally, Section Four summarizes key points and describes future direction and goals.

Executive Summary

Section One: Implementation and Evidence-Based Practices

Evidence-Based Practices

*“Evidence-based practice (EBP) is the objective, balanced, and responsible use of current research and the best available data to guide policy and practice decisions, such that outcomes for consumers are improved.”*¹ When a practice is deemed to be “evidence-based,” it implies that the practice has a definable outcome; is measurable; and is relevant and realistic in practice, such as recidivism reduction, crime desistance, or substance use reduction. EPIC’s focus is on building the necessary supports in the areas of staff competency, a hospitable organizational environment in which to perform the work, and leadership that is flexible and adaptive to meet the needs of the staff in carrying out the new policy or practice.

Implementation Science

“Implementation Science is the study of factors that influence the full and effective use of innovations in practice.”² While we have made improvements in the quality and adoption of evidence-based interventions within the justice field, the use of research-based implementation frameworks, processes, and tools is still not utilized by many organizations. According to the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), more than 90% of all public sector evidence-based practice implementations do not progress past the initial execution training because, in large part, staff classroom-style training events are the primary—if not the only—method of implementation.³ Using implementation science, EPIC works towards closing the gaps between research and service delivery, employing implementation science to develop high-fidelity use of EBPs and enhance an organization’s ability to produce measurable, intended outcomes. This is accomplished through the use of principles, assessments, and tools from implementation science, primarily from NIRN’s Active Implementation Frameworks, to close the gaps between research and real-world EBP implementation. These frameworks are:

- **Usable Innovations:** Use of an innovation that has: a clear description of the program, clear essential functions that define the program, operational definitions of the essential functions, and a practical performance assessment to measure use of the innovation.
- **Implementation Stages:** As opposed to being a discrete event, implementation is a process that takes place over time. Elements of the implementation take place within stages: Exploration

¹ Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (2009). *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

² Fixsen, D., Blase, K., Metz, A., & Van Dyke, M. (2015). *Implementation science*. In *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (pp. 695-702).

³ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

(assess how well selected EBPs meet the organization's needs, whether it is practical to implement, the extent to which the EBPs will address the specific problem or issue that the organization has identified is evaluated, how the EBPs meet the usable innovation criteria, and which specific EBP will be implemented), Installation (includes the development of communication and feedback loops, finance management for the implementation, development of initial knowledge and skills in staff for the innovation, and developing and/or acquiring the necessary resources for the implementation), Initial Implementation (begins at the point that the EBPP is first put into practice and involves coaching, improvement cycles, and organizational data collection), and Full Implementation (staff are effectively using the EBP to fidelity in a supportive environment and outcomes are produced).

- Implementation Drivers: The common components that should exist in the implementation of any evidence-based program or practice. These include competency drivers (training, coaching, selection, and fidelity measurement), leadership drivers (adaptive and technical), and organizational drivers (decisional-support data systems, facilitative administration, and systems intervention).
- Improvement Cycles: Cycles in which organizational practices are examined by creating action plans, activating on those plans, studying the outcomes of the actions taken, and modifying that action plan based on that outcome data.
- Implementation Teams: A cross section of agency staff, including decision makers to direct service providers, who are accountable for moving the implementation forward through planning, messaging, and organization of necessary activities.

Section Two: Fidelity, Learning Components, and Staff Selection

Fidelity Measurement

At its core, the term fidelity refers to the relationship between an intended program and the program as it is applied in practice. The level of fidelity of a new practice is dependent upon how closely the enacted program replicates the intended, or researched, program.⁴ To ensure that a new program will achieve its intended results, monitoring fidelity of the program and the practitioners who are using it are essential pieces of the implementation puzzle.

Prior to the implementation of a new program or practice, EPIC works with its partners to determine whether there are existing tools and processes that can be accessed to assist with fidelity monitoring, or if a tool and/or process must be developed in order to examine adherence to a model.

⁴ Century, J., Rudnick, M., & Freeman, C. (2010). A Framework for Measuring Fidelity of Implementation: A Foundation for Shared Language and Accumulation of Knowledge. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31(2), 199-218.

Many organizations perceive implementation to be a costly and resource intensive venture, seeing little value in coaching, practice, and fidelity checking. When an EBP is not accepted by an organization, whether it can be attributed to value clash, fear of acquiring new skills and perceived incompetence in the new EBP, or concerns that implementation will consume too many resources and too much time, efforts to monitor and support fidelity can be an uphill battle.

EPIC has found that using fidelity criteria based in research is an effective way to communicate principles that can easily be translated into practice, can be scaled, and are effective in determining a practitioner's grasp of the principle as well as his or her growth in understanding and incorporating these principles into practice.

Learning Components

Coaching and Training. Coaching is a process in which skills that have been trained can be more fully integrated into the working space through the employment of feedback. Coaches help practitioners bring together their knowledge, values, philosophies, and professional experience in the delivery of interventions.⁵ The role of the coach includes supervising staff in their use of new knowledge, providing further instruction in the practice setting, assessing the use of skills and providing feedback, and providing emotional support for the practitioner who is being coached.⁶

EPIC's staff development model utilizes multiple learning modalities to cater to all learning styles and reinforce content. By using various methods in crafting learning events, EPIC increases its ability to maximize the number of people who are engaged during the training, which better equips the participant to understand and use the skills being taught.

Practice Structure Installation. The installment of practice groups is a core component of EPIC's work. Communities of practice (CoPs) are a vehicle through which staff can come together and practice new skills, discuss their application of skills in the workplace, review challenges and successes that accompany the use of these new skills, and collaborate and give input around difficult workplace situations requiring the use of these acquired skills. CoPs add value to organizations by providing a space in which skills can be practiced and improved upon, ideas can be shared, challenges can be addressed, and improved processes can be generated.⁷ Many of the benefits CoPs can produce, including new employees learning the job more quickly, quicker responses to customer needs, reduction in duplicating efforts, and generation of new ideas, are linked to increases in social capital that the groups inspire.⁸

⁵ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

⁸ Lesser, E. L. & Storck, J. (2001). Communities of Practice and Organizational Performance. *IBM Systems Journal*, 40(4), 831-841.

Furthermore, CoPs also provide a space to drive strategy, innovate and start new practices, yield solutions more quickly than traditional methods, transfer best practices more efficiently, help to develop professional skills, and can assist in recruiting and retaining new talent.⁹

The use of CoPs holds a great deal of value in providing ongoing practice and support in using new and complex skillsets acquired through training. While CoPs are traditionally intended to be voluntary, organic practice spaces,¹⁰ the introduction of the concept in Colorado's justice system has necessitated a more directive and facilitated approach to align with the top-down culture that pervades the field. This more rigid system of mandated attendance and facilitated content that EPIC introduces in new agencies has made it easier to install CoPs and educate about how they can be used/applied. This can later give way to a more organic environment that staff come to appreciate and voluntarily attend to find solutions to their struggles and improve their service delivery, which EPIC has seen happen in several of the partnering agencies.

Staff Selection

Staff selection is a critical component of the competency driver in the context of implementation. Reportedly, implications on the staff selection in the implementation context is yet to be researched extensively,¹¹ however, there is no lack of information in both popular and academic literature around hiring the right person, be it for an organization or a job itself. Experimental research found that for practitioners of an intervention, using interviewing techniques that included role play and behavioral vignettes to demonstrate a candidate's fit with the required duties were strong indicators of success as well as retention on the job.¹² For existing staff members who must learn and adapt new skills and techniques with implementation, selection techniques still apply. The downfalls of not taking time to select staff for participation in the innovation thoughtfully and collaboratively includes wasted resources of training, coaching and development, "poisoning the well" amongst other staff members regarding the new practice, and ultimately, a botched implementation which can lead to a total failure of the new practice.

EPIC finds staff selection failures to be a significant challenge when assisting agencies with implementation. A recent project found that approximately 55% of staff chosen to take on a lead role in implementing a new case planning system turned over within the first year of implementation. Among those who turned over in the first year, 75% either opted out of the lead role or transferred laterally out of the role to another position. Conversely, EPIC's MI trainer and coach development procedure is a multi-phased process with an application and agreements that occur with and between the candidate,

⁹ Wenger, E. C., & Snyder, W. M. (2000). Communities of practice: The organizational frontier. *Harvard business review*, 78(1), 139-146.

¹⁰ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

¹¹ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

¹² Ibid.

his or her supervisor, and EPIC staff members. These coaches have remained in their roles at much higher rates.

Section Three: Milestones and Accomplishments

Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. The following subsections will describe these activities. *(For a graphic description of the following projects, please see Appendix B.)*

Motivational Interviewing Direct Training and Coaching. The majority of trainings and coaching delivered by EPIC in the past 3 years have been in MI, though EPIC has also delivered training on coaching pertaining to case planning, Thinking for a Change, leading through adaptive change in an organization, and presentation preparation skills. Regarding MI, EPIC has delivered 54 trainings since the beginning of FY2014. Of these trainings, 29 were basic MI 101 trainings, 19 were advanced MI 102 trainings, five were coaching trainings to prepare prospective coaches to take that role within their agency, and one was a training for trainers to certify staff to train MI 101 and MI 102 for their own and other agencies.

EPIC delivered MI 101 training to 661 Coloradans working in the justice field between July 1st, 2014 and June 30th, 2017. In that same timeframe, EPIC trained 383 individuals in MI 102, 46 as MI coaches, and 23 as MI trainers. As such, a total of 1,113 seats were filled in EPIC trainings over the course of the last 3 years, building a significant knowledge and skill base in the Colorado justice community around MI. EPIC staff and contractors documented 785 coaching sessions since July 1st, 2014.

Motivational Interviewing Coach Development. Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. EPIC partnered with selected probation and community corrections programs to develop 57 coaches to ensure sustainability of Motivational Interviewing (MI) in these agencies, all of which are currently active. To measure quality and assess for inter-rater reliability, EPIC and its coaches utilize the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards and engage with the identified coach in a rigorous training and coaching program. Components of this program include numerous observations and feedback sessions, participation in statewide communities of practice (CoP) (practice groups), and maintenance of their MI competency through session audio recordings submitted every six months.

Since 2014, the greatest concentration of new coaches was developed in Jefferson, Mesa, El Paso, and Adams Counties and the greatest concentration of new trainers in Jefferson, El Paso and Mesa Counties.

EPIC Regional Working Group	Judicial District	Coaches	Trainers	Provisional Coaches
Jefferson	1st	8	7	1
Denver	2nd	3	1	0
Colorado Springs	4th	5	3	2
Larimer	8th	2	2	1
Glenwood Springs/Rifle	9th	2	1	0
Pueblo	10th	2	2	0
Buena Vista/Salida	11th	1	0	0
Alamosa	12th	1	0	0
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	13th	2	1	0
Moffat/Routt/Grand	14th	1	0	0
La Junta	16th	2	1	0
Adams	17th	8	2	2
Arapahoe	18th	0	0	1
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	19th	4	0	2
Grand Junction	21st	5	3	2

17th Judicial District Probation Department. EPIC commenced a three-year project with the 17th Judicial District Probation in 2014 to build the competency of their department in MI, increase their coaching capacity, and evaluate their use of CoPs.

To build MI competency throughout the organization, EPIC began by training staff with both a basic and advanced MI training to be taken sequentially. At the time of this writing, 90% of staff employed by Adam County Probation has received the basic training, while 49% have received the advanced training. To ensure the agency has the internal capacity to train new staff as they are hired, two staff members attended an EPIC training for trainers and are now certified to train MI. These efforts have been supplemented by EPIC staff providing coaching to up to 25 change agents at a time who have completed the advanced training. Approximately 14% of staff have reached MI competency at this juncture, and an additional 25% have either submitted tapes for evaluation in the past or are currently occupying change agent slots to move toward competency.

To further bolster the sustainability of MI in the 17th Judicial District Probation, those who have reached competency may apply to work toward becoming certified coaches. EPIC has fully certified 8 coaches in the 17th Judicial District Probation and two additional, provisional coaches are currently going through the process to earn their certification.

EPIC also installed a practice infrastructure (CoP) specific to the 17th Judicial District Probation that began in 2014. To understand how these CoPs were impacting skill development within the agency, EPIC conducted a process evaluation from July, 2015 through November, 2015. The results of this evaluation were used to redesign the practice groups to respond to mediocre levels of facilitation skill, engagement, challenging of ideas, modeling MI skills, and significant skill practice. The new model included facilitated practice groups with stable membership to encourage engagement, safety, and bonding and was implemented in late 2016. The implementation team identified and selected a number

of staff as “CoP leads” who would be trained in facilitating group learning and provided resources for ensuring meaningful practice within their groups.

Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC). EPIC worked with the DOC (Facilities) to implement the Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP), which consists of the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) and its accompanying case planning process. This project involved building coaches across the state’s facilities and developing leadership at facilities to lead adaptive changes in corrections. EPIC worked with over 80 case management staff that DOC leadership identified to engage in a coach development process to develop the remaining case management staffs’ capacity to effectively case plan using CTAP. Over the course of the two-year project, EPIC visited 23 of 24 facilities, meeting with facility leadership at each site, working with coaches, and assisting facilities in their development of practice groups. EPIC also provided monthly phone coaching and conducted regional practice groups in Denver, Pueblo, and Canon City on a monthly basis. Additionally and importantly, EPIC developed and presented an adaptive leadership curriculum to 98 leaders from across the department to help them adjust and excel at leading through this large system change.

Arapahoe Community Treatment Center (ACTC). EPIC partnered with the ACTC, a community corrections facility located in southwest Denver to implement the Progression Matrix (case planning system) and the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART) incentives and sanctions tool. Throughout this three-year collaboration, EPIC worked with ACTC to develop coaching, leadership and organizational capacity to support the implementation of these two innovations.

Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP). To support the implementation of CTAP within the Colorado Department of Corrections, EPIC trained over 80 case manager coaches on the Elicit-Provide-Elicit model of coaching to allow them to build the skills of other case managers learning to use the innovation. EPIC staff made available 473 phone coaching slots and conducted a total of 369 coaching sessions with the case manager coaches that were being developed, for a total of 553.5 EPIC hours spent coaching. EPIC also conducted facility visits and facilitated many regional CoPs over the two-year period. Lastly, EPIC conducted trainings available to facility leadership around leading through adaptive change to help facilitate the department-wide adoption of the CTAP tool. EPIC completed a total of 11 trainings spanning four content modules, with 220 seats filled by 98 individual invitees in facility leadership positions across the state. These activities led to a fidelity improvement score of nearly 18% across all coaches from the 23 facilities with whom EPIC worked.

Colorado Department of Public Safety. Beginning in February 2017, EPIC has been working within its own department to enhance staff members’ ability to effectively design presentations and trainings. Because staff within the department, and especially within the departments’ Division of Criminal Justice, have contact with many other justice agencies across many domains, EPIC prioritized this work. The two-part project, starts with the premise that the goal of any presentation or training program should not be to merely help someone learn something new, but rather to help them change the way they perform their jobs, and ultimately to improve outcomes for an agency and its customers. The following plan

incorporates this foundation into its design and is based in the science of learning. It is designed for any staff delivering presentations or training events.

- **“Fundamentals of Presentation Preparation.”** This workshop relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to lay the foundation for creating responsive, innovative, and impactful presentations. Rather than lessons on facilitation or training skills, this course focuses on the design and development of presentations. Two sessions of this course were delivered to 44 staff in February 2017.
- **“Designing Learning Using an Evidence-Based Approach.”** This course relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to provide participants with the skills to design and develop curricula using an evidence-based approach. Excellent curriculum designers need to possess the specialized knowledge and skills that are the purview of professionals who design learning experiences that don’t just help participants remember something, but rather transfer skills to staff that result in improved organizational outcomes. At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to describe and apply a blended model learning approach, and they will each create an outline for a curriculum using multiple methods of learning, informed by learning objectives. One session of this intensive course will be delivered in July 2017.

Thinking for a Change. EPIC also delivered its first Thinking for a Change training, an evidence-based program focused on cognitive-behavioral techniques to be used with justice clients, in March of 2017. The model includes not only classroom-type events, but coaching sessions between trainings. Eighteen participants were trained to facilitate this program, increasing Colorado’s capacity to implement this innovation in the state.

Coach Development Services. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by Implementation Specialists and trained coaches in the field, EPIC is conducting an additional smaller-scale project currently underway with the Office of Community Corrections to work on two live coaching projects, one in Larimer County Community Corrections (LCCC), and one with ACTC, Centennial Community Transition Center (CCTC) and Arapahoe County Residential Center (ACRC). This project is aimed at building coaching capacity not specific to any particular innovation, but that can be applied to any innovation.

This model of training and coaching allows EPIC to both move through the installation phase of implementation by ensuring the delivery of high-quality training and basic skill support, and to identify champions within the organization that can begin to take over some training and coaching for the organization as they move into the initial implementation phase. As the implementation progresses, more focus is placed on sustainability of the practice within the organization itself with a decreased reliance on outside entities to continue the use of the innovation.

Section Four: Implications, Future Directions, and Conclusion

Implications

EPIC's work within the state of Colorado brings a robust pool of empirical literature that had been primarily used in the scholastic and healthcare fields into the justice system. By working through program implementation with various agencies throughout Colorado, EPIC is able to both educate diverse sectors of the justice system on a successful implementation framework used in other disciplines, and show the utility of attending to factors beyond number of staff trained in a given innovation.

Working with agencies that represent both adult and juvenile probation, parole, correctional institutions, community corrections, pre-trial intervention, and other justice sectors, the concepts represented by and value of implementation science can begin to pervade the system. EPIC, through formal presentations and experiential learning methods, continues to work in Colorado to educate on the literature about the effects of evidence-based implementation and what is lost by not attending to the implementation drivers.

Since this method of implementation takes significantly more effort and time than traditional methods of program installation, some agencies feel they lack the resources to dedicate to such an involved process. The literature, however, indicates that agencies indeed lack the resources NOT to engage in effective implementation strategies. The limitations of simply training staff can make these lighter levels of implementation more costly in the long run than a more intensive implementation process, as the skills taught in training are never used effectively to realize the promised outcomes of the installed practice. When an agency understands the value of attending not only to the competency driver (i.e. training and coaching the right people), but also the leadership and organizational drivers, a cultural environment can be fostered that creates the necessary space that an EBP implementation requires to be successful.

Future Direction

EPIC created and began using a Request for Services (RFS) process beginning on January 1st, 2017 as a means for taking on new work and better understanding the scope of work before engaging. This RFS is aimed at gaining a preliminary understanding of what the agency is trying to implement. This new process is intended to streamline and standardize the way in which EPIC commits to new work, ensuring that the unit is able to work within its statutory purview and within its capacity. Understanding that implementation is an intensive process that requires a great deal of effort, EPIC realizes it will be able to have a greater and more sustainable impact by working intensely with a handful of organizations at a time as opposed to sparsely spreading out its resources through shallow implementation efforts.

Conclusion

EPIC's use of sound and empirically supported implementation practices has led to performance improvement within partner agencies. Satisfaction surveys, as noted in previous sections, indicate high

levels of perceived value for training, coaching, and practice facilitation offered by EPIC to direct service providers. Additionally, with improved program fidelity permeating the ranks partner agencies, EBPs are being used in a way that better reflects the researched form of the intervention compared to those same individuals when they had only receive training (where most implementation efforts tend to be marked as completed). The use of EBPs in the criminal justice system is intended to reduce recidivism, but this can only be accomplished if the interventions are delivered as intended. By attending to organizational factors, competency, and leadership within in agency, EPIC is able to assist in creating an environment that fosters and encourages the use of EBPs with fidelity. When criminal justice clients experience these practices as they are meant to be used, it reduces the odds that they will recidivate, making Colorado communities safer for everyone.

Section One: Evidence-Based Practices and Implementation Science

Evidence-Based Practices

*“Evidence-based practice (EBP) is the objective, balanced, and responsible use of current research and the best available data to guide policy and practice decisions, such that outcomes for consumers are improved”.*¹³

EBPs originated in the health care and social science fields and focus on effective approaches that are based in empirical research rather than anecdote or professional experience alone. When a practice is deemed to be “evidence-based,” it implies that the practice has a definable outcome; is measurable; and is relevant and realistic in practice, such as recidivism reduction, crime desistance, or substance use reduction.¹⁴

The term “EBP” has been used increasingly in the justice system over the past decade to the point where people often cringe upon hearing it. EPIC’s work revolves around assisting agencies in implementing practices and principles that are evidence-based for the purpose of helping agencies execute their work in proven manners. Additionally, agencies work to implement evidence-informed policies or practices (such policies are based in relevant research, but have not yet been rigorously tested for outcomes in their current use or field) for further evaluation as to whether they will be effective in their performed work. In either case, EPIC’s focus is on building the necessary supports in the areas of staff competency, a hospitable organizational environment in which to perform the work, and leadership that is flexible and adaptive to meet the needs of the staff in carrying out the new policy or practice.

Implementation Science

For decades, research has focused on developing evidence-based programs and practices to produce better outcomes for those involved in the justice system. In recent years, policy has focused on system implementation of these interventions to improve outcomes. While we have made improvements in the quality and adoption of evidence-based interventions, the use of research-based implementation frameworks, processes, and tools is still not utilized by many organizations. No matter how strong the science is behind the EBP, people and communities cannot benefit from the intervention if it is not implemented as intended. In many instances there still remain two primary gaps that prevent EBPs from being used to fidelity and/or producing the intended outcomes. The first is the science-to-service gap, which exists when what has been proven in the research to work is not what is done in practice within the organization. The second is the implementation gap. This results in an EBP that is not being used to fidelity and/or what is done to fidelity is not sustained over time or used on a large enough scale to

¹³ EBPs are also referred to as EBPPs (Evidence Based Programs and Practices) in the literature.

¹⁴ Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (2009). *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

produce outcomes. Implementation science works towards closing these gaps to develop high-fidelity use of EBPs and enhance an organization’s ability to produce measurable, intended outcomes.

Traditionally, agency and department administrators adopt innovations to implement by simply training their staff and designing new written policies with the expectation that this will translate to daily practice. But research on organizational change and skill development shows that this approach does not achieve sustainable outcomes or high-fidelity use of the program or practice. EPIC uses frameworks derived from implementation science to provide technical assistance to agencies in the effective and sustainable implementation of EBPs. According to the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), more than 90% of all public sector evidence-based practice implementations do not progress past the initial execution training because, in large part, staff classroom-style training events are the primary—if not the only—method of implementation.¹⁵ For this reason, EPIC utilizes principles, assessments, and tools from implementation science, primarily from NIRN’s Active Implementation Frameworks, to close the gaps between research and real-world EBP application. This section includes a description of NIRN’s framework given that it is the key framework used by EPIC.

Active Implementation Frameworks

In 2005, Dean Fixsen, et al with the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) developed a monograph in that synthesizes implementation research across multiple fields.¹⁵ From this synthesis of the research, NIRN developed five overarching components that are referred to as the Active Implementation Frameworks. These components are used in the implementation of any EBP into an organization in which NIRN engages and are as follows:

- Usable Innovations
- Implementation Stages
- Implementation Drivers
- Implementation Teams
- Improvement Cycles

Usable Innovations

In order for an EBP to be used by an organization to produce measurable outcomes, the innovation needs to be clearly defined. This allows that program or practice to be learned, used to fidelity, replicated, and scaled-up. This also ensures that an organization will be able to identify the program’s intended population for which it should be used. An EBP that is clearly defined allows the organization to make better decisions about what needs to be added, removed, or adapted to support the program or practice. It also makes evaluation easier and enables the organization to better identify when the program or practice exists within the organization. Operationally defining the essential functions helps an organization to teach, use, and assess the program or practice’s components.

¹⁵ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231)

Implementation Stages

Implementation is not a single event, but rather it occurs over time. The Implementation Stages outline the process of implementation and the multiple activities and decisions that are made at various points of the implementation. Research indicates that implementation of an EBP that meets the usable innovation criteria can be expected to take two to four years. Four stages of implementation are included in NIRN's framework:

- Exploration
- Installation
- Initial Implementation
- Full Implementation

These stages overlap. One stage does not need to end before another begins, but they do tend to move forward in a linear manner.

The goal of the *Exploration* Stage is to assess how well selected EBPs meet the organization's needs, whether it is practical to implement, the extent to which the EBPs will address the specific problem or issue that the organization has identified is evaluated, how the EBPs meet the usable innovation criteria, and which specific EBP will be implemented. Implementation teams (discussed in an upcoming subsection) are created in this stage to conduct these assessments and decide which EBP to implement.

The *Installation* Stage sets the groundwork for the new EBP to be implemented. This includes the development of communication and feedback loops, finance management for the implementation, and developing and/or acquiring the necessary resources for the implementation. In this stage, development of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the organization's staff for the EBP are begun. Systems for training, coaching, feedback, practice, and data are developed in this stage as well.

Initial Implementation begins at the point that the EBP is first put into practice. It is critical to continually monitor progress to identify and address any issues with the implementation and use of the program or practice. Coaching, practice mechanisms, and feedback are also important in this stage to help staff build and incorporate new skills into their work in a way that can be measured by the organization. Data helps guide the process improvement and ongoing decision-making.

Full Implementation occurs when staff are effectively and sustainably using the EBP to fidelity and outcomes are produced. At this point, organizational and cultural shifts have been made to support the new innovation and the new program or practice is now incorporated into the work.

Implementation Drivers

Implementation Drivers are common components that should exist in the implementation of any evidence-based program or practice. These components develop infrastructure, policies and procedures, organizational activities and practices, and agency culture in ways that will support the effective and sustainable implementation of EBPs. The three categories of Implementation Drivers are:

- Competency
- Organization
- Leadership

Competency drivers include activities that improve the ability of organizational staff to learn a new program or practice and incorporate it into practice. The four competency drivers are:

- Staff Selection
 - o Staff selection is critical in determining who within the organization will assist in the implementation of a new EBP as well as who is chosen to be hired into the organization in the future. These staff need to be chosen based on appropriate criteria to ensure the best fit for the role and alignment with the organization.
- Training
 - o EBPs commonly require new skills that are initially learned through training. This may not necessarily be accomplished only through classroom training, but rather multiple learning methods that are based in adult learning theory and research.
- Coaching
 - o In order for the newly acquired knowledge to be developed and incorporated into daily practice, coaching and feedback is necessary. Coaching plans, multiple forms of feedback and observation, to include practice structures, are used to help staff build new skills.
- Fidelity Assessment
 - o It is important to know whether or not staff are using new EBP skills the way that the research intended. High-fidelity use of the program or practice by staff is necessary for the organization to predict outcomes. A fidelity assessment that uses multiple sources of data allows the organization to know at what level of fidelity staff are using the EBP as well as what improvements may need to be made.

The *organizational* supports and infrastructure that are necessary to create an environment that is suitable for the implementation of a new EBP are developed through the organizational drivers. They are:

- Decisional-Support Data Systems
 - o Sound organizational decisions are best made with the use of data to inform and support them. It is necessary for an organization to have data systems that collect and analyze the necessary data in a way that makes the data useful and easily accessible across the organization.
- Facilitative Administration
 - o This driver focuses on organizational components that facilitate the success of the new practice. Administrators and others within the organization tasked to oversee the implementation need to use data to inform decisions, and these decisions should be made in ways that facilitate and support the implementation and the new EBP. Administrators should also be continually identifying and addressing obstacles, creating and effectively utilizing communication and feedback loops, creating or adapting policy to support the new EBP, and examining ways to reduce barriers for staff and the EBP.
- Systems Interventions

- Systems interventions include strategies to help an organization better work with external systems to address systemic issue and barriers. This driver helps develop communication and processes with external entities and partner systems that may be necessary to address key issues.

Actively involved *leadership* across all levels within an organization is a critical component to any implementation. The two primary leadership drivers are:

- Technical Leadership¹⁶
 - Technical leadership can be considered good organizational management. Leaders are able to quickly identify and address issues that arise through the use of more traditional methods. The issues that are addressed are generally not very complex in their associated solutions, but are generally straight forward in nature.
- Adaptive Leadership¹⁷
 - Adaptive leadership is specifically about how leaders are able to support change that enables the organization's and staff's ability to thrive. This requires the use of new and innovative strategies and abilities to address complex problems and issues and lead an organization. Adaptive leadership builds a culture that values diverse views and relies less on central planning and top-down leadership.

Implementation Teams

Traditionally, organizations attempt to implement new programs and practices by simply training staff and potentially changing policies. This does not result in long-term sustainable implementations that produce measureable outcomes. The designation and use of a team that is dedicated to actively planning and coordinating an implementation leads to a more efficient implementation with higher likelihood of achieving the intended outcomes.

An implementation team is composed of a cross section of agency staff, from decision makers to direct service providers. The implementation team leads the effort to institutionalize a new program by taking the responsibility for removing barriers to implementation and ensuring quality planning and practice. These teams focus on enhancing readiness for an implementation, developing the infrastructure for implementation, assessing outcomes and fidelity to the EBP, establishing connections with external systems and partners, and removing barriers for sustainability.

Investigating the replication of EBPs, Fixsen et al. found that sites with an implementation team providing services such as training, on-site consultation, participant selection guidance, facilitative administrative supports, and routine evaluation, were much more likely to successfully implement the

¹⁶ Stacey RD. (2002). *Strategic management and organizational dynamics: the challenge of complexity*. 3rd ed. Harlow: Prentice Hall.

¹⁷ Heifetz, R. A., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business Press.

new program and also become sustainable over time.¹⁸ Specifically, with the use of competent implementation teams, over 80% of the implementation sites were sustained for six years or more (up from 30% without an implementation team) and the time for them to achieve certification of fidelity was 3.6 years. Additional research reveals that it takes an estimated average of 17 years for only 14% of new scientific discoveries to enter day-to-day clinical practice without the use of implementation teams.

Improvement Cycles

Continuous process improvement is necessary to identify and remove barriers to implementation. Organizations and staff can struggle with new EBPs, skills, policies, and practices. It can be easier to change the EBP to fit the current organization's way of work rather than changing the organization and culture to support the effective program or practice. The use of improvement cycles ensures that the barriers are addressed and solutions are developed and implemented in ways that make the organizational environment more conducive to the new program or practice. The purpose of these cycles is to continually improve the quality of the implementation and, therefore, the likelihood of achieving the desired outcomes of the EBP. Organizational change is inevitable, and process improvement cycles help to ensure that this change is done in a purposeful manner.

¹⁸Fixsen, D. L., Blase, K. A., Timbers, G. D., & Wolf, M. M. (2001). In search of program implementation: 792 replications of the Teaching-Family Model. In G. A. Bernfeld, D. P. Farrington & A. W. Leschied (Eds.), *Offender rehabilitation in practice: Implementing and evaluating effective programs* (pp. 149-166). London: Wiley.

Section Two: Fidelity, Learning Components, and Staff Selection

Fidelity Measurement

At its core, the term fidelity refers to the relationship between an intended program and the program as it is applied in practice. The level of fidelity of a new practice is dependent upon how closely the enacted program replicates the intended, or researched, program.¹⁹ All too often, EBPs are deemed ineffective and discarded because intended outcomes are not achieved and fidelity monitoring does not accompany the implementation of the practice. This can lead to staff frustration when an agency has overhauled their processes and practices to bring on an innovation, and cannot see any visible results produced by these efforts.²⁰ To ensure that a new program will achieve its intended results, monitoring fidelity of the program and the practitioners who are using it are essential pieces of the implementation puzzle.

Fidelity is a critical component of EPIC's work. Prior to the implementation of a new program or practice, EPIC works with its partners to determine whether there are existing tools or processes that can be accessed to assist with fidelity monitoring, or if one must be developed in order to examine adherence to a model. In many cases, checking for fidelity can be integrated into training and coaching processes. In other cases, where numerical scores accompany fidelity monitoring, practitioners can become preoccupied with achieving scores rather than investing in practice quality. EPIC works with agencies to incorporate fidelity measurement into a decision-support data system that can be used to monitor fidelity across the organization and make data-informed decisions as necessary to enhance fidelity.

Barriers. Whether EPIC is able to effectively engage with a partner around fidelity measurement in a way that is supportive of staff depends strongly on the acceptance of the EBP and implementation process by agency leadership. Several challenges may hinder progress on achieving fidelity.

EBP implementation can be most efficacious when there is a strong fit between the EBP and the values of the organization where it is being implemented.^{21,22,23} This principle has proven to be extremely contentious in the justice and corrections arenas with the EBPs that are currently being implemented across the state, particularly where the predominant culture is still rooted in punitive measures rather than efforts focused on offender behavior change and skill development.

¹⁹ Century, J., Rudnick, M., & Freeman, C. (2010). A Framework for Measuring Fidelity of Implementation: A Foundation for Shared Language and Accumulation of Knowledge. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31(2), 199-218.

²⁰ Howe, M. & Joplin, L. (2005) *Implementing Evidence-Based Practice in Community Corrections: Quality Assurance Manual*. National Institute of Corrections and the Crime and Justice Institute.

²¹ Linge Rv. (2006). *Innoveren in de gezondheidszorg; theorie, praktijk en onderzoek*. Maarssen: Elsevier gezondheidszorg.

²² Koekkoek, R., Linge, Rv., & van der Hooft-Leemans, G. (2011). Team and Organizational Learning and Implementation success; A study at the influence of Team and Organizational Learning on the Implementation Success of the innovation 'Zorgleefplan' in the context of the Innovation Contingency Theory.

²³ Os-Medendorp, Hv., Eland-de Kok, P., Linge, Rv., Buijnzeel-Koomen, C., Grypdonck, M., & Ros, W (2008). The tailored implementation of the nursing programme 'Coping with itch'. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 17(11), 1460-1470.

Research also shows that professionals who are earlier in their careers when the EBP is being rolled out are more likely to accept the change. Additionally, research indicates that an innovation that is perceived to be a good fit with organizational environment may be more well received because the EBP is more likely to be accepted.²⁴ These two factors may present challenges to many agencies in Colorado's justice system where EBPs are being implemented because the demographics of some agencies may not align with the acceptance of current practices that are more responsive to client needs.

Agency leadership sometimes see fidelity monitoring as a way to monitor staff performance and use fidelity results to negatively impact annual reviews and potential advancement. While some organizations may not even use fidelity as a way to monitor performance, staff may resist assessment due to a *perceived* threat of retribution around "screwing up." To overcome that angst, agencies that separate the fidelity scoring from the performance system by excluding it as an evaluation criteria or ensuring that a direct supervisor does not conduct such assessments of subordinates are more likely to see sustained improvements in the application of EBPs and retain a strengths-based supervision model. Leaders that take a more supportive and coaching approach to fidelity monitoring is more effective.²⁵

Finally, many organizations perceive implementation to be a costly and resource intensive venture, seeing too much work time consumed by the necessary coaching, practice, and fidelity checking. When an EBP is not accepted by an organization, whether it can be attributed to value clash, fear of acquiring new skills and being perceived incompetence in the new EBP, or concerns that implementation will consume too many resources and too much time, efforts to monitor and support fidelity can be an uphill battle.²⁶ But as was mentioned earlier, with the use of competent implementation teams, over 80% of the implementation sites were sustained for six years or more (up from 30% without an implementation team) and the time for them to achieve certification of fidelity was 3.6 years. Additional research reveals that it takes an estimated average of 17 years for only 14% of new scientific discoveries to enter day-to-day clinical practice without the use of implementation teams.

EPIC has found that using fidelity criteria based in research is sometimes an effective way to combat these concerns and communicate principles that can be easily translated into practice, can be scaled, and are effective in determining a practitioner's grasp of the principle. An added benefit can be

²⁴ Titler MG. The Evidence for Evidence-Based Practice Implementation. In: Hughes RG, editor. Patient Safety and Quality: An Evidence-Based Handbook for Nurses. Rockville (MD): Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US); 2008 Apr. Chapter 7. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK2659/>

²⁵ Aarons, G. A., Sommerfeld, D. H., Hecht, D. B., Silovsky, J. F., & Chaffin, M. J. (2009). The Impact of Evidence-Based Practice Implementation and Fidelity Monitoring on Staff Turnover: Evidence for a Protective Effect. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 77*(2), 270–280. <http://doi.org/10.1037/a0013223>

²⁶ Sanders, S., Mackin, M. L., Reyes, J., Herr, K., Titler, M., Fine, P., & Forcucci, C. (2010). Implementing Evidence-Based Practices: Considerations for the Hospice Setting. *The American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Care, 27*(6), 369–376. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1049909109358695>

practitioner experiences of his or her own growth in understanding and incorporating these principles into practice. In subsequent sections describing EPIC's work with specific sites, fidelity measures will be described.

Learning Components

Coaching and Training. Coaching and training are key Competency Drivers. They focus on the development of new EBP skills. Combined with effective staff selection and practice as well as integration with the Leadership and Organizational Drivers, coaching and training lead to staff's understanding, skill, and high-fidelity use of an EBP.

Coaching is the process in which skills that have been trained can be fully integrated into the working space. Coaches help practitioners bring together their knowledge, values, philosophies, and professional experience in the delivery of interventions.²⁷ The role of the coach includes mentoring staff around their use of new knowledge, providing further instruction in the practice setting, assessing the use of skills and providing feedback, and providing emotional support for the practitioner who is being coached.²⁸ Paired with effective training practices, coaching ensures that practitioners understand how to use new skills and effectively know how to integrate them into their everyday work.

EPIC's training model utilizes multiple learning modalities to cater to all learning styles and reinforce content. This includes the use of visual aids, interactive discussions, small group work, role plays, lecture, and competitive games that display understanding of training concepts. By using each of these methods in crafting training events, EPIC increases its ability to maximize the number of people who are engaged during the training, which better equips the participant to understand and use the skills being taught.

The majority of trainings and coaching delivered by EPIC in the past three years have been in MI, though EPIC has also delivered training on coaching pertaining to case planning, Thinking for a Change, leading through adaptive change in an organization, and presentation preparation skills.

The combination of these training practices with effective coaching supports skill development, which leads to fidelity. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by trained coaches in the field, EPIC and contracted entities also complete direct coaching to assist in initial skill development, especially for those who plan to work towards becoming coaches or trainers themselves.

The use of a training and coaching model that involves both EPIC and partner agency has two purposes. First, it allows EPIC to both move through the Installation Stage of implementation by ensuring the

²⁷ Smart, D.A., Blasé, K.B., Smart, D.I., Graham, K., Collins, S.R., Daly, D.L., Fixsen, D.L., & Maloney, D.M. (1979). *The Teaching-Family Consultant's Handbook (Second ed.)*. Boys Town, Nebraska: Father Flanagan's Boys' Home.

²⁸Spouse, J. (2001). Bridging theory and practice in the supervisory relationship: a sociocultural perspective. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33(4), 512-522.

delivery of high-quality training and basic skill support. Second, it helps identify champions within the organization that can begin to take over some training and coaching for the organization as they move into the Initial Implementation Stage. Within this model, as the implementation progresses, more focus is placed on sustainability of the practice within the organization with a decreased reliance on outside entities to continue the use of the innovation. By selecting the right people to carry the innovation from within the organization, the steady transition of training and coaching from EPIC to the organization is smoother and has an increased chance of sustainment.

Practice Structure Installation. The installment of practice groups is a core component of EPIC’s work. A Communities of Practice (CoP) is a vehicle through which staff can come together and practice new skills, discuss their application of skills in the workplace, review challenges and successes that accompany the use of these new skills, and collaborate and give input around difficult workplace situations requiring the use of these acquired skills. CoPs add value to organizations by providing a space in which skills can be practiced and improved upon, ideas can be shared, challenges can be addressed, and improved processes can be generated.²⁹ By definition, CoPs are intended to be conducted in a flat structure, where no one person is in a lead or expert role in the group, and each participant is valued for their unique input and expertise.

Many of the benefits CoPs can produce, including new employees learning the job more quickly, quicker responses to customer needs, reduction in duplicating efforts, and generation of new ideas, are linked to increases in social capital that the groups inspire.³⁰ Furthermore, CoPs also provide a space to drive strategy, innovate and start new practices, yield solutions more quickly than traditional methods, transfer best practices more efficiently, help to develop professional skills, and can assist in recruiting and retaining new talent.³¹

One of the major challenges in implementing CoPs in the justice environment is that by nature, the environment is hierarchical. Often described as a para-military environment, staff are trained and conditioned to follow the direction of their leadership, leaving little room for innovation or discretion on the part of the subordinate. While this structure is more prevalent in law enforcement and corrections, probation and parole units also follow a similar structure of position titles and authority. EPIC has learned through its implementation experiences that the installation of CoPs in justice contexts requires an orchestrated transition from a facilitated group, where there is a designated lead organizer who establishes a structure for the group and facilitates accordingly, to more of a true “community” of ideas and input. Anecdotally, many CoP participants continue to refer to these practice groups as “training” throughout EPIC projects. Additionally, given the established culture of the agencies that EPIC partners with, managers typically do not grasp the value of practice and skill development progress; the

²⁹ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

³⁰ Lesser, E. L. & Storck, J. (2001). Communities of Practice and Organizational Performance. *IBM Systems Journal*, 40(4), 831-841.

³¹ Wenger, E. C., & Snyder, W. M. (2000). Communities of practice: The organizational frontier. *Harvard business review*, 78(1), 139-146.

expectation is often that once staff members attend training, they are ready to implement their new skills perfectly.

The use of CoPs holds a great deal of value in providing ongoing practice and support in using new and complex skillsets acquired through training. While CoPs are traditionally intended to be voluntary, organic practice spaces,³² the introduction of the concept in Colorado's justice system has necessitated a more directive and facilitated approach to align with the top-down culture that pervades the field. This more rigid system of mandated attendance and facilitated content that EPIC introduces in new agencies has made it easier to install CoPs and educate about what they can be used for. This can later give way to a more organic environment that staff come to appreciate and voluntarily attend to find solutions to their struggles and improve their service delivery.

Staff Selection

Staff selection is a critical component of the Competency Drivers in the context of implementation. Reportedly, implications on the staff selection in the implementation context is yet to be researched extensively,³³ however, there is no lack of information in both popular and academic literature around hiring the right person, be it for an organization or a job itself.

Experimental research found that for practitioners of an intervention, using interviewing techniques that included role play and behavioral vignettes to demonstrate a candidate's fit with the required duties were strong indicators of success as well as retention on the job.⁴⁸ For existing staff members who must learn and adapt new skills and techniques with implementation, selection techniques still apply. Not everyone who was hired under former practices may be well suited for the implementation of new practices and under new policies. Based on EPIC's experiences, many justice agency staff members who are chosen to blaze trails in critical roles during implementation are more often selected on the basis of years of service or rank within a particular hierarchy, rather than good fit with a role. Staff selection as it applies to existing staff needs to start with a conversation and continue with a process of negotiation between manager and staff member. Staff members, when "voluntold" to fill a need, can often hinder or sabotage an implementation, even if they are technically a good fit. The potential downfalls of not taking time to select staff thoughtfully and collaboratively includes wasting of training and coaching resources, disgruntled participants "poisoning the well" amongst other staff members regarding the new practice, and ultimately, a botched implementation which can lead to a total failure of the new practice.

³² Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

³³ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231)

EPIC has found staff selection failures to be a significant challenge when assisting agencies with implementation. For example, data from a recent project found that approximately 55% of staff chosen to take on a lead role in implementing a new case planning system turned over within the first year of implementation. Among those who turned over in the first year, 75% either opted out of the lead role or transferred laterally out of the role to another position. Additionally, when staff members are not selected carefully, there is often a very limited amount of buy-in and interest in developing the skills to execute a new practice. Precious time that could be used for skill building is expended to address staff resistance.

Conversely, EPIC's MI trainer and coach development procedure is a multi-phased process with an application and agreements that occur with and between the candidate, his or her supervisor, and EPIC staff members. Briefly, candidates complete an application that requires agreement and sign off from their supervisors. They are required to engage in 24 hours of skill building training, participate regularly in CoPs, observe certified coaches in the coaching process, and be observed themselves. Candidates must also complete coaching reports, or a written summary of feedback. The process takes approximately one year to complete. A different level of commitment is expected and development is spent solely on skill building rather than breaking down resistance to the innovation.

Section Three: Milestones and Accomplishments

Overview of Projects

Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. The following subsections will describe these activities. *(For a graphic description of the following projects, please see Appendix B.)*

Motivational Interviewing Direct Training, Coaching and Practice Development. MI implementation began statewide in 2010. As part of the Installation Stage of implementation, it included direct training, coaching and practice group development for designated “Change Agents”³⁴ in probation, parole, behavioral health, community corrections, and prison facilities.

EPIC continued to provide MI training services since the writing of its last legislative report. The *number and type of MI trainings* held by year is listed below. Over this last report period, 1,113 justice professionals were served by these trainings. EPIC has delivered 48 trainings since the beginning of FY2014. Of these trainings, 27 were MI 101 trainings, 15 were MI 102 trainings, five were coaches trainings to prepare prospective coaches to take that role within their agency, and one was training for trainers to enable staff to train MI 101 and MI 102 for their own and other agencies.

Motivational Interviewing Trainings Provided	2014 (from 7/1)	2015	2016	2017 (through 6/30)	TOTAL (7/1/2014-6/30/2017)
MI 101	7	9	10	1	27
MI 102	1	2	11	1	15
MI Coaches Training	1	2	1	1	5
MI Train the Trainer	0	0	1	0	1

EPIC delivered MI 101 training to 661 Coloradans working in the justice field between July 1st, 2014 and June 30th, 2017. In that same timeframe, EPIC trained 383 individuals in MI 102. As such, a total of 1,113 training slots were filled in EPIC trainings over the course of the last 3 years, building a significant knowledge and skill base in the Colorado justice community around MI. As a part of the Installation Stage of Implementation, during this time frame EPIC developed 46 MI coaches and 23 MI trainers within EPIC’s partner agencies across the state as sustainable resources to continue long-term efforts to build agency capacity in Motivational Interviewing.

³⁴ A Change Agent is defined as a person who is willing, ready and able to impact the culture and outcomes of their organization by learning, employing and modeling day-to-day use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) with their clients and colleagues.

Staff trained in Motivational Interviewing	Total (7/1/2014-6/30/2017)
MI 101	661
MI 102	383
MI Coaches Training	46
MI Train the Trainer	23
TOTAL	1,113

Change Agents participated in an intensive skill development process, described in earlier sections. Their program included numerous coaching sessions, participation in local communities of practice (CoPs), audio-taping on regular intervals in order to reach MI competency as deemed by the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards. Using a recorded work sample of at least 20 minutes, these standards measure the practitioner's reflection to question ratio, percentage of open-ended questions, percentage of complex reflections, as well as the use of MI adherent approaches and skills.³⁵

From July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2017, 61 people achieved competency in MI. This means that they were able to adhere to a quality of MI that has been researched and confirmed to have an impact on behavior change.

Motivational Interviewing Coach and Trainer Development. An additional part of the initial implementation design was the development of MI coaches and trainers across all these agencies to facilitate agency independence and sustainability in growing MI in their respective departments. Consequently, EPIC continued to build coaches and trainers in Motivational Interviewing (MI) across the state throughout this period in an effort to enhance agency Competency Drivers. Ultimately, EPIC partnered with selected probation and community corrections programs to develop 57 coaches and 23 trainers to ensure sustainability of MI in these agencies. These coaches and trainers help the agencies continue to further staff learning in MI and the incorporation of the skills into everyday work in a long-term, sustainable way.

Current coaching curriculum targets providing effective feedback, technical skill development, creating hospitable working environments, leadership development and engagement, and responsivity practices. The trainer curriculum focuses on the skills of MI while also helping participants learn frameworks for helping others learn and incorporate new skills. These frameworks are often new to most agencies and participants at the beginning because of the incorporation of practice, feedback, and formal and informal coaching.

³⁵ Moyers, T.B., Martin, T., Manuel, J.K., Miller, W.R., & Ernst, D. (2010). Revised Global Scales: Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity 3.1.1 (MITI 3.1.1). Retrieved from <http://casaa.unm.edu/mimanuals.html>.

To ensure quality of coaching and assess for inter-rater reliability among coaches post-training, EPIC and its coaches also utilize Justice System Assessment and Training’s Skillbuilders tool that incorporates the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards. EPIC engages with the identified coaches in a rigorous training and coaching program. Components of this program include numerous observations and feedback sessions with EPIC Implementation Specialists, participation in statewide communities of practice (CoP) (practice groups), and maintenance of their MI competency through session audio recordings submitted every six months.

Since 2014, the greatest concentration of new coaches was developed in Jefferson, Mesa, El Paso, and Adams Counties and the greatest concentration of new trainers in Jefferson, El Paso and Mesa Counties.

EPIC Regional Working Group	Judicial District	Coaches	Trainers	Provisional Coaches
Jefferson	1st	8	7	1
Denver	2nd	3	1	0
Colorado Springs	4th	5	3	2
Larimer	8th	2	2	1
Glenwood Springs/Rifle	9th	2	1	0
Pueblo	10th	2	2	0
Buena Vista/Salida	11th	1	0	0
Alamosa	12th	1	0	0
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	13th	2	1	0
Moffat/Routt/Grand	14th	1	0	0
La Junta	16th	2	1	0
Adams	17th	8	2	2
Arapahoe	18th	0	0	1
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	19th	4	0	2
Grand Junction	21st	5	3	2
Total		46	23	11

17th Judicial District Probation Department. After being targeted as an initial EPIC site in 2010, EPIC once again commenced a three-year project with the 17th Judicial District Probation Department in 2014 to further build the competency of their department in MI, increase their coaching capacity, and evaluate their use of CoPs. These goals were formalized extensions of the work that had been taking place with the agency since 2010. Each of these areas of focus has consisted of multiple activities which were coordinated through the standing implementation team within the agency.

To build MI competency throughout the organization, EPIC began the early Installation Stage of implementation by training staff with both a basic and advanced MI training to be taken sequentially. The initial goal was to identify champions and early adopters (Change Agents) that would help the organization implement MI. Some of these champions and early adopters would progress to become trainers, coaches, and promoters of MI and the implementation. At the time of this writing, in the Initial

Implementation Stage of implementation, 90% of staff employed by the 17th Judicial District Probation Department has received the basic training, while 49% have received the advanced training. To ensure the agency has the internal capacity to train new staff as they are hired, designated staff members attended an EPIC training for trainers and are now able to train MI. These efforts have been supplemented by EPIC staff providing individual coaching to up to 25 Change Agents at a time who have completed the advanced training. These individualized coaching sessions focus on the needs of the Change Agent to help them refine their skills and ultimately reach competency. Approximately 14% of staff have reached MI competency at this juncture, and an additional 25% have either submitted tapes for evaluation in the past or are currently actively moving toward competency.

To further bolster the sustainability of MI in the 17th Judicial District Probation Department, those who have reached competency may apply to work toward becoming coaches of MI to coach their fellow staff members and improve their skills. To do this, MI competent individuals participate in a two-day coaches training, then shadow a certified or EPIC coach during multiple coaching sessions before being shadowed themselves whilst conducting coaching sessions. This rigorous process ensures that certified coaches adhere to evidence-based coaching processes and are capable of coaching the correct skills effectively. EPIC has fully certified 8 coaches in the 17th Judicial District Probation Department and two additional, provisional coaches are currently going through the process to earn their certification. These internal coaches, along with the certified trainers, allow the agency to take new employees from having no MI experience all the way through competency and becoming certified coaches without reliance on any external consultants or resources. These resources are critical as the agency moves through the Full Implementation Stage of implementation into long-term sustainability and high-fidelity use of MI.

To continue strengthening the Competency Drivers within the organization, EPIC also helped the 17th install a practice infrastructure specific to their department that began in 2014. The installed CoP structure was created for the 17th Judicial District Probation Department to operate an independent practice space and replaced county-wide practice groups, which originally developed from EPIC-facilitated CoPs. The 2014 practice structure was heavily facilitated and voluntary, which led to sparse attendance. In 2015, this was transitioned to a mandatory attendance model in which staff had to attend at least six CoPs per year and had the flexibility to choose when to attend.

To understand how these CoPs were impacting skill development within the agency, EPIC conducted an evaluation from July, 2015 through November, 2015. Goals for this evaluation were to determine what aspects of their practice structure were functioning effectively and which may be hindering their efficacy, and to extrapolate for application with other sites incorporating CoP.

For this endeavor, EPIC empaneled an evaluation staff comprised of two EPIC staff members and two staff from Justice System Assessment & Training (JSAT), a local consulting firm under contract to EPIC. This evaluation team determined they were able to access several sources of data to complete a process evaluation and develop deeper understanding of the agency's CoP process:

1. Direct observation of CoPs

2. Anonymous survey data from all agency officers and managers regarding the current MI CoP program
3. EPIC centralized tracking data for staff MI status and CoP attendance
4. Post-observation Focus Group from a stratified sample of staff

Both quantitative and qualitative information were pulled from these sources. Improvements in the learning community – the essence of the CoP experience, were deemed a function for how Facilitation, Engagement and Learning/ Practices are aligned. Based on the survey and focus group results, various themes emerged. Facilitators and participants alike noted that facilitation of these CoPs was relatively weak based on low skills. Many participants also had little experience with MI when these CoPs were being conducted. As such, topics were very basic in nature which left those with more MI experience feeling bored and disengaged during the practice groups. This skill differential created a low energy environment in which people participated when they had to and were not invested enough to challenge incorrect practice or thoughts. While there was still some MI modeling and skill practice, these components were rather basic due to low MI skills of some in the room.

The survey and focus group indicated a need for greater investment and engagement within CoPs if they were to continue. There was also a desire to have more relevant and varied practice for their jobs, which varied based on unit. These desires reflected the evaluation results explained above as well.

The results of this evaluation were used to redesign the practice groups once more in late 2016. A new CoP structure was co-created with the 17th Judicial District Probation Department that stabilized group membership, provided each group the autonomy to practice how and what they wanted relating to MI, and provided the option to incorporate other job-related activities into their CoP practice. The implementation team identified and selected a number of staff as “CoP leads” who would be trained in facilitating group learning, provided resources for ensuring meaningful practice, and who would facilitate practice groups with stable membership to encourage engagement, safety, and bonding. The leads of these new groups attend quarterly CoPs with an EPIC staff member to adaptively troubleshoot problems, share successes and resources, and discuss facilitation strategies to foster greater learning and engagement.

The new practice structure also increases the autonomy of all staff involved, as each stable group decides together what to practice and how to do so. Based on feedback received at the lead CoPs and group CoPs that EPIC staff has attended, participation, engagement, and relevant skill practice have increased significantly since the installation of the new model. EPIC plans to conduct a smaller scale CoP evaluation later this year and will again collect data using similar measures to compare time one to time two.

Colorado Department of Corrections. EPIC also worked with Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities to implement the Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP), which consists of the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) and its accompanying case planning process. This project involved implementing a coaching model for case management across the state’s facilities. EPIC helped DOC

develop an implementation team representing various levels and responsibilities from across the department to develop the implementation plan. Additional activities included developing coaches through phone coaching, facility visits that included live coaching, CoPs, and leadership development.

Over the course of the two-year project, EPIC initiated or completed coach development with 81 case management staff that DOC leadership identified to engage in a coach development process to develop the remaining case management staffs' capacity to effectively case plan using CTAP. EPIC provided monthly phone coaching, making available a total of 473 coaching slots, with 369 slots being used by case manager coaches. This amounted to a total of 553.5 hours being dedicated to coaching and preparation by EPIC staff. EPIC also conducted regional practice groups in Denver, Pueblo, and Canon City on a monthly basis to help reinforce the concepts originally presented in training. During this time, EPIC also visited 23 state and private facilities, addressing facilitative support issues with facility leadership at each site, working with coaches, and assisting facilities in their development of practice groups.

Throughout work with DOC (2015-2017), EPIC's focus on fidelity was designed to have case managers work toward using CTAP as designed so client outcomes could be attributed to the intervention as opposed to adaptations or other practices occurring with clients that lack current, empirical support.

EPIC coaches were spread over 22 public and private facilities. At the time DOC terminated its relationship with EPIC, 38 coaches were actively coaching facility staff and 21 were in the process of onboarding as coaches. Over the course of EPIC's involvement with DOC, 22 people left their role as coaches, primarily due to retirement, promotion or transferring out of case management (55%). The remaining staff opted out of the coaching role (45%).

Coaches who had completed training were asked to participate in at least one coaching session per quarter. Coaches who were in the onboarding process were required to engage in phone coaching with an EPIC staff member at least once a month. Of the 38 active coaches, 61% were on target with quarterly coaching requirements. Among the 21 coaches who were onboarding, all but three people were meeting the minimum monthly coaching requirements.

EPIC coached to and measured progress data in accordance with the fidelity worksheet criteria. Final case plan fidelity criteria were determined by the implementation team and were derived from the Eight Guiding Principles to Reducing Risk and Recidivism,³⁶ the Prisoner Reentry Initiative's Coaching Packet Series: Effective Case Management³⁷ and training materials provided to CDOC by the University of Cincinnati's Corrections Institute:

³⁶Bogue, B. et al. (2004). Implementing evidence-based practice in community corrections: The principles of effective intervention. Boston, MA: Crime and Justice Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.nicic.org/pubs/2004/019342.pdf>

³⁷Domurad, F., & Carey, M. (2010). Coaching packet: Implementing evidence-based practices. Silver Spring, MD: Center for Effective Public Policy.

1. Case plan prioritizes top two criminogenic need areas as determined by the assessment.
2. Each criminogenic need area breaks out at least two objectives.
3. Each objective is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic/Relevant, Timebound).
4. At least one objective enhances intrinsic motivation.
5. At least one objective utilizes skill training with directed practice.
6. At least half of the objectives use a “face to face” technique.

The average baseline fidelity score for the original coaches that remained in the role were slightly higher than the average original score for all that were included in the original cohort, which exemplifies the utility of effective selection criteria. Those who dropped out due to a lack of fit with the role (not to include those who were promoted out of the role or dropped out for emotional health reasons) had an average original fidelity score approximately 32% lower than those who elected to stay in the role throughout the implementation. Though the original selection process was based on seniority as opposed to fit for the role, the individuals who remained as coaches happened to be good selections based on other characteristics that more closely tie to successful case planning practices.

In tracking improvements to fidelity measures used during the CTAP implementation, EPIC saw improvements in the adherence to the evidence-based principles underlying the use of case planning with justice clients. In comparing aggregated fidelity data available for active coaches who sent EPIC a case plan within the first few months of coaching and coaches who had sent a case plan that was completed by July 1, 2017, there was marked improvement in the adherence to the outlined fidelity principles. Overall, the average recorded improvement between these coaching cohorts was 17.89%. Though some coaches included in this analysis were new to the coaching role, there was still a strong skill gain noted. When controlling for new coaches and analyzing fidelity improvement for original coaches only, the observed effect improved slightly with an 18.18% increase in fidelity score. EPIC also looked at fidelity increases for coaches who started and remained in the role for the entirety of the implementation partnership by comparing their original scores with their final scores. These individuals also saw an average increase of approximately 18% when controlling for coaches who dropped out of the role. The final average fidelity score for active coaches was 4.44 out of 6.

As was mentioned, CoPs are a key component of the learning process in which EPIC engages agencies. The results from the 17th Judicial District Probation Department CoP Analysis were used to inform the evolving CoP structure used in the DOC implementation of CTAP, and evidence-based risk assessment and case planning system. While these CoPs were originally similar to interactive trainings due to a need for more exposure to content before organic discussion of concepts could occur, EPIC transitioned these to providing greater autonomy as early in the process as possible. This meant bringing fewer preordained topics for discussion and allowing each group to identify their struggles and desired topic areas in real time and facilitating conversation around these areas. EPIC also began this process with stable CoPs in which identified coaches would attend the same CoP each month, providing greater levels of safety and comfort within each group to explore topics unabashedly. Finally, EPIC allowed space early into this process for attendees to air their concerns and frustrations with the fast implementation process of CTAP. Providing a safe space for this dialogue to occur increased trust among participants and

facilitators and created more engagement around the innovation content practiced and discussed in subsequent CoPs.

Additionally and importantly, to support the implementation of CTAP within the Colorado Department of Corrections, EPIC developed and presented an adaptive leadership curriculum to leaders from across the department to help them adjust and excel at leading through this large system change. EPIC completed a total of 11 trainings spanning four content modules, with 220 seats filled by 98 individual invitees in facility leadership positions.

The topics for the leadership series were chosen because they are central to leading an implementation of adaptive skills. Implementing adaptive skills requires leadership to attend to engaging staff and attending to issues such as autonomy, mastery, and purpose, which are predictive of improved performance and outcomes. The leadership series therefore began with creating an engaged workforce and the ability to identify and reverse disengagement of employees. Other topics included enhancing employee motivation, preventing burnout, supporting employees through paradigm shifts, developing lead and lag indicators of progress, coaching and giving difficult feedback, and developing skills in forging effective relationships with higher ranking staff members.

In examining the impact of the leadership workshops through post-training evaluations, EPIC staff were most interested in knowing attendees levels of interest in the material, what they wanted to learn more about, what they were learning about themselves as leaders, and what their takeaways were from the workshops. These data indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the material presented in the trainings, as 100% of respondents indicated that they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with each module, with approximately 76% reporting that they were highly satisfied.

Overall, narrative responses included many self-reflective statements about how the material was inspiring them to look at themselves through some of the lenses presented and challenge themselves to go beyond their own limitations to become better leaders. To facilitate the change process, they wanted to be better listeners, take into account others' personality styles, paradigms and perspectives, explain better why the change is needed, help folks deal with burnout and stress around it, and better engage staff through understanding underlying assumptions and commitments staff have about their work and the world. The great majority of participants wanted to continue the learning and expressed many topics they in which they were interested to learn more. Unfortunately, the work with DOC was cut short at DOC's request and the leadership workshops, along with all the other components mentioned, were not completed.

Arapahoe Community Treatment Center (ACTC). EPIC partnered with the ACTC, a community corrections facility located in southwest Denver to implement the Progression Matrix (case planning system) and the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART) incentives and sanctions tool. Throughout this three-year collaboration, EPIC worked with ACTC focused on two primary targets: to develop a coaching model that could be applied to any innovation and the enhancement of leadership and organizational capacity to support the implementation of these two innovations. These

targets were identified by the implementation team to be of highest importance and consequence through a drivers best practices assessment (DBPA)³⁸ conducted by EPIC. This DBPA established a baseline score around how each driver was functioning in the organization. Because this phase of the work with ACTC is officially wrapping up at the end of July 2017, EPIC recently conducted a closing DBPA with the implementation team. The reassessment revealed that overall, the composite score increased from the baseline (.74 in 2016 to .95 in 2017, on a 0-2 point scale) and for the respective target areas, subscale scores for the coaching driver increased from 0 to .75 and leadership, 1.0 to 1.3. These score increases represent significant growth in these two areas of focus. The overall organizational support driver score increased from .5 to 1.2, demonstrating an increase in the infrastructural components critical to supporting the newly implemented innovations.

Colorado Department of Public Safety. Beginning in February 2017, EPIC has been working within its own department to enhance staff members' ability to effectively design presentations and trainings. Because staff within the department, and especially within the department's Division of Criminal Justice, have contact with many other justice agencies across many domains, EPIC prioritized this work. The two-part project, starts with the premise that the goal of any presentation or training program should not be to merely help someone learn something new, but rather to help them change the way they perform their jobs, and ultimately to improve outcomes for an agency and its customers. The following plan incorporates this foundation into its design and is based in the science of learning. It is designed for any staff delivering presentations or training events.

- ***“Fundamentals of Presentation Preparation.”*** This workshop relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to lay the foundation for creating responsive, innovative, and impactful presentations. Rather than lessons on facilitation or training skills, this course focuses on the design and development of presentations. Two sessions of this course were delivered to 44 staff in February 2017.
- ***“Designing Learning Using an Evidence-Based Approach.”*** This course relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to provide participants with the skills to design and develop curricula using an evidence-based approach. Excellent curriculum designers need to possess the specialized knowledge and skills that are the purview of professionals who design learning experiences that don't just help participants remember something, but rather transfer skills to staff that result in improved organizational outcomes. At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to describe and apply a blended model learning approach, and they will each create an outline for a curriculum using multiple methods of learning, informed by learning objectives. One session of this intensive course will be delivered in July 2017.

³⁸ Fixsen, D., Blase, K., Naoom, S., & Duda, M. (2015). *Drivers Best Practices Assessment* [Measurement instrument]. Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources/implementation-drivers-assessing-best-practices>

Thinking for a Change. EPIC also delivered its first Thinking for a Change training, an evidence-based program focused on cognitive-behavioral techniques to be used with justice clients, in March of 2017. 18 participants from various behavioral health and community corrections entities were trained to facilitate this program to clients in the field, increasing Colorado’s capacity to implement this effective, well-researched innovation in the state.

Coach Development Services. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by Implementation Specialists and trained coaches in the field, EPIC is conducting an additional smaller-scale project currently underway with the Office of Community Corrections to work on two live coaching projects, one in Larimer County Community Corrections (LCCC), and one with ACTC, Centennial Community Transition Center (CCTC) and Arapahoe County Residential Center (ACRC). This project is aimed at building coaching capacity not specific to any particular innovation, but that can be applied to any EBP.

In 2015, when the rollout of the Office of Community Corrections (OCC) Progression Matrix case planning tool was nearly completed, EPIC partnered with LCCC to develop and pilot a live (in-person) coaching process to coach staff on the Progression Matrix. EPIC and LCCC worked together to establish a process of observation and coaching of case managers as they met with clients. Components of the Progression Matrix, including skill training with directed practice and enhancing intrinsic motivation, using basic motivational interviewing techniques, were tested. Upon completion of the pilot, a report was developed on the feasibility of using the coaching model to help build capacity around the Progression Matrix and what elements needed to be in place in order to implement a successful live coaching model.

In 2016, EPIC conducted a Drivers Best Practice Assessment (DBPA) with the management/implementation team at ACTC. The results of the DBPA highlighted a coaching deficit within the agency. The team decided they would like to begin with tackling the coaching driver as this presented as an attainable goal. Once ACTC agreed this is what they wanted to focus on, a live coaching model was discussed and presented by EPIC to assist with moving them forward. Upon approval of the model by the ACTC implementation team, OCC and EPIC began planning what would be the Live Coaching Workshop. Two other community corrections facilities in Arapahoe County also chose to adopt the live coaching model and integrate it into their programs.

Section Four: Implications and Future Direction

Implications

EPIC's work within the state of Colorado brings a robust pool of empirical literature that is primarily used in the scholastic and healthcare fields into the justice system. While the use of EBPs has been on the rise in this field, the science behind evidence-based implementation remains a relatively foreign and novel concept. By working through program implementation with various agencies throughout Colorado, EPIC is able to both educate diverse sectors of the justice system on successful implementation frameworks and change strategies used in other disciplines, and show the utility of attending to factors beyond the number of staff trained in a given innovation.

Working with agencies that represent probation, parole, correctional institutions, community corrections, pre-trial intervention, and other justice sectors, the concepts represented by and value of implementation science can begin to pervade the system. To begin changing the perception of what constitutes successful implementation as opposed to simply training and changing policy, understanding the research that has been done on the implementation process is integral. EPIC, through formal presentations and experiential learning methods, continues to work in Colorado to translate the effects of evidence-based implementation and what is lost by not attending to the implementation drivers.

Since this method of implementation takes significantly more effort and time than traditional methods of program installation, some agencies feel they lack the resources to dedicate to such an involved process. The literature, however, indicates that agencies indeed lack the resources NOT to engage in effective implementation strategies. The limitations of simply training staff can make these lighter levels of implementation more costly in the long run than a more intensive implementation process, as the skills taught in training are never used effectively to realize the promised outcomes of the installed practice. An investment in a more holistic and purposeful implementation process with the primary goal of transferring learned skills into routine professional use is an investment that can produce changes in how staff do their jobs, which is the purpose (but not necessarily the outcome) of training alone. When an agency understands the value of attending not only to the Competency Drivers (i.e. training and coaching the right people), but also the Leadership and Organizational Drivers, a cultural environment can be fostered that creates the necessary space that an EBP implementation requires to be successful. This is at the heart of what EPIC aims to accomplish through the use of active implementation frameworks.

Future Direction

EPIC created and began using a Request for Services (RFS) process beginning on January 1st, 2017 as a means for taking on new work and better understanding the scope of work before engaging. This RFS is aimed at gaining a preliminary understanding of what the agency is trying to implement. Upon reception of an RFS, a rotating committee of three-four EPIC staff (that always includes the unit manager) review the application, assess the scope of the request, and determine whether or not a subsequent meeting with the agency to gain more information about the request is needed.

This new process is intended to streamline and standardize the way in which EPIC commits to new work, ensuring that the unit is able to work within its statutory purview and within its capacity. Understanding that implementation is an intensive process that requires a great deal of effort, EPIC realizes it will be able to have a greater and more sustainable impact by working intensely with a handful of organizations at a time as opposed to sparsely spreading out its resources through shallow implementation efforts.

As communities have embraced the initial offerings of EPIC the EBP market in Colorado's correctional and justice systems has advanced in their understanding of and value for wise expenditures of resources. EPIC's more intensive focus in select agencies will allow for more impactful outcomes, smoother management of change processes, and more purposeful collection of implementation and EBP data. EPIC seeks to collect data that will demonstrate the impact of and need for effective implementation practices in the justice system, document the process within a justice organization for replication, approximate up-front implementation costs and savings long-term, and will indicate that efficient use of research-based implementation practices produces high-fidelity use of EBPs and predictable, measurable outcomes for organizations.

Numerous implementation frameworks, models, tools, and assessments exist. Many have come from NIRN's synthesis of the implementation research. All of these have been created from varying levels of research as well as multiple fields of study. While EPIC primarily uses the NIRN framework, along with theories of change management and organizational development, it seeks to continually learn about effective strategies from all these fields so that it is always at the forefront in the use of these methodologies.

Conclusion

EPIC's use of sound and empirically supported implementation practices has led to performance improvement within partner agencies. Satisfaction surveys, as noted in previous sections, indicate high levels of perceived value for training, coaching, and practice facilitation offered by EPIC to direct service providers and leaders. Additionally, with improved program fidelity permeating the ranks within partner agencies, EBPs are being used in a way that better reflects the researched form of the intervention compared to those same individuals when they had only receive training (where most implementation efforts tend to be marked as completed). The use of EBPs in the justice system is intended to reduce recidivism, but this can only be accomplished if the interventions are delivered as intended. By attending to organizational factors, competency, and leadership within in agency, EPIC is able to assist in creating environments that fosters and encourage the use of EBPs with fidelity. When justice clients experience these practices as they are meant to be used, it reduces the odds that they will recidivate, driving down costs to the state and counties, and making Colorado communities safer for everyone.

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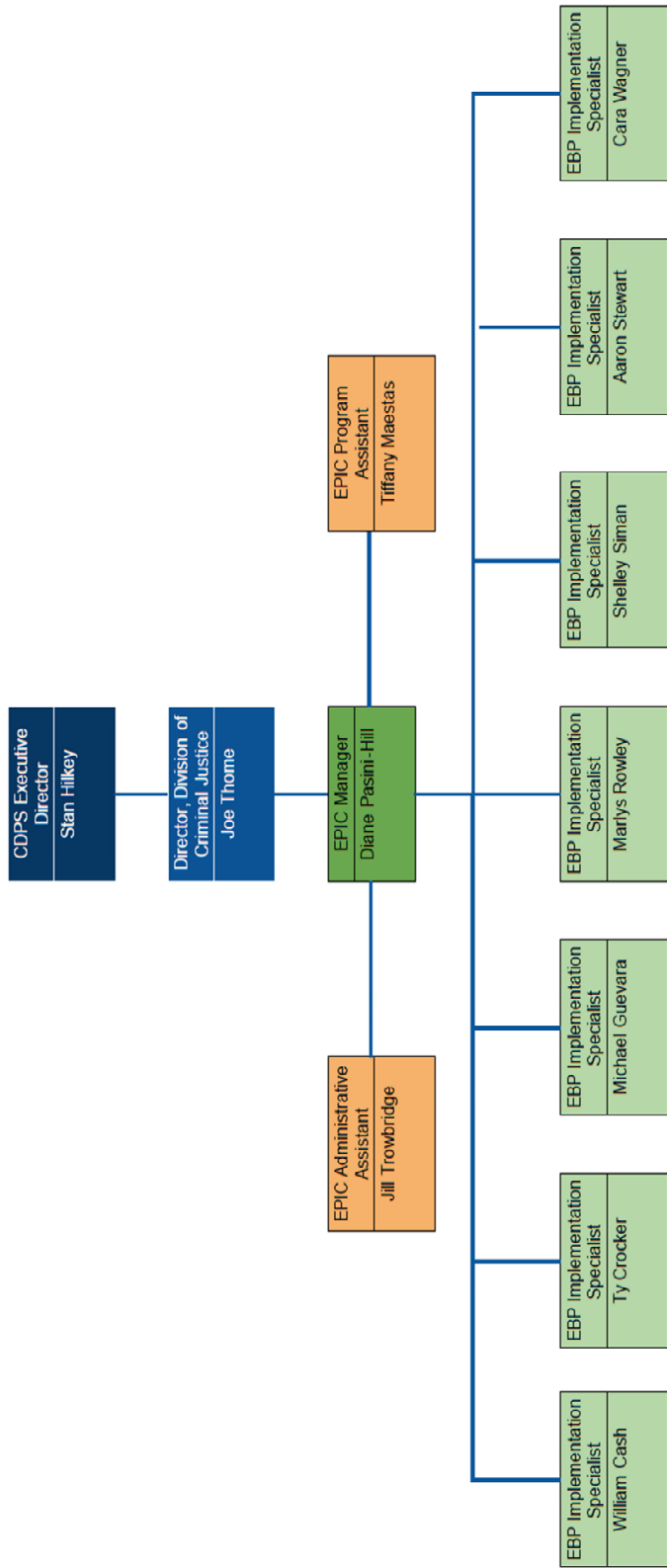
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Appendices

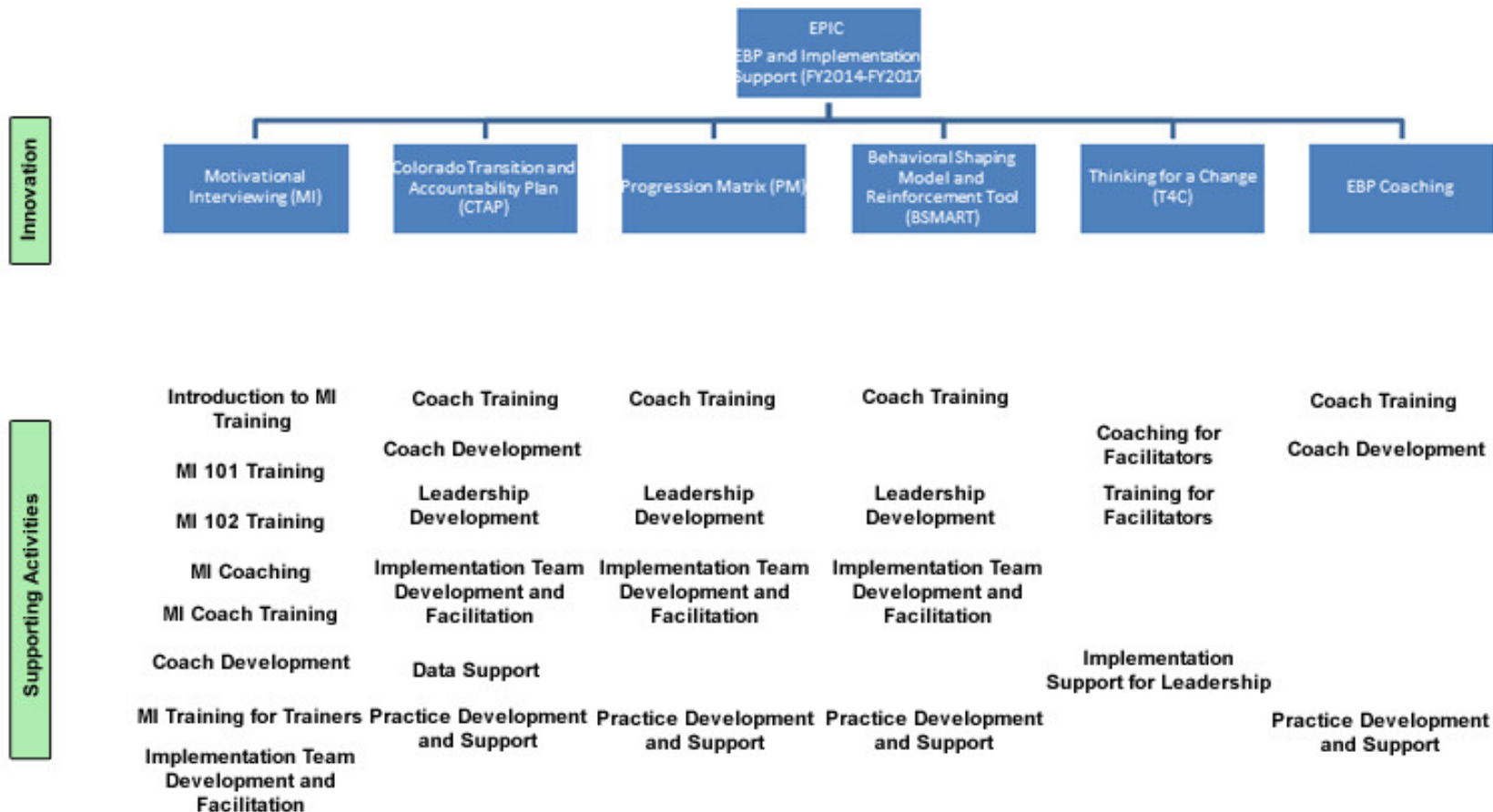
APPENDIX A

EPIC Organizational Chart Effective 06/2017



APPENDIX B
EPIC Projects Overview FY2014 to FY2017

Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity: 2017 Legislative Update



Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity (EPIC)

Legislative Update (CRS 24-33.5-514)



July 2017

Division of Criminal Justice
Colorado Department of Public Safety
700 Kipling Street
Denver CO 80215
<http://dcj.epic.state.co.us/>



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Division of Criminal Justice
Department of Public Safety



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Executive Director's Office

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Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity (EPIC)

Legislative Update (CRS 24-33.5-514)

July 2017

Prepared by:

Ty Crocker, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Shelley Siman, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Aaron Stewart, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Diane Pasini-Hill, EPIC Manager
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Stan Hilkey, Executive Director
Colorado Department of Public Safety

Joe Thome, Director
Division of Criminal Justice

Diane Pasini-Hill, EPIC Manager
Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity

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Introduction

Background and Purpose of the Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity (EPIC) Resource Center

At its inception in October, 2009, EPIC was funded through a federal Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) for \$2.1 million dollars for the primary purpose of building capacity among five state agencies for the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs). EPIC was originally housed in the Colorado Department of Public Safety's (CDPS) Executive Director's Office as an initiative of the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice. The EPIC Resource Center was created as a collaborative, comprehensive effort to systematically enhance the knowledge, skill base and capacity of justice system professionals in evidence-based practices (EBPs). In April, 2013, the Colorado State Legislature passed HB13-1129, placing EPIC within the Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) in CDPS (*see Appendix A for EPIC's organizational chart*). The mission of EPIC is to collaborate with justice partners using research-informed approaches to improve outcomes in Colorado communities. This report serves to fulfill the requirement for a center status report every three years per 24-33.5.514(4).

For the first several years of the project, EPIC worked exclusively with the following legislatively identified collaborators: Department of Corrections (both facilities and parole), The Office of Behavioral Health within the Department of Human Services and their affiliated agencies, the Division of Probation Services within the Judicial Branch, and the Office of Community Corrections within the Division of Criminal Justice and the associated community corrections facilities. The work focused on developing agency staff capacity to integrate selected evidence-based practices and principles into their daily interactions with individuals in the justice system using structured components from implementation science. These included Motivational Interviewing, assessment and case management systems (Level of Supervision Inventory and the Ohio Risk Assessment System [Colorado Department of Corrections' Colorado Transition Accountability Plan], and Colorado Community Correction's Progression Matrix), cognitive behavioral interventions (primarily Thinking for a Change), and Colorado Community Corrections sanctions and incentives model, the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART). EPIC has recently expanded its scope of partnerships to include wider array of agencies serving justice-involved or at-risk populations and has opened its approach to a Request for Services model for agencies interested in EPIC services, paving the way for wider expanse of impact across the system.

Once a request is received, an internal committee reviews the requests and meets with submitting agencies to determine the fit of the project for implementation services. Upon agreement, a scope of work and Memorandum of Understanding are drafted to move forward with the work.

Report Organization

This report begins with an executive summary and is then organized as follows: Section One gives a brief overview of implementation and evidence-based practices; Section Two describes EPIC's milestones and

accomplishments since the last legislative reporting period; Section Three discusses EPIC's sustainability approaches and corresponding data; and finally, Section Four summarizes key points and describes future direction and goals.

Executive Summary

Section One: Implementation and Evidence-Based Practices

Evidence-Based Practices

*“Evidence-based practice (EBP) is the objective, balanced, and responsible use of current research and the best available data to guide policy and practice decisions, such that outcomes for consumers are improved.”*¹ When a practice is deemed to be “evidence-based,” it implies that the practice has a definable outcome; is measurable; and is relevant and realistic in practice, such as recidivism reduction, crime desistance, or substance use reduction. EPIC’s focus is on building the necessary supports in the areas of staff competency, a hospitable organizational environment in which to perform the work, and leadership that is flexible and adaptive to meet the needs of the staff in carrying out the new policy or practice.

Implementation Science

“Implementation Science is the study of factors that influence the full and effective use of innovations in practice.”² While we have made improvements in the quality and adoption of evidence-based interventions within the justice field, the use of research-based implementation frameworks, processes, and tools is still not utilized by many organizations. According to the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), more than 90% of all public sector evidence-based practice implementations do not progress past the initial execution training because, in large part, staff classroom-style training events are the primary—if not the only—method of implementation.³ Using implementation science, EPIC works towards closing the gaps between research and service delivery, employing implementation science to develop high-fidelity use of EBPs and enhance an organization’s ability to produce measurable, intended outcomes. This is accomplished through the use of principles, assessments, and tools from implementation science, primarily from NIRN’s Active Implementation Frameworks, to close the gaps between research and real-world EBP implementation. These frameworks are:

- **Usable Innovations:** Use of an innovation that has: a clear description of the program, clear essential functions that define the program, operational definitions of the essential functions, and a practical performance assessment to measure use of the innovation.
- **Implementation Stages:** As opposed to being a discrete event, implementation is a process that takes place over time. Elements of the implementation take place within stages: Exploration

¹ Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (2009). *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

² Fixsen, D., Blase, K., Metz, A., & Van Dyke, M. (2015). *Implementation science*. In *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (pp. 695-702).

³ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

(assess how well selected EBPs meet the organization's needs, whether it is practical to implement, the extent to which the EBPs will address the specific problem or issue that the organization has identified is evaluated, how the EBPs meet the usable innovation criteria, and which specific EBP will be implemented), Installation (includes the development of communication and feedback loops, finance management for the implementation, development of initial knowledge and skills in staff for the innovation, and developing and/or acquiring the necessary resources for the implementation), Initial Implementation (begins at the point that the EBPP is first put into practice and involves coaching, improvement cycles, and organizational data collection), and Full Implementation (staff are effectively using the EBP to fidelity in a supportive environment and outcomes are produced).

- Implementation Drivers: The common components that should exist in the implementation of any evidence-based program or practice. These include competency drivers (training, coaching, selection, and fidelity measurement), leadership drivers (adaptive and technical), and organizational drivers (decisional-support data systems, facilitative administration, and systems intervention).
- Improvement Cycles: Cycles in which organizational practices are examined by creating action plans, activating on those plans, studying the outcomes of the actions taken, and modifying that action plan based on that outcome data.
- Implementation Teams: A cross section of agency staff, including decision makers to direct service providers, who are accountable for moving the implementation forward through planning, messaging, and organization of necessary activities.

Section Two: Fidelity, Learning Components, and Staff Selection

Fidelity Measurement

At its core, the term fidelity refers to the relationship between an intended program and the program as it is applied in practice. The level of fidelity of a new practice is dependent upon how closely the enacted program replicates the intended, or researched, program.⁴ To ensure that a new program will achieve its intended results, monitoring fidelity of the program and the practitioners who are using it are essential pieces of the implementation puzzle.

Prior to the implementation of a new program or practice, EPIC works with its partners to determine whether there are existing tools and processes that can be accessed to assist with fidelity monitoring, or if a tool and/or process must be developed in order to examine adherence to a model.

⁴ Century, J., Rudnick, M., & Freeman, C. (2010). A Framework for Measuring Fidelity of Implementation: A Foundation for Shared Language and Accumulation of Knowledge. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31(2), 199-218.

Many organizations perceive implementation to be a costly and resource intensive venture, seeing little value in coaching, practice, and fidelity checking. When an EBP is not accepted by an organization, whether it can be attributed to value clash, fear of acquiring new skills and perceived incompetence in the new EBP, or concerns that implementation will consume too many resources and too much time, efforts to monitor and support fidelity can be an uphill battle.

EPIC has found that using fidelity criteria based in research is an effective way to communicate principles that can easily be translated into practice, can be scaled, and are effective in determining a practitioner's grasp of the principle as well as his or her growth in understanding and incorporating these principles into practice.

Learning Components

Coaching and Training. Coaching is a process in which skills that have been trained can be more fully integrated into the working space through the employment of feedback. Coaches help practitioners bring together their knowledge, values, philosophies, and professional experience in the delivery of interventions.⁵ The role of the coach includes supervising staff in their use of new knowledge, providing further instruction in the practice setting, assessing the use of skills and providing feedback, and providing emotional support for the practitioner who is being coached.⁶

EPIC's staff development model utilizes multiple learning modalities to cater to all learning styles and reinforce content. By using various methods in crafting learning events, EPIC increases its ability to maximize the number of people who are engaged during the training, which better equips the participant to understand and use the skills being taught.

Practice Structure Installation. The installment of practice groups is a core component of EPIC's work. Communities of practice (CoPs) are a vehicle through which staff can come together and practice new skills, discuss their application of skills in the workplace, review challenges and successes that accompany the use of these new skills, and collaborate and give input around difficult workplace situations requiring the use of these acquired skills. CoPs add value to organizations by providing a space in which skills can be practiced and improved upon, ideas can be shared, challenges can be addressed, and improved processes can be generated.⁷ Many of the benefits CoPs can produce, including new employees learning the job more quickly, quicker responses to customer needs, reduction in duplicating efforts, and generation of new ideas, are linked to increases in social capital that the groups inspire.⁸

⁵ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

⁸ Lesser, E. L. & Storck, J. (2001). Communities of Practice and Organizational Performance. *IBM Systems Journal*, 40(4), 831-841.

Furthermore, CoPs also provide a space to drive strategy, innovate and start new practices, yield solutions more quickly than traditional methods, transfer best practices more efficiently, help to develop professional skills, and can assist in recruiting and retaining new talent.⁹

The use of CoPs holds a great deal of value in providing ongoing practice and support in using new and complex skillsets acquired through training. While CoPs are traditionally intended to be voluntary, organic practice spaces,¹⁰ the introduction of the concept in Colorado's justice system has necessitated a more directive and facilitated approach to align with the top-down culture that pervades the field. This more rigid system of mandated attendance and facilitated content that EPIC introduces in new agencies has made it easier to install CoPs and educate about how they can be used/applied. This can later give way to a more organic environment that staff come to appreciate and voluntarily attend to find solutions to their struggles and improve their service delivery, which EPIC has seen happen in several of the partnering agencies.

Staff Selection

Staff selection is a critical component of the competency driver in the context of implementation. Reportedly, implications on the staff selection in the implementation context is yet to be researched extensively,¹¹ however, there is no lack of information in both popular and academic literature around hiring the right person, be it for an organization or a job itself. Experimental research found that for practitioners of an intervention, using interviewing techniques that included role play and behavioral vignettes to demonstrate a candidate's fit with the required duties were strong indicators of success as well as retention on the job.¹² For existing staff members who must learn and adapt new skills and techniques with implementation, selection techniques still apply. The downfalls of not taking time to select staff for participation in the innovation thoughtfully and collaboratively includes wasted resources of training, coaching and development, "poisoning the well" amongst other staff members regarding the new practice, and ultimately, a botched implementation which can lead to a total failure of the new practice.

EPIC finds staff selection failures to be a significant challenge when assisting agencies with implementation. A recent project found that approximately 55% of staff chosen to take on a lead role in implementing a new case planning system turned over within the first year of implementation. Among those who turned over in the first year, 75% either opted out of the lead role or transferred laterally out of the role to another position. Conversely, EPIC's MI trainer and coach development procedure is a multi-phased process with an application and agreements that occur with and between the candidate,

⁹ Wenger, E. C., & Snyder, W. M. (2000). Communities of practice: The organizational frontier. *Harvard business review*, 78(1), 139-146.

¹⁰ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

¹¹ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

¹² Ibid.

his or her supervisor, and EPIC staff members. These coaches have remained in their roles at much higher rates.

Section Three: Milestones and Accomplishments

Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. The following subsections will describe these activities. *(For a graphic description of the following projects, please see Appendix B.)*

Motivational Interviewing Direct Training and Coaching. The majority of trainings and coaching delivered by EPIC in the past 3 years have been in MI, though EPIC has also delivered training on coaching pertaining to case planning, Thinking for a Change, leading through adaptive change in an organization, and presentation preparation skills. Regarding MI, EPIC has delivered 54 trainings since the beginning of FY2014. Of these trainings, 29 were basic MI 101 trainings, 19 were advanced MI 102 trainings, five were coaching trainings to prepare prospective coaches to take that role within their agency, and one was a training for trainers to certify staff to train MI 101 and MI 102 for their own and other agencies.

EPIC delivered MI 101 training to 661 Coloradans working in the justice field between July 1st, 2014 and June 30th, 2017. In that same timeframe, EPIC trained 383 individuals in MI 102, 46 as MI coaches, and 23 as MI trainers. As such, a total of 1,113 seats were filled in EPIC trainings over the course of the last 3 years, building a significant knowledge and skill base in the Colorado justice community around MI. EPIC staff and contractors documented 785 coaching sessions since July 1st, 2014.

Motivational Interviewing Coach Development. Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. EPIC partnered with selected probation and community corrections programs to develop 57 coaches to ensure sustainability of Motivational Interviewing (MI) in these agencies, all of which are currently active. To measure quality and assess for inter-rater reliability, EPIC and its coaches utilize the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards and engage with the identified coach in a rigorous training and coaching program. Components of this program include numerous observations and feedback sessions, participation in statewide communities of practice (CoP) (practice groups), and maintenance of their MI competency through session audio recordings submitted every six months.

Since 2014, the greatest concentration of new coaches was developed in Jefferson, Mesa, El Paso, and Adams Counties and the greatest concentration of new trainers in Jefferson, El Paso and Mesa Counties.

EPIC Regional Working Group	Judicial District	Coaches	Trainers	Provisional Coaches
Jefferson	1st	8	7	1
Denver	2nd	3	1	0
Colorado Springs	4th	5	3	2
Larimer	8th	2	2	1
Glenwood Springs/Rifle	9th	2	1	0
Pueblo	10th	2	2	0
Buena Vista/Salida	11th	1	0	0
Alamosa	12th	1	0	0
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	13th	2	1	0
Moffat/Routt/Grand	14th	1	0	0
La Junta	16th	2	1	0
Adams	17th	8	2	2
Arapahoe	18th	0	0	1
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	19th	4	0	2
Grand Junction	21st	5	3	2

17th Judicial District Probation Department. EPIC commenced a three-year project with the 17th Judicial District Probation in 2014 to build the competency of their department in MI, increase their coaching capacity, and evaluate their use of CoPs.

To build MI competency throughout the organization, EPIC began by training staff with both a basic and advanced MI training to be taken sequentially. At the time of this writing, 90% of staff employed by Adam County Probation has received the basic training, while 49% have received the advanced training. To ensure the agency has the internal capacity to train new staff as they are hired, two staff members attended an EPIC training for trainers and are now certified to train MI. These efforts have been supplemented by EPIC staff providing coaching to up to 25 change agents at a time who have completed the advanced training. Approximately 14% of staff have reached MI competency at this juncture, and an additional 25% have either submitted tapes for evaluation in the past or are currently occupying change agent slots to move toward competency.

To further bolster the sustainability of MI in the 17th Judicial District Probation, those who have reached competency may apply to work toward becoming certified coaches. EPIC has fully certified 8 coaches in the 17th Judicial District Probation and two additional, provisional coaches are currently going through the process to earn their certification.

EPIC also installed a practice infrastructure (CoP) specific to the 17th Judicial District Probation that began in 2014. To understand how these CoPs were impacting skill development within the agency, EPIC conducted a process evaluation from July, 2015 through November, 2015. The results of this evaluation were used to redesign the practice groups to respond to mediocre levels of facilitation skill, engagement, challenging of ideas, modeling MI skills, and significant skill practice. The new model included facilitated practice groups with stable membership to encourage engagement, safety, and bonding and was implemented in late 2016. The implementation team identified and selected a number

of staff as “CoP leads” who would be trained in facilitating group learning and provided resources for ensuring meaningful practice within their groups.

Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC). EPIC worked with the DOC (Facilities) to implement the Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP), which consists of the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) and its accompanying case planning process. This project involved building coaches across the state’s facilities and developing leadership at facilities to lead adaptive changes in corrections. EPIC worked with over 80 case management staff that DOC leadership identified to engage in a coach development process to develop the remaining case management staffs’ capacity to effectively case plan using CTAP. Over the course of the two-year project, EPIC visited 23 of 24 facilities, meeting with facility leadership at each site, working with coaches, and assisting facilities in their development of practice groups. EPIC also provided monthly phone coaching and conducted regional practice groups in Denver, Pueblo, and Canon City on a monthly basis. Additionally and importantly, EPIC developed and presented an adaptive leadership curriculum to 98 leaders from across the department to help them adjust and excel at leading through this large system change.

Arapahoe Community Treatment Center (ACTC). EPIC partnered with the ACTC, a community corrections facility located in southwest Denver to implement the Progression Matrix (case planning system) and the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART) incentives and sanctions tool. Throughout this three-year collaboration, EPIC worked with ACTC to develop coaching, leadership and organizational capacity to support the implementation of these two innovations.

Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP). To support the implementation of CTAP within the Colorado Department of Corrections, EPIC trained over 80 case manager coaches on the Elicit-Provide-Elicit model of coaching to allow them to build the skills of other case managers learning to use the innovation. EPIC staff made available 473 phone coaching slots and conducted a total of 369 coaching sessions with the case manager coaches that were being developed, for a total of 553.5 EPIC hours spent coaching. EPIC also conducted facility visits and facilitated many regional CoPs over the two-year period. Lastly, EPIC conducted trainings available to facility leadership around leading through adaptive change to help facilitate the department-wide adoption of the CTAP tool. EPIC completed a total of 11 trainings spanning four content modules, with 220 seats filled by 98 individual invitees in facility leadership positions across the state. These activities led to a fidelity improvement score of nearly 18% across all coaches from the 23 facilities with whom EPIC worked.

Colorado Department of Public Safety. Beginning in February 2017, EPIC has been working within its own department to enhance staff members’ ability to effectively design presentations and trainings. Because staff within the department, and especially within the departments’ Division of Criminal Justice, have contact with many other justice agencies across many domains, EPIC prioritized this work. The two-part project, starts with the premise that the goal of any presentation or training program should not be to merely help someone learn something new, but rather to help them change the way they perform their jobs, and ultimately to improve outcomes for an agency and its customers. The following plan

incorporates this foundation into its design and is based in the science of learning. It is designed for any staff delivering presentations or training events.

- **“Fundamentals of Presentation Preparation.”** This workshop relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to lay the foundation for creating responsive, innovative, and impactful presentations. Rather than lessons on facilitation or training skills, this course focuses on the design and development of presentations. Two sessions of this course were delivered to 44 staff in February 2017.
- **“Designing Learning Using an Evidence-Based Approach.”** This course relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to provide participants with the skills to design and develop curricula using an evidence-based approach. Excellent curriculum designers need to possess the specialized knowledge and skills that are the purview of professionals who design learning experiences that don’t just help participants remember something, but rather transfer skills to staff that result in improved organizational outcomes. At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to describe and apply a blended model learning approach, and they will each create an outline for a curriculum using multiple methods of learning, informed by learning objectives. One session of this intensive course will be delivered in July 2017.

Thinking for a Change. EPIC also delivered its first Thinking for a Change training, an evidence-based program focused on cognitive-behavioral techniques to be used with justice clients, in March of 2017. The model includes not only classroom-type events, but coaching sessions between trainings. Eighteen participants were trained to facilitate this program, increasing Colorado’s capacity to implement this innovation in the state.

Coach Development Services. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by Implementation Specialists and trained coaches in the field, EPIC is conducting an additional smaller-scale project currently underway with the Office of Community Corrections to work on two live coaching projects, one in Larimer County Community Corrections (LCCC), and one with ACTC, Centennial Community Transition Center (CCTC) and Arapahoe County Residential Center (ACRC). This project is aimed at building coaching capacity not specific to any particular innovation, but that can be applied to any innovation.

This model of training and coaching allows EPIC to both move through the installation phase of implementation by ensuring the delivery of high-quality training and basic skill support, and to identify champions within the organization that can begin to take over some training and coaching for the organization as they move into the initial implementation phase. As the implementation progresses, more focus is placed on sustainability of the practice within the organization itself with a decreased reliance on outside entities to continue the use of the innovation.

Section Four: Implications, Future Directions, and Conclusion

Implications

EPIC's work within the state of Colorado brings a robust pool of empirical literature that had been primarily used in the scholastic and healthcare fields into the justice system. By working through program implementation with various agencies throughout Colorado, EPIC is able to both educate diverse sectors of the justice system on a successful implementation framework used in other disciplines, and show the utility of attending to factors beyond number of staff trained in a given innovation.

Working with agencies that represent both adult and juvenile probation, parole, correctional institutions, community corrections, pre-trial intervention, and other justice sectors, the concepts represented by and value of implementation science can begin to pervade the system. EPIC, through formal presentations and experiential learning methods, continues to work in Colorado to educate on the literature about the effects of evidence-based implementation and what is lost by not attending to the implementation drivers.

Since this method of implementation takes significantly more effort and time than traditional methods of program installation, some agencies feel they lack the resources to dedicate to such an involved process. The literature, however, indicates that agencies indeed lack the resources NOT to engage in effective implementation strategies. The limitations of simply training staff can make these lighter levels of implementation more costly in the long run than a more intensive implementation process, as the skills taught in training are never used effectively to realize the promised outcomes of the installed practice. When an agency understands the value of attending not only to the competency driver (i.e. training and coaching the right people), but also the leadership and organizational drivers, a cultural environment can be fostered that creates the necessary space that an EBP implementation requires to be successful.

Future Direction

EPIC created and began using a Request for Services (RFS) process beginning on January 1st, 2017 as a means for taking on new work and better understanding the scope of work before engaging. This RFS is aimed at gaining a preliminary understanding of what the agency is trying to implement. This new process is intended to streamline and standardize the way in which EPIC commits to new work, ensuring that the unit is able to work within its statutory purview and within its capacity. Understanding that implementation is an intensive process that requires a great deal of effort, EPIC realizes it will be able to have a greater and more sustainable impact by working intensely with a handful of organizations at a time as opposed to sparsely spreading out its resources through shallow implementation efforts.

Conclusion

EPIC's use of sound and empirically supported implementation practices has led to performance improvement within partner agencies. Satisfaction surveys, as noted in previous sections, indicate high

levels of perceived value for training, coaching, and practice facilitation offered by EPIC to direct service providers. Additionally, with improved program fidelity permeating the ranks partner agencies, EBPs are being used in a way that better reflects the researched form of the intervention compared to those same individuals when they had only receive training (where most implementation efforts tend to be marked as completed). The use of EBPs in the criminal justice system is intended to reduce recidivism, but this can only be accomplished if the interventions are delivered as intended. By attending to organizational factors, competency, and leadership within in agency, EPIC is able to assist in creating an environment that fosters and encourages the use of EBPs with fidelity. When criminal justice clients experience these practices as they are meant to be used, it reduces the odds that they will recidivate, making Colorado communities safer for everyone.

Section One: Evidence-Based Practices and Implementation Science

Evidence-Based Practices

*“Evidence-based practice (EBP) is the objective, balanced, and responsible use of current research and the best available data to guide policy and practice decisions, such that outcomes for consumers are improved”.*¹³

EBPs originated in the health care and social science fields and focus on effective approaches that are based in empirical research rather than anecdote or professional experience alone. When a practice is deemed to be “evidence-based,” it implies that the practice has a definable outcome; is measurable; and is relevant and realistic in practice, such as recidivism reduction, crime desistance, or substance use reduction.¹⁴

The term “EBP” has been used increasingly in the justice system over the past decade to the point where people often cringe upon hearing it. EPIC’s work revolves around assisting agencies in implementing practices and principles that are evidence-based for the purpose of helping agencies execute their work in proven manners. Additionally, agencies work to implement evidence-informed policies or practices (such policies are based in relevant research, but have not yet been rigorously tested for outcomes in their current use or field) for further evaluation as to whether they will be effective in their performed work. In either case, EPIC’s focus is on building the necessary supports in the areas of staff competency, a hospitable organizational environment in which to perform the work, and leadership that is flexible and adaptive to meet the needs of the staff in carrying out the new policy or practice.

Implementation Science

For decades, research has focused on developing evidence-based programs and practices to produce better outcomes for those involved in the justice system. In recent years, policy has focused on system implementation of these interventions to improve outcomes. While we have made improvements in the quality and adoption of evidence-based interventions, the use of research-based implementation frameworks, processes, and tools is still not utilized by many organizations. No matter how strong the science is behind the EBP, people and communities cannot benefit from the intervention if it is not implemented as intended. In many instances there still remain two primary gaps that prevent EBPs from being used to fidelity and/or producing the intended outcomes. The first is the science-to-service gap, which exists when what has been proven in the research to work is not what is done in practice within the organization. The second is the implementation gap. This results in an EBP that is not being used to fidelity and/or what is done to fidelity is not sustained over time or used on a large enough scale to

¹³ EBPs are also referred to as EBPPs (Evidence Based Programs and Practices) in the literature.

¹⁴ Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (2009). *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

produce outcomes. Implementation science works towards closing these gaps to develop high-fidelity use of EBPs and enhance an organization’s ability to produce measurable, intended outcomes.

Traditionally, agency and department administrators adopt innovations to implement by simply training their staff and designing new written policies with the expectation that this will translate to daily practice. But research on organizational change and skill development shows that this approach does not achieve sustainable outcomes or high-fidelity use of the program or practice. EPIC uses frameworks derived from implementation science to provide technical assistance to agencies in the effective and sustainable implementation of EBPs. According to the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), more than 90% of all public sector evidence-based practice implementations do not progress past the initial execution training because, in large part, staff classroom-style training events are the primary—if not the only—method of implementation.¹⁵ For this reason, EPIC utilizes principles, assessments, and tools from implementation science, primarily from NIRN’s Active Implementation Frameworks, to close the gaps between research and real-world EBP application. This section includes a description of NIRN’s framework given that it is the key framework used by EPIC.

Active Implementation Frameworks

In 2005, Dean Fixsen, et al with the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) developed a monograph in that synthesizes implementation research across multiple fields.¹⁵ From this synthesis of the research, NIRN developed five overarching components that are referred to as the Active Implementation Frameworks. These components are used in the implementation of any EBP into an organization in which NIRN engages and are as follows:

- Usable Innovations
- Implementation Stages
- Implementation Drivers
- Implementation Teams
- Improvement Cycles

Usable Innovations

In order for an EBP to be used by an organization to produce measurable outcomes, the innovation needs to be clearly defined. This allows that program or practice to be learned, used to fidelity, replicated, and scaled-up. This also ensures that an organization will be able to identify the program’s intended population for which it should be used. An EBP that is clearly defined allows the organization to make better decisions about what needs to be added, removed, or adapted to support the program or practice. It also makes evaluation easier and enables the organization to better identify when the program or practice exists within the organization. Operationally defining the essential functions helps an organization to teach, use, and assess the program or practice’s components.

¹⁵ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231)

Implementation Stages

Implementation is not a single event, but rather it occurs over time. The Implementation Stages outline the process of implementation and the multiple activities and decisions that are made at various points of the implementation. Research indicates that implementation of an EBP that meets the usable innovation criteria can be expected to take two to four years. Four stages of implementation are included in NIRN's framework:

- Exploration
- Installation
- Initial Implementation
- Full Implementation

These stages overlap. One stage does not need to end before another begins, but they do tend to move forward in a linear manner.

The goal of the *Exploration* Stage is to assess how well selected EBPs meet the organization's needs, whether it is practical to implement, the extent to which the EBPs will address the specific problem or issue that the organization has identified is evaluated, how the EBPs meet the usable innovation criteria, and which specific EBP will be implemented. Implementation teams (discussed in an upcoming subsection) are created in this stage to conduct these assessments and decide which EBP to implement.

The *Installation* Stage sets the groundwork for the new EBP to be implemented. This includes the development of communication and feedback loops, finance management for the implementation, and developing and/or acquiring the necessary resources for the implementation. In this stage, development of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the organization's staff for the EBP are begun. Systems for training, coaching, feedback, practice, and data are developed in this stage as well.

Initial Implementation begins at the point that the EBP is first put into practice. It is critical to continually monitor progress to identify and address any issues with the implementation and use of the program or practice. Coaching, practice mechanisms, and feedback are also important in this stage to help staff build and incorporate new skills into their work in a way that can be measured by the organization. Data helps guide the process improvement and ongoing decision-making.

Full Implementation occurs when staff are effectively and sustainably using the EBP to fidelity and outcomes are produced. At this point, organizational and cultural shifts have been made to support the new innovation and the new program or practice is now incorporated into the work.

Implementation Drivers

Implementation Drivers are common components that should exist in the implementation of any evidence-based program or practice. These components develop infrastructure, policies and procedures, organizational activities and practices, and agency culture in ways that will support the effective and sustainable implementation of EBPs. The three categories of Implementation Drivers are:

- Competency
- Organization
- Leadership

Competency drivers include activities that improve the ability of organizational staff to learn a new program or practice and incorporate it into practice. The four competency drivers are:

- Staff Selection
 - o Staff selection is critical in determining who within the organization will assist in the implementation of a new EBP as well as who is chosen to be hired into the organization in the future. These staff need to be chosen based on appropriate criteria to ensure the best fit for the role and alignment with the organization.
- Training
 - o EBPs commonly require new skills that are initially learned through training. This may not necessarily be accomplished only through classroom training, but rather multiple learning methods that are based in adult learning theory and research.
- Coaching
 - o In order for the newly acquired knowledge to be developed and incorporated into daily practice, coaching and feedback is necessary. Coaching plans, multiple forms of feedback and observation, to include practice structures, are used to help staff build new skills.
- Fidelity Assessment
 - o It is important to know whether or not staff are using new EBP skills the way that the research intended. High-fidelity use of the program or practice by staff is necessary for the organization to predict outcomes. A fidelity assessment that uses multiple sources of data allows the organization to know at what level of fidelity staff are using the EBP as well as what improvements may need to be made.

The *organizational* supports and infrastructure that are necessary to create an environment that is suitable for the implementation of a new EBP are developed through the organizational drivers. They are:

- Decisional-Support Data Systems
 - o Sound organizational decisions are best made with the use of data to inform and support them. It is necessary for an organization to have data systems that collect and analyze the necessary data in a way that makes the data useful and easily accessible across the organization.
- Facilitative Administration
 - o This driver focuses on organizational components that facilitate the success of the new practice. Administrators and others within the organization tasked to oversee the implementation need to use data to inform decisions, and these decisions should be made in ways that facilitate and support the implementation and the new EBP. Administrators should also be continually identifying and addressing obstacles, creating and effectively utilizing communication and feedback loops, creating or adapting policy to support the new EBP, and examining ways to reduce barriers for staff and the EBP.
- Systems Interventions

- Systems interventions include strategies to help an organization better work with external systems to address systemic issue and barriers. This driver helps develop communication and processes with external entities and partner systems that may be necessary to address key issues.

Actively involved *leadership* across all levels within an organization is a critical component to any implementation. The two primary leadership drivers are:

- Technical Leadership¹⁶
 - Technical leadership can be considered good organizational management. Leaders are able to quickly identify and address issues that arise through the use of more traditional methods. The issues that are addressed are generally not very complex in their associated solutions, but are generally straight forward in nature.
- Adaptive Leadership¹⁷
 - Adaptive leadership is specifically about how leaders are able to support change that enables the organization's and staff's ability to thrive. This requires the use of new and innovative strategies and abilities to address complex problems and issues and lead an organization. Adaptive leadership builds a culture that values diverse views and relies less on central planning and top-down leadership.

Implementation Teams

Traditionally, organizations attempt to implement new programs and practices by simply training staff and potentially changing policies. This does not result in long-term sustainable implementations that produce measureable outcomes. The designation and use of a team that is dedicated to actively planning and coordinating an implementation leads to a more efficient implementation with higher likelihood of achieving the intended outcomes.

An implementation team is composed of a cross section of agency staff, from decision makers to direct service providers. The implementation team leads the effort to institutionalize a new program by taking the responsibility for removing barriers to implementation and ensuring quality planning and practice. These teams focus on enhancing readiness for an implementation, developing the infrastructure for implementation, assessing outcomes and fidelity to the EBP, establishing connections with external systems and partners, and removing barriers for sustainability.

Investigating the replication of EBPs, Fixsen et al. found that sites with an implementation team providing services such as training, on-site consultation, participant selection guidance, facilitative administrative supports, and routine evaluation, were much more likely to successfully implement the

¹⁶ Stacey RD. (2002). *Strategic management and organizational dynamics: the challenge of complexity*. 3rd ed. Harlow: Prentice Hall.

¹⁷ Heifetz, R. A., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business Press.

new program and also become sustainable over time.¹⁸ Specifically, with the use of competent implementation teams, over 80% of the implementation sites were sustained for six years or more (up from 30% without an implementation team) and the time for them to achieve certification of fidelity was 3.6 years. Additional research reveals that it takes an estimated average of 17 years for only 14% of new scientific discoveries to enter day-to-day clinical practice without the use of implementation teams.

Improvement Cycles

Continuous process improvement is necessary to identify and remove barriers to implementation. Organizations and staff can struggle with new EBPs, skills, policies, and practices. It can be easier to change the EBP to fit the current organization's way of work rather than changing the organization and culture to support the effective program or practice. The use of improvement cycles ensures that the barriers are addressed and solutions are developed and implemented in ways that make the organizational environment more conducive to the new program or practice. The purpose of these cycles is to continually improve the quality of the implementation and, therefore, the likelihood of achieving the desired outcomes of the EBP. Organizational change is inevitable, and process improvement cycles help to ensure that this change is done in a purposeful manner.

¹⁸Fixsen, D. L., Blase, K. A., Timbers, G. D., & Wolf, M. M. (2001). In search of program implementation: 792 replications of the Teaching-Family Model. In G. A. Bernfeld, D. P. Farrington & A. W. Leschied (Eds.), *Offender rehabilitation in practice: Implementing and evaluating effective programs* (pp. 149-166). London: Wiley.

Section Two: Fidelity, Learning Components, and Staff Selection

Fidelity Measurement

At its core, the term fidelity refers to the relationship between an intended program and the program as it is applied in practice. The level of fidelity of a new practice is dependent upon how closely the enacted program replicates the intended, or researched, program.¹⁹ All too often, EBPs are deemed ineffective and discarded because intended outcomes are not achieved and fidelity monitoring does not accompany the implementation of the practice. This can lead to staff frustration when an agency has overhauled their processes and practices to bring on an innovation, and cannot see any visible results produced by these efforts.²⁰ To ensure that a new program will achieve its intended results, monitoring fidelity of the program and the practitioners who are using it are essential pieces of the implementation puzzle.

Fidelity is a critical component of EPIC's work. Prior to the implementation of a new program or practice, EPIC works with its partners to determine whether there are existing tools or processes that can be accessed to assist with fidelity monitoring, or if one must be developed in order to examine adherence to a model. In many cases, checking for fidelity can be integrated into training and coaching processes. In other cases, where numerical scores accompany fidelity monitoring, practitioners can become preoccupied with achieving scores rather than investing in practice quality. EPIC works with agencies to incorporate fidelity measurement into a decision-support data system that can be used to monitor fidelity across the organization and make data-informed decisions as necessary to enhance fidelity.

Barriers. Whether EPIC is able to effectively engage with a partner around fidelity measurement in a way that is supportive of staff depends strongly on the acceptance of the EBP and implementation process by agency leadership. Several challenges may hinder progress on achieving fidelity.

EBP implementation can be most efficacious when there is a strong fit between the EBP and the values of the organization where it is being implemented.^{21,22,23} This principle has proven to be extremely contentious in the justice and corrections arenas with the EBPs that are currently being implemented across the state, particularly where the predominant culture is still rooted in punitive measures rather than efforts focused on offender behavior change and skill development.

¹⁹ Century, J., Rudnick, M., & Freeman, C. (2010). A Framework for Measuring Fidelity of Implementation: A Foundation for Shared Language and Accumulation of Knowledge. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31(2), 199-218.

²⁰ Howe, M. & Joplin, L. (2005) *Implementing Evidence-Based Practice in Community Corrections: Quality Assurance Manual*. National Institute of Corrections and the Crime and Justice Institute.

²¹ Linge Rv. (2006). *Innoveren in de gezondheidszorg; theorie, praktijk en onderzoek*. Maarssen: Elsevier gezondheidszorg.

²² Koekkoek, R., Linge, Rv., & van der Hooft-Leemans, G. (2011). Team and Organizational Learning and Implementation success; A study at the influence of Team and Organizational Learning on the Implementation Success of the innovation 'Zorgleefplan' in the context of the Innovation Contingency Theory.

²³ Os-Medendorp, Hv., Eland-de Kok, P., Linge, Rv., Buijnzeel-Koomen, C., Grypdonck, M., & Ros, W (2008). The tailored implementation of the nursing programme 'Coping with itch'. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 17(11), 1460-1470.

Research also shows that professionals who are earlier in their careers when the EBP is being rolled out are more likely to accept the change. Additionally, research indicates that an innovation that is perceived to be a good fit with organizational environment may be more well received because the EBP is more likely to be accepted.²⁴ These two factors may present challenges to many agencies in Colorado's justice system where EBPs are being implemented because the demographics of some agencies may not align with the acceptance of current practices that are more responsive to client needs.

Agency leadership sometimes see fidelity monitoring as a way to monitor staff performance and use fidelity results to negatively impact annual reviews and potential advancement. While some organizations may not even use fidelity as a way to monitor performance, staff may resist assessment due to a *perceived* threat of retribution around "screwing up." To overcome that angst, agencies that separate the fidelity scoring from the performance system by excluding it as an evaluation criteria or ensuring that a direct supervisor does not conduct such assessments of subordinates are more likely to see sustained improvements in the application of EBPs and retain a strengths-based supervision model. Leaders that take a more supportive and coaching approach to fidelity monitoring is more effective.²⁵

Finally, many organizations perceive implementation to be a costly and resource intensive venture, seeing too much work time consumed by the necessary coaching, practice, and fidelity checking. When an EBP is not accepted by an organization, whether it can be attributed to value clash, fear of acquiring new skills and being perceived incompetence in the new EBP, or concerns that implementation will consume too many resources and too much time, efforts to monitor and support fidelity can be an uphill battle.²⁶ But as was mentioned earlier, with the use of competent implementation teams, over 80% of the implementation sites were sustained for six years or more (up from 30% without an implementation team) and the time for them to achieve certification of fidelity was 3.6 years. Additional research reveals that it takes an estimated average of 17 years for only 14% of new scientific discoveries to enter day-to-day clinical practice without the use of implementation teams.

EPIC has found that using fidelity criteria based in research is sometimes an effective way to combat these concerns and communicate principles that can be easily translated into practice, can be scaled, and are effective in determining a practitioner's grasp of the principle. An added benefit can be

²⁴ Titler MG. The Evidence for Evidence-Based Practice Implementation. In: Hughes RG, editor. Patient Safety and Quality: An Evidence-Based Handbook for Nurses. Rockville (MD): Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US); 2008 Apr. Chapter 7. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK2659/>

²⁵ Aarons, G. A., Sommerfeld, D. H., Hecht, D. B., Silovsky, J. F., & Chaffin, M. J. (2009). The Impact of Evidence-Based Practice Implementation and Fidelity Monitoring on Staff Turnover: Evidence for a Protective Effect. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 77*(2), 270–280. <http://doi.org/10.1037/a0013223>

²⁶ Sanders, S., Mackin, M. L., Reyes, J., Herr, K., Titler, M., Fine, P., & Forcucci, C. (2010). Implementing Evidence-Based Practices: Considerations for the Hospice Setting. *The American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Care, 27*(6), 369–376. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1049909109358695>

practitioner experiences of his or her own growth in understanding and incorporating these principles into practice. In subsequent sections describing EPIC's work with specific sites, fidelity measures will be described.

Learning Components

Coaching and Training. Coaching and training are key Competency Drivers. They focus on the development of new EBP skills. Combined with effective staff selection and practice as well as integration with the Leadership and Organizational Drivers, coaching and training lead to staff's understanding, skill, and high-fidelity use of an EBP.

Coaching is the process in which skills that have been trained can be fully integrated into the working space. Coaches help practitioners bring together their knowledge, values, philosophies, and professional experience in the delivery of interventions.²⁷ The role of the coach includes mentoring staff around their use of new knowledge, providing further instruction in the practice setting, assessing the use of skills and providing feedback, and providing emotional support for the practitioner who is being coached.²⁸ Paired with effective training practices, coaching ensures that practitioners understand how to use new skills and effectively know how to integrate them into their everyday work.

EPIC's training model utilizes multiple learning modalities to cater to all learning styles and reinforce content. This includes the use of visual aids, interactive discussions, small group work, role plays, lecture, and competitive games that display understanding of training concepts. By using each of these methods in crafting training events, EPIC increases its ability to maximize the number of people who are engaged during the training, which better equips the participant to understand and use the skills being taught.

The majority of trainings and coaching delivered by EPIC in the past three years have been in MI, though EPIC has also delivered training on coaching pertaining to case planning, Thinking for a Change, leading through adaptive change in an organization, and presentation preparation skills.

The combination of these training practices with effective coaching supports skill development, which leads to fidelity. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by trained coaches in the field, EPIC and contracted entities also complete direct coaching to assist in initial skill development, especially for those who plan to work towards becoming coaches or trainers themselves.

The use of a training and coaching model that involves both EPIC and partner agency has two purposes. First, it allows EPIC to both move through the Installation Stage of implementation by ensuring the

²⁷ Smart, D.A., Blasé, K.B., Smart, D.I., Graham, K., Collins, S.R., Daly, D.L., Fixsen, D.L., & Maloney, D.M. (1979). *The Teaching-Family Consultant's Handbook (Second ed.)*. Boys Town, Nebraska: Father Flanagan's Boys' Home.

²⁸Spouse, J. (2001). Bridging theory and practice in the supervisory relationship: a sociocultural perspective. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33(4), 512-522.

delivery of high-quality training and basic skill support. Second, it helps identify champions within the organization that can begin to take over some training and coaching for the organization as they move into the Initial Implementation Stage. Within this model, as the implementation progresses, more focus is placed on sustainability of the practice within the organization with a decreased reliance on outside entities to continue the use of the innovation. By selecting the right people to carry the innovation from within the organization, the steady transition of training and coaching from EPIC to the organization is smoother and has an increased chance of sustainment.

Practice Structure Installation. The installment of practice groups is a core component of EPIC’s work. A Communities of Practice (CoP) is a vehicle through which staff can come together and practice new skills, discuss their application of skills in the workplace, review challenges and successes that accompany the use of these new skills, and collaborate and give input around difficult workplace situations requiring the use of these acquired skills. CoPs add value to organizations by providing a space in which skills can be practiced and improved upon, ideas can be shared, challenges can be addressed, and improved processes can be generated.²⁹ By definition, CoPs are intended to be conducted in a flat structure, where no one person is in a lead or expert role in the group, and each participant is valued for their unique input and expertise.

Many of the benefits CoPs can produce, including new employees learning the job more quickly, quicker responses to customer needs, reduction in duplicating efforts, and generation of new ideas, are linked to increases in social capital that the groups inspire.³⁰ Furthermore, CoPs also provide a space to drive strategy, innovate and start new practices, yield solutions more quickly than traditional methods, transfer best practices more efficiently, help to develop professional skills, and can assist in recruiting and retaining new talent.³¹

One of the major challenges in implementing CoPs in the justice environment is that by nature, the environment is hierarchical. Often described as a para-military environment, staff are trained and conditioned to follow the direction of their leadership, leaving little room for innovation or discretion on the part of the subordinate. While this structure is more prevalent in law enforcement and corrections, probation and parole units also follow a similar structure of position titles and authority. EPIC has learned through its implementation experiences that the installation of CoPs in justice contexts requires an orchestrated transition from a facilitated group, where there is a designated lead organizer who establishes a structure for the group and facilitates accordingly, to more of a true “community” of ideas and input. Anecdotally, many CoP participants continue to refer to these practice groups as “training” throughout EPIC projects. Additionally, given the established culture of the agencies that EPIC partners with, managers typically do not grasp the value of practice and skill development progress; the

²⁹ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

³⁰ Lesser, E. L. & Storck, J. (2001). Communities of Practice and Organizational Performance. *IBM Systems Journal*, 40(4), 831-841.

³¹ Wenger, E. C., & Snyder, W. M. (2000). Communities of practice: The organizational frontier. *Harvard business review*, 78(1), 139-146.

expectation is often that once staff members attend training, they are ready to implement their new skills perfectly.

The use of CoPs holds a great deal of value in providing ongoing practice and support in using new and complex skillsets acquired through training. While CoPs are traditionally intended to be voluntary, organic practice spaces,³² the introduction of the concept in Colorado's justice system has necessitated a more directive and facilitated approach to align with the top-down culture that pervades the field. This more rigid system of mandated attendance and facilitated content that EPIC introduces in new agencies has made it easier to install CoPs and educate about what they can be used for. This can later give way to a more organic environment that staff come to appreciate and voluntarily attend to find solutions to their struggles and improve their service delivery.

Staff Selection

Staff selection is a critical component of the Competency Drivers in the context of implementation. Reportedly, implications on the staff selection in the implementation context is yet to be researched extensively,³³ however, there is no lack of information in both popular and academic literature around hiring the right person, be it for an organization or a job itself.

Experimental research found that for practitioners of an intervention, using interviewing techniques that included role play and behavioral vignettes to demonstrate a candidate's fit with the required duties were strong indicators of success as well as retention on the job.⁴⁸ For existing staff members who must learn and adapt new skills and techniques with implementation, selection techniques still apply. Not everyone who was hired under former practices may be well suited for the implementation of new practices and under new policies. Based on EPIC's experiences, many justice agency staff members who are chosen to blaze trails in critical roles during implementation are more often selected on the basis of years of service or rank within a particular hierarchy, rather than good fit with a role. Staff selection as it applies to existing staff needs to start with a conversation and continue with a process of negotiation between manager and staff member. Staff members, when "voluntold" to fill a need, can often hinder or sabotage an implementation, even if they are technically a good fit. The potential downfalls of not taking time to select staff thoughtfully and collaboratively includes wasting of training and coaching resources, disgruntled participants "poisoning the well" amongst other staff members regarding the new practice, and ultimately, a botched implementation which can lead to a total failure of the new practice.

³² Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

³³ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231)

EPIC has found staff selection failures to be a significant challenge when assisting agencies with implementation. For example, data from a recent project found that approximately 55% of staff chosen to take on a lead role in implementing a new case planning system turned over within the first year of implementation. Among those who turned over in the first year, 75% either opted out of the lead role or transferred laterally out of the role to another position. Additionally, when staff members are not selected carefully, there is often a very limited amount of buy-in and interest in developing the skills to execute a new practice. Precious time that could be used for skill building is expended to address staff resistance.

Conversely, EPIC's MI trainer and coach development procedure is a multi-phased process with an application and agreements that occur with and between the candidate, his or her supervisor, and EPIC staff members. Briefly, candidates complete an application that requires agreement and sign off from their supervisors. They are required to engage in 24 hours of skill building training, participate regularly in CoPs, observe certified coaches in the coaching process, and be observed themselves. Candidates must also complete coaching reports, or a written summary of feedback. The process takes approximately one year to complete. A different level of commitment is expected and development is spent solely on skill building rather than breaking down resistance to the innovation.

Section Three: Milestones and Accomplishments

Overview of Projects

Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. The following subsections will describe these activities. *(For a graphic description of the following projects, please see Appendix B.)*

Motivational Interviewing Direct Training, Coaching and Practice Development. MI implementation began statewide in 2010. As part of the Installation Stage of implementation, it included direct training, coaching and practice group development for designated “Change Agents”³⁴ in probation, parole, behavioral health, community corrections, and prison facilities.

EPIC continued to provide MI training services since the writing of its last legislative report. The *number and type of MI trainings* held by year is listed below. Over this last report period, 1,113 justice professionals were served by these trainings. EPIC has delivered 48 trainings since the beginning of FY2014. Of these trainings, 27 were MI 101 trainings, 15 were MI 102 trainings, five were coaches trainings to prepare prospective coaches to take that role within their agency, and one was training for trainers to enable staff to train MI 101 and MI 102 for their own and other agencies.

Motivational Interviewing Trainings Provided	2014 (from 7/1)	2015	2016	2017 (through 6/30)	TOTAL (7/1/2014-6/30/2017)
MI 101	7	9	10	1	27
MI 102	1	2	11	1	15
MI Coaches Training	1	2	1	1	5
MI Train the Trainer	0	0	1	0	1

EPIC delivered MI 101 training to 661 Coloradans working in the justice field between July 1st, 2014 and June 30th, 2017. In that same timeframe, EPIC trained 383 individuals in MI 102. As such, a total of 1,113 training slots were filled in EPIC trainings over the course of the last 3 years, building a significant knowledge and skill base in the Colorado justice community around MI. As a part of the Installation Stage of Implementation, during this time frame EPIC developed 46 MI coaches and 23 MI trainers within EPIC’s partner agencies across the state as sustainable resources to continue long-term efforts to build agency capacity in Motivational Interviewing.

³⁴ A Change Agent is defined as a person who is willing, ready and able to impact the culture and outcomes of their organization by learning, employing and modeling day-to-day use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) with their clients and colleagues.

Staff trained in Motivational Interviewing	Total (7/1/2014-6/30/2017)
MI 101	661
MI 102	383
MI Coaches Training	46
MI Train the Trainer	23
TOTAL	1,113

Change Agents participated in an intensive skill development process, described in earlier sections. Their program included numerous coaching sessions, participation in local communities of practice (CoPs), audio-taping on regular intervals in order to reach MI competency as deemed by the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards. Using a recorded work sample of at least 20 minutes, these standards measure the practitioner's reflection to question ratio, percentage of open-ended questions, percentage of complex reflections, as well as the use of MI adherent approaches and skills.³⁵

From July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2017, 61 people achieved competency in MI. This means that they were able to adhere to a quality of MI that has been researched and confirmed to have an impact on behavior change.

Motivational Interviewing Coach and Trainer Development. An additional part of the initial implementation design was the development of MI coaches and trainers across all these agencies to facilitate agency independence and sustainability in growing MI in their respective departments. Consequently, EPIC continued to build coaches and trainers in Motivational Interviewing (MI) across the state throughout this period in an effort to enhance agency Competency Drivers. Ultimately, EPIC partnered with selected probation and community corrections programs to develop 57 coaches and 23 trainers to ensure sustainability of MI in these agencies. These coaches and trainers help the agencies continue to further staff learning in MI and the incorporation of the skills into everyday work in a long-term, sustainable way.

Current coaching curriculum targets providing effective feedback, technical skill development, creating hospitable working environments, leadership development and engagement, and responsivity practices. The trainer curriculum focuses on the skills of MI while also helping participants learn frameworks for helping others learn and incorporate new skills. These frameworks are often new to most agencies and participants at the beginning because of the incorporation of practice, feedback, and formal and informal coaching.

³⁵ Moyers, T.B., Martin, T., Manuel, J.K., Miller, W.R., & Ernst, D. (2010). Revised Global Scales: Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity 3.1.1 (MITI 3.1.1). Retrieved from <http://casaa.unm.edu/mimanuals.html>.

To ensure quality of coaching and assess for inter-rater reliability among coaches post-training, EPIC and its coaches also utilize Justice System Assessment and Training’s Skillbuilders tool that incorporates the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards. EPIC engages with the identified coaches in a rigorous training and coaching program. Components of this program include numerous observations and feedback sessions with EPIC Implementation Specialists, participation in statewide communities of practice (CoP) (practice groups), and maintenance of their MI competency through session audio recordings submitted every six months.

Since 2014, the greatest concentration of new coaches was developed in Jefferson, Mesa, El Paso, and Adams Counties and the greatest concentration of new trainers in Jefferson, El Paso and Mesa Counties.

EPIC Regional Working Group	Judicial District	Coaches	Trainers	Provisional Coaches
Jefferson	1st	8	7	1
Denver	2nd	3	1	0
Colorado Springs	4th	5	3	2
Larimer	8th	2	2	1
Glenwood Springs/Rifle	9th	2	1	0
Pueblo	10th	2	2	0
Buena Vista/Salida	11th	1	0	0
Alamosa	12th	1	0	0
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	13th	2	1	0
Moffat/Routt/Grand	14th	1	0	0
La Junta	16th	2	1	0
Adams	17th	8	2	2
Arapahoe	18th	0	0	1
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	19th	4	0	2
Grand Junction	21st	5	3	2
Total		46	23	11

17th Judicial District Probation Department. After being targeted as an initial EPIC site in 2010, EPIC once again commenced a three-year project with the 17th Judicial District Probation Department in 2014 to further build the competency of their department in MI, increase their coaching capacity, and evaluate their use of CoPs. These goals were formalized extensions of the work that had been taking place with the agency since 2010. Each of these areas of focus has consisted of multiple activities which were coordinated through the standing implementation team within the agency.

To build MI competency throughout the organization, EPIC began the early Installation Stage of implementation by training staff with both a basic and advanced MI training to be taken sequentially. The initial goal was to identify champions and early adopters (Change Agents) that would help the organization implement MI. Some of these champions and early adopters would progress to become trainers, coaches, and promoters of MI and the implementation. At the time of this writing, in the Initial

Implementation Stage of implementation, 90% of staff employed by the 17th Judicial District Probation Department has received the basic training, while 49% have received the advanced training. To ensure the agency has the internal capacity to train new staff as they are hired, designated staff members attended an EPIC training for trainers and are now able to train MI. These efforts have been supplemented by EPIC staff providing individual coaching to up to 25 Change Agents at a time who have completed the advanced training. These individualized coaching sessions focus on the needs of the Change Agent to help them refine their skills and ultimately reach competency. Approximately 14% of staff have reached MI competency at this juncture, and an additional 25% have either submitted tapes for evaluation in the past or are currently actively moving toward competency.

To further bolster the sustainability of MI in the 17th Judicial District Probation Department, those who have reached competency may apply to work toward becoming coaches of MI to coach their fellow staff members and improve their skills. To do this, MI competent individuals participate in a two-day coaches training, then shadow a certified or EPIC coach during multiple coaching sessions before being shadowed themselves whilst conducting coaching sessions. This rigorous process ensures that certified coaches adhere to evidence-based coaching processes and are capable of coaching the correct skills effectively. EPIC has fully certified 8 coaches in the 17th Judicial District Probation Department and two additional, provisional coaches are currently going through the process to earn their certification. These internal coaches, along with the certified trainers, allow the agency to take new employees from having no MI experience all the way through competency and becoming certified coaches without reliance on any external consultants or resources. These resources are critical as the agency moves through the Full Implementation Stage of implementation into long-term sustainability and high-fidelity use of MI.

To continue strengthening the Competency Drivers within the organization, EPIC also helped the 17th install a practice infrastructure specific to their department that began in 2014. The installed CoP structure was created for the 17th Judicial District Probation Department to operate an independent practice space and replaced county-wide practice groups, which originally developed from EPIC-facilitated CoPs. The 2014 practice structure was heavily facilitated and voluntary, which led to sparse attendance. In 2015, this was transitioned to a mandatory attendance model in which staff had to attend at least six CoPs per year and had the flexibility to choose when to attend.

To understand how these CoPs were impacting skill development within the agency, EPIC conducted an evaluation from July, 2015 through November, 2015. Goals for this evaluation were to determine what aspects of their practice structure were functioning effectively and which may be hindering their efficacy, and to extrapolate for application with other sites incorporating CoP.

For this endeavor, EPIC empaneled an evaluation staff comprised of two EPIC staff members and two staff from Justice System Assessment & Training (JSAT), a local consulting firm under contract to EPIC. This evaluation team determined they were able to access several sources of data to complete a process evaluation and develop deeper understanding of the agency's CoP process:

1. Direct observation of CoPs

2. Anonymous survey data from all agency officers and managers regarding the current MI CoP program
3. EPIC centralized tracking data for staff MI status and CoP attendance
4. Post-observation Focus Group from a stratified sample of staff

Both quantitative and qualitative information were pulled from these sources. Improvements in the learning community – the essence of the CoP experience, were deemed a function for how Facilitation, Engagement and Learning/ Practices are aligned. Based on the survey and focus group results, various themes emerged. Facilitators and participants alike noted that facilitation of these CoPs was relatively weak based on low skills. Many participants also had little experience with MI when these CoPs were being conducted. As such, topics were very basic in nature which left those with more MI experience feeling bored and disengaged during the practice groups. This skill differential created a low energy environment in which people participated when they had to and were not invested enough to challenge incorrect practice or thoughts. While there was still some MI modeling and skill practice, these components were rather basic due to low MI skills of some in the room.

The survey and focus group indicated a need for greater investment and engagement within CoPs if they were to continue. There was also a desire to have more relevant and varied practice for their jobs, which varied based on unit. These desires reflected the evaluation results explained above as well.

The results of this evaluation were used to redesign the practice groups once more in late 2016. A new CoP structure was co-created with the 17th Judicial District Probation Department that stabilized group membership, provided each group the autonomy to practice how and what they wanted relating to MI, and provided the option to incorporate other job-related activities into their CoP practice. The implementation team identified and selected a number of staff as “CoP leads” who would be trained in facilitating group learning, provided resources for ensuring meaningful practice, and who would facilitate practice groups with stable membership to encourage engagement, safety, and bonding. The leads of these new groups attend quarterly CoPs with an EPIC staff member to adaptively troubleshoot problems, share successes and resources, and discuss facilitation strategies to foster greater learning and engagement.

The new practice structure also increases the autonomy of all staff involved, as each stable group decides together what to practice and how to do so. Based on feedback received at the lead CoPs and group CoPs that EPIC staff has attended, participation, engagement, and relevant skill practice have increased significantly since the installation of the new model. EPIC plans to conduct a smaller scale CoP evaluation later this year and will again collect data using similar measures to compare time one to time two.

Colorado Department of Corrections. EPIC also worked with Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities to implement the Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP), which consists of the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) and its accompanying case planning process. This project involved implementing a coaching model for case management across the state’s facilities. EPIC helped DOC

develop an implementation team representing various levels and responsibilities from across the department to develop the implementation plan. Additional activities included developing coaches through phone coaching, facility visits that included live coaching, CoPs, and leadership development.

Over the course of the two-year project, EPIC initiated or completed coach development with 81 case management staff that DOC leadership identified to engage in a coach development process to develop the remaining case management staffs' capacity to effectively case plan using CTAP. EPIC provided monthly phone coaching, making available a total of 473 coaching slots, with 369 slots being used by case manager coaches. This amounted to a total of 553.5 hours being dedicated to coaching and preparation by EPIC staff. EPIC also conducted regional practice groups in Denver, Pueblo, and Canon City on a monthly basis to help reinforce the concepts originally presented in training. During this time, EPIC also visited 23 state and private facilities, addressing facilitative support issues with facility leadership at each site, working with coaches, and assisting facilities in their development of practice groups.

Throughout work with DOC (2015-2017), EPIC's focus on fidelity was designed to have case managers work toward using CTAP as designed so client outcomes could be attributed to the intervention as opposed to adaptations or other practices occurring with clients that lack current, empirical support.

EPIC coaches were spread over 22 public and private facilities. At the time DOC terminated its relationship with EPIC, 38 coaches were actively coaching facility staff and 21 were in the process of onboarding as coaches. Over the course of EPIC's involvement with DOC, 22 people left their role as coaches, primarily due to retirement, promotion or transferring out of case management (55%). The remaining staff opted out of the coaching role (45%).

Coaches who had completed training were asked to participate in at least one coaching session per quarter. Coaches who were in the onboarding process were required to engage in phone coaching with an EPIC staff member at least once a month. Of the 38 active coaches, 61% were on target with quarterly coaching requirements. Among the 21 coaches who were onboarding, all but three people were meeting the minimum monthly coaching requirements.

EPIC coached to and measured progress data in accordance with the fidelity worksheet criteria. Final case plan fidelity criteria were determined by the implementation team and were derived from the Eight Guiding Principles to Reducing Risk and Recidivism,³⁶ the Prisoner Reentry Initiative's Coaching Packet Series: Effective Case Management³⁷ and training materials provided to CDOC by the University of Cincinnati's Corrections Institute:

³⁶Bogue, B. et al. (2004). Implementing evidence-based practice in community corrections: The principles of effective intervention. Boston, MA: Crime and Justice Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.nicic.org/pubs/2004/019342.pdf>

³⁷Domurad, F., & Carey, M. (2010). Coaching packet: Implementing evidence-based practices. Silver Spring, MD: Center for Effective Public Policy.

1. Case plan prioritizes top two criminogenic need areas as determined by the assessment.
2. Each criminogenic need area breaks out at least two objectives.
3. Each objective is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic/Relevant, Timebound).
4. At least one objective enhances intrinsic motivation.
5. At least one objective utilizes skill training with directed practice.
6. At least half of the objectives use a “face to face” technique.

The average baseline fidelity score for the original coaches that remained in the role were slightly higher than the average original score for all that were included in the original cohort, which exemplifies the utility of effective selection criteria. Those who dropped out due to a lack of fit with the role (not to include those who were promoted out of the role or dropped out for emotional health reasons) had an average original fidelity score approximately 32% lower than those who elected to stay in the role throughout the implementation. Though the original selection process was based on seniority as opposed to fit for the role, the individuals who remained as coaches happened to be good selections based on other characteristics that more closely tie to successful case planning practices.

In tracking improvements to fidelity measures used during the CTAP implementation, EPIC saw improvements in the adherence to the evidence-based principles underlying the use of case planning with justice clients. In comparing aggregated fidelity data available for active coaches who sent EPIC a case plan within the first few months of coaching and coaches who had sent a case plan that was completed by July 1, 2017, there was marked improvement in the adherence to the outlined fidelity principles. Overall, the average recorded improvement between these coaching cohorts was 17.89%. Though some coaches included in this analysis were new to the coaching role, there was still a strong skill gain noted. When controlling for new coaches and analyzing fidelity improvement for original coaches only, the observed effect improved slightly with an 18.18% increase in fidelity score. EPIC also looked at fidelity increases for coaches who started and remained in the role for the entirety of the implementation partnership by comparing their original scores with their final scores. These individuals also saw an average increase of approximately 18% when controlling for coaches who dropped out of the role. The final average fidelity score for active coaches was 4.44 out of 6.

As was mentioned, CoPs are a key component of the learning process in which EPIC engages agencies. The results from the 17th Judicial District Probation Department CoP Analysis were used to inform the evolving CoP structure used in the DOC implementation of CTAP, and evidence-based risk assessment and case planning system. While these CoPs were originally similar to interactive trainings due to a need for more exposure to content before organic discussion of concepts could occur, EPIC transitioned these to providing greater autonomy as early in the process as possible. This meant bringing fewer preordained topics for discussion and allowing each group to identify their struggles and desired topic areas in real time and facilitating conversation around these areas. EPIC also began this process with stable CoPs in which identified coaches would attend the same CoP each month, providing greater levels of safety and comfort within each group to explore topics unabashedly. Finally, EPIC allowed space early into this process for attendees to air their concerns and frustrations with the fast implementation process of CTAP. Providing a safe space for this dialogue to occur increased trust among participants and

facilitators and created more engagement around the innovation content practiced and discussed in subsequent CoPs.

Additionally and importantly, to support the implementation of CTAP within the Colorado Department of Corrections, EPIC developed and presented an adaptive leadership curriculum to leaders from across the department to help them adjust and excel at leading through this large system change. EPIC completed a total of 11 trainings spanning four content modules, with 220 seats filled by 98 individual invitees in facility leadership positions.

The topics for the leadership series were chosen because they are central to leading an implementation of adaptive skills. Implementing adaptive skills requires leadership to attend to engaging staff and attending to issues such as autonomy, mastery, and purpose, which are predictive of improved performance and outcomes. The leadership series therefore began with creating an engaged workforce and the ability to identify and reverse disengagement of employees. Other topics included enhancing employee motivation, preventing burnout, supporting employees through paradigm shifts, developing lead and lag indicators of progress, coaching and giving difficult feedback, and developing skills in forging effective relationships with higher ranking staff members.

In examining the impact of the leadership workshops through post-training evaluations, EPIC staff were most interested in knowing attendees levels of interest in the material, what they wanted to learn more about, what they were learning about themselves as leaders, and what their takeaways were from the workshops. These data indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the material presented in the trainings, as 100% of respondents indicated that they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with each module, with approximately 76% reporting that they were highly satisfied.

Overall, narrative responses included many self-reflective statements about how the material was inspiring them to look at themselves through some of the lenses presented and challenge themselves to go beyond their own limitations to become better leaders. To facilitate the change process, they wanted to be better listeners, take into account others' personality styles, paradigms and perspectives, explain better why the change is needed, help folks deal with burnout and stress around it, and better engage staff through understanding underlying assumptions and commitments staff have about their work and the world. The great majority of participants wanted to continue the learning and expressed many topics they in which they were interested to learn more. Unfortunately, the work with DOC was cut short at DOC's request and the leadership workshops, along with all the other components mentioned, were not completed.

Arapahoe Community Treatment Center (ACTC). EPIC partnered with the ACTC, a community corrections facility located in southwest Denver to implement the Progression Matrix (case planning system) and the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART) incentives and sanctions tool. Throughout this three-year collaboration, EPIC worked with ACTC focused on two primary targets: to develop a coaching model that could be applied to any innovation and the enhancement of leadership and organizational capacity to support the implementation of these two innovations. These

targets were identified by the implementation team to be of highest importance and consequence through a drivers best practices assessment (DBPA)³⁸ conducted by EPIC. This DBPA established a baseline score around how each driver was functioning in the organization. Because this phase of the work with ACTC is officially wrapping up at the end of July 2017, EPIC recently conducted a closing DBPA with the implementation team. The reassessment revealed that overall, the composite score increased from the baseline (.74 in 2016 to .95 in 2017, on a 0-2 point scale) and for the respective target areas, subscale scores for the coaching driver increased from 0 to .75 and leadership, 1.0 to 1.3. These score increases represent significant growth in these two areas of focus. The overall organizational support driver score increased from .5 to 1.2, demonstrating an increase in the infrastructural components critical to supporting the newly implemented innovations.

Colorado Department of Public Safety. Beginning in February 2017, EPIC has been working within its own department to enhance staff members' ability to effectively design presentations and trainings. Because staff within the department, and especially within the department's' Division of Criminal Justice, have contact with many other justice agencies across many domains, EPIC prioritized this work. The two-part project, starts with the premise that the goal of any presentation or training program should not be to merely help someone learn something new, but rather to help them change the way they perform their jobs, and ultimately to improve outcomes for an agency and its customers. The following plan incorporates this foundation into its design and is based in the science of learning. It is designed for any staff delivering presentations or training events.

- ***“Fundamentals of Presentation Preparation.”*** This workshop relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to lay the foundation for creating responsive, innovative, and impactful presentations. Rather than lessons on facilitation or training skills, this course focuses on the design and development of presentations. Two sessions of this course were delivered to 44 staff in February 2017.
- ***“Designing Learning Using an Evidence-Based Approach.”*** This course relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to provide participants with the skills to design and develop curricula using an evidence-based approach. Excellent curriculum designers need to possess the specialized knowledge and skills that are the purview of professionals who design learning experiences that don't just help participants remember something, but rather transfer skills to staff that result in improved organizational outcomes. At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to describe and apply a blended model learning approach, and they will each create an outline for a curriculum using multiple methods of learning, informed by learning objectives. One session of this intensive course will be delivered in July 2017.

³⁸ Fixsen, D., Blase, K., Naoom, S., & Duda, M. (2015). *Drivers Best Practices Assessment* [Measurement instrument]. Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources/implementation-drivers-assessing-best-practices>

Thinking for a Change. EPIC also delivered its first Thinking for a Change training, an evidence-based program focused on cognitive-behavioral techniques to be used with justice clients, in March of 2017. 18 participants from various behavioral health and community corrections entities were trained to facilitate this program to clients in the field, increasing Colorado’s capacity to implement this effective, well-researched innovation in the state.

Coach Development Services. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by Implementation Specialists and trained coaches in the field, EPIC is conducting an additional smaller-scale project currently underway with the Office of Community Corrections to work on two live coaching projects, one in Larimer County Community Corrections (LCCC), and one with ACTC, Centennial Community Transition Center (CCTC) and Arapahoe County Residential Center (ACRC). This project is aimed at building coaching capacity not specific to any particular innovation, but that can be applied to any EBP.

In 2015, when the rollout of the Office of Community Corrections (OCC) Progression Matrix case planning tool was nearly completed, EPIC partnered with LCCC to develop and pilot a live (in-person) coaching process to coach staff on the Progression Matrix. EPIC and LCCC worked together to establish a process of observation and coaching of case managers as they met with clients. Components of the Progression Matrix, including skill training with directed practice and enhancing intrinsic motivation, using basic motivational interviewing techniques, were tested. Upon completion of the pilot, a report was developed on the feasibility of using the coaching model to help build capacity around the Progression Matrix and what elements needed to be in place in order to implement a successful live coaching model.

In 2016, EPIC conducted a Drivers Best Practice Assessment (DBPA) with the management/implementation team at ACTC. The results of the DBPA highlighted a coaching deficit within the agency. The team decided they would like to begin with tackling the coaching driver as this presented as an attainable goal. Once ACTC agreed this is what they wanted to focus on, a live coaching model was discussed and presented by EPIC to assist with moving them forward. Upon approval of the model by the ACTC implementation team, OCC and EPIC began planning what would be the Live Coaching Workshop. Two other community corrections facilities in Arapahoe County also chose to adopt the live coaching model and integrate it into their programs.

Section Four: Implications and Future Direction

Implications

EPIC's work within the state of Colorado brings a robust pool of empirical literature that is primarily used in the scholastic and healthcare fields into the justice system. While the use of EBPs has been on the rise in this field, the science behind evidence-based implementation remains a relatively foreign and novel concept. By working through program implementation with various agencies throughout Colorado, EPIC is able to both educate diverse sectors of the justice system on successful implementation frameworks and change strategies used in other disciplines, and show the utility of attending to factors beyond the number of staff trained in a given innovation.

Working with agencies that represent probation, parole, correctional institutions, community corrections, pre-trial intervention, and other justice sectors, the concepts represented by and value of implementation science can begin to pervade the system. To begin changing the perception of what constitutes successful implementation as opposed to simply training and changing policy, understanding the research that has been done on the implementation process is integral. EPIC, through formal presentations and experiential learning methods, continues to work in Colorado to translate the effects of evidence-based implementation and what is lost by not attending to the implementation drivers.

Since this method of implementation takes significantly more effort and time than traditional methods of program installation, some agencies feel they lack the resources to dedicate to such an involved process. The literature, however, indicates that agencies indeed lack the resources NOT to engage in effective implementation strategies. The limitations of simply training staff can make these lighter levels of implementation more costly in the long run than a more intensive implementation process, as the skills taught in training are never used effectively to realize the promised outcomes of the installed practice. An investment in a more holistic and purposeful implementation process with the primary goal of transferring learned skills into routine professional use is an investment that can produce changes in how staff do their jobs, which is the purpose (but not necessarily the outcome) of training alone. When an agency understands the value of attending not only to the Competency Drivers (i.e. training and coaching the right people), but also the Leadership and Organizational Drivers, a cultural environment can be fostered that creates the necessary space that an EBP implementation requires to be successful. This is at the heart of what EPIC aims to accomplish through the use of active implementation frameworks.

Future Direction

EPIC created and began using a Request for Services (RFS) process beginning on January 1st, 2017 as a means for taking on new work and better understanding the scope of work before engaging. This RFS is aimed at gaining a preliminary understanding of what the agency is trying to implement. Upon reception of an RFS, a rotating committee of three-four EPIC staff (that always includes the unit manager) review the application, assess the scope of the request, and determine whether or not a subsequent meeting with the agency to gain more information about the request is needed.

This new process is intended to streamline and standardize the way in which EPIC commits to new work, ensuring that the unit is able to work within its statutory purview and within its capacity. Understanding that implementation is an intensive process that requires a great deal of effort, EPIC realizes it will be able to have a greater and more sustainable impact by working intensely with a handful of organizations at a time as opposed to sparsely spreading out its resources through shallow implementation efforts.

As communities have embraced the initial offerings of EPIC the EBP market in Colorado's correctional and justice systems has advanced in their understanding of and value for wise expenditures of resources. EPIC's more intensive focus in select agencies will allow for more impactful outcomes, smoother management of change processes, and more purposeful collection of implementation and EBP data. EPIC seeks to collect data that will demonstrate the impact of and need for effective implementation practices in the justice system, document the process within a justice organization for replication, approximate up-front implementation costs and savings long-term, and will indicate that efficient use of research-based implementation practices produces high-fidelity use of EBPs and predictable, measurable outcomes for organizations.

Numerous implementation frameworks, models, tools, and assessments exist. Many have come from NIRN's synthesis of the implementation research. All of these have been created from varying levels of research as well as multiple fields of study. While EPIC primarily uses the NIRN framework, along with theories of change management and organizational development, it seeks to continually learn about effective strategies from all these fields so that it is always at the forefront in the use of these methodologies.

Conclusion

EPIC's use of sound and empirically supported implementation practices has led to performance improvement within partner agencies. Satisfaction surveys, as noted in previous sections, indicate high levels of perceived value for training, coaching, and practice facilitation offered by EPIC to direct service providers and leaders. Additionally, with improved program fidelity permeating the ranks within partner agencies, EBPs are being used in a way that better reflects the researched form of the intervention compared to those same individuals when they had only receive training (where most implementation efforts tend to be marked as completed). The use of EBPs in the justice system is intended to reduce recidivism, but this can only be accomplished if the interventions are delivered as intended. By attending to organizational factors, competency, and leadership within in agency, EPIC is able to assist in creating environments that fosters and encourage the use of EBPs with fidelity. When justice clients experience these practices as they are meant to be used, it reduces the odds that they will recidivate, driving down costs to the state and counties, and making Colorado communities safer for everyone.

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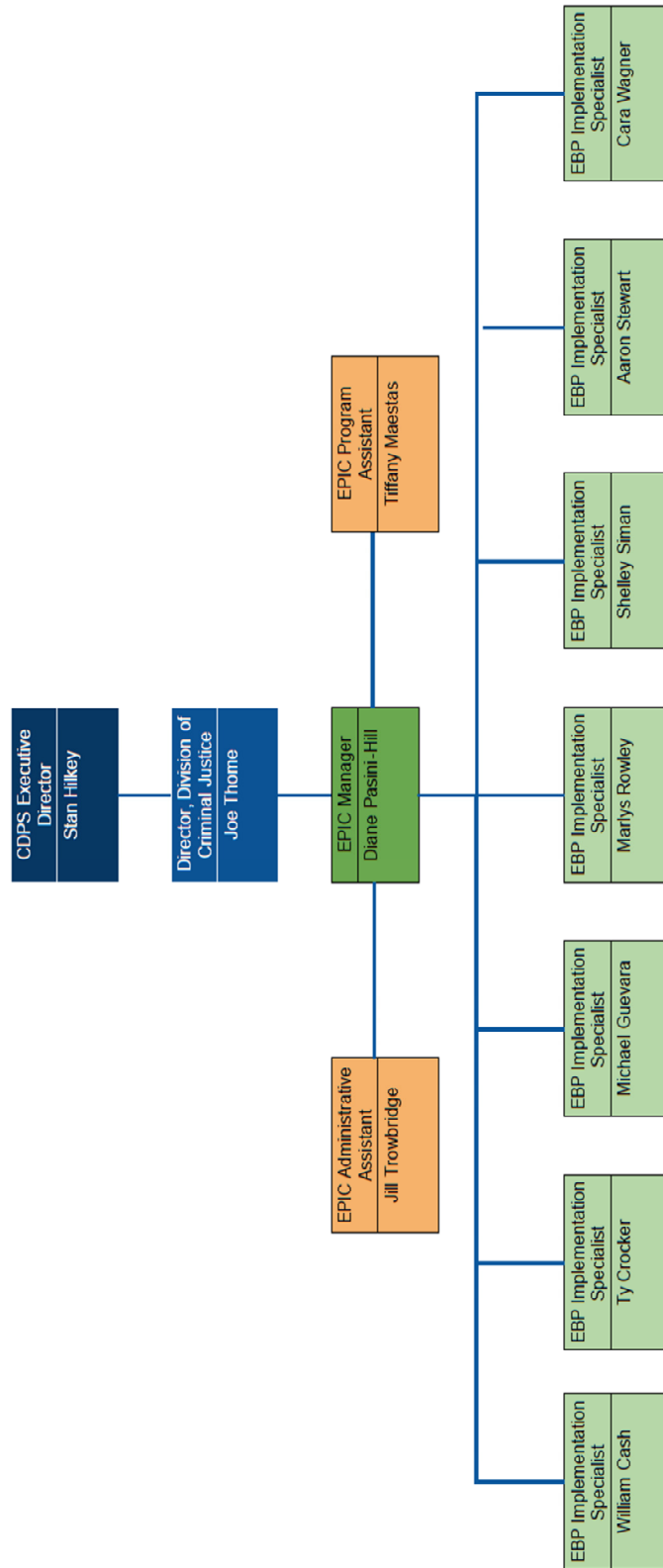
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Appendices

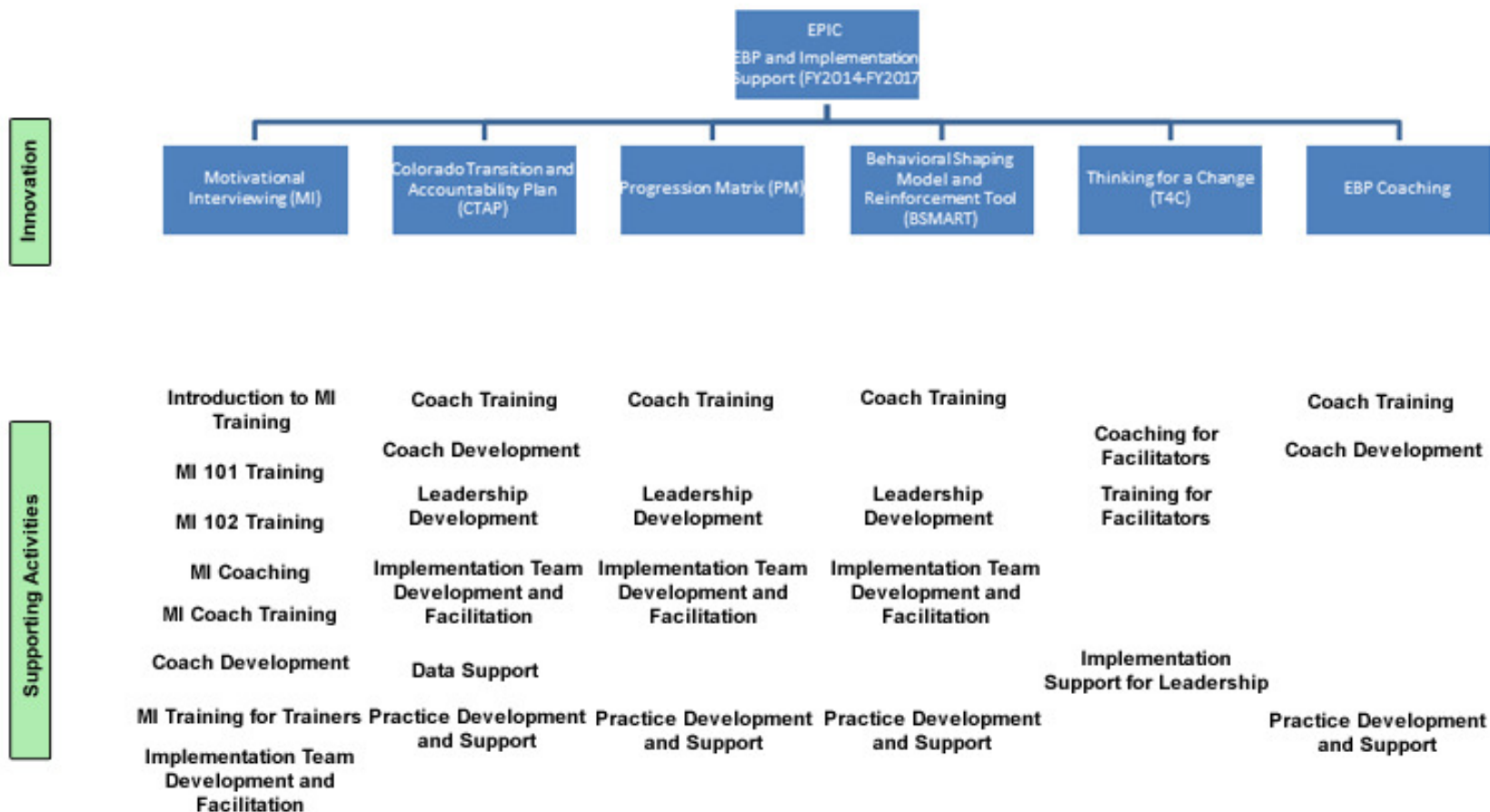
APPENDIX A

EPIC Organizational Chart Effective 06/2017



APPENDIX B
EPIC Projects Overview FY2014 to FY2017

Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity: 2017 Legislative Update



Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity (EPIC)

Legislative Update (CRS 24-33.5-514)



July 2017

Division of Criminal Justice
Colorado Department of Public Safety
700 Kipling Street
Denver CO 80215
<http://dcj.epic.state.co.us/>



COLORADO
Division of Criminal Justice
Department of Public Safety



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Department of Public Safety
Executive Director's Office

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Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity (EPIC)

Legislative Update (CRS 24-33.5-514)

July 2017

Prepared by:

Ty Crocker, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Shelley Siman, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Aaron Stewart, EBP Implementation Specialist
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Diane Pasini-Hill, EPIC Manager
Colorado Division of Criminal Justice

Stan Hilkey, Executive Director
Colorado Department of Public Safety

Joe Thome, Director
Division of Criminal Justice

Diane Pasini-Hill, EPIC Manager
Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity

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Introduction

Background and Purpose of the Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity (EPIC) Resource Center

At its inception in October, 2009, EPIC was funded through a federal Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) for \$2.1 million dollars for the primary purpose of building capacity among five state agencies for the implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs). EPIC was originally housed in the Colorado Department of Public Safety's (CDPS) Executive Director's Office as an initiative of the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice. The EPIC Resource Center was created as a collaborative, comprehensive effort to systematically enhance the knowledge, skill base and capacity of justice system professionals in evidence-based practices (EBPs). In April, 2013, the Colorado State Legislature passed HB13-1129, placing EPIC within the Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) in CDPS (*see Appendix A for EPIC's organizational chart*). The mission of EPIC is to collaborate with justice partners using research-informed approaches to improve outcomes in Colorado communities. This report serves to fulfill the requirement for a center status report every three years per 24-33.5.514(4).

For the first several years of the project, EPIC worked exclusively with the following legislatively identified collaborators: Department of Corrections (both facilities and parole), The Office of Behavioral Health within the Department of Human Services and their affiliated agencies, the Division of Probation Services within the Judicial Branch, and the Office of Community Corrections within the Division of Criminal Justice and the associated community corrections facilities. The work focused on developing agency staff capacity to integrate selected evidence-based practices and principles into their daily interactions with individuals in the justice system using structured components from implementation science. These included Motivational Interviewing, assessment and case management systems (Level of Supervision Inventory and the Ohio Risk Assessment System [Colorado Department of Corrections' Colorado Transition Accountability Plan], and Colorado Community Correction's Progression Matrix), cognitive behavioral interventions (primarily Thinking for a Change), and Colorado Community Corrections sanctions and incentives model, the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART). EPIC has recently expanded its scope of partnerships to include wider array of agencies serving justice-involved or at-risk populations and has opened its approach to a Request for Services model for agencies interested in EPIC services, paving the way for wider expanse of impact across the system.

Once a request is received, an internal committee reviews the requests and meets with submitting agencies to determine the fit of the project for implementation services. Upon agreement, a scope of work and Memorandum of Understanding are drafted to move forward with the work.

Report Organization

This report begins with an executive summary and is then organized as follows: Section One gives a brief overview of implementation and evidence-based practices; Section Two describes EPIC's milestones and

accomplishments since the last legislative reporting period; Section Three discusses EPIC's sustainability approaches and corresponding data; and finally, Section Four summarizes key points and describes future direction and goals.

Executive Summary

Section One: Implementation and Evidence-Based Practices

Evidence-Based Practices

*“Evidence-based practice (EBP) is the objective, balanced, and responsible use of current research and the best available data to guide policy and practice decisions, such that outcomes for consumers are improved.”*¹ When a practice is deemed to be “evidence-based,” it implies that the practice has a definable outcome; is measurable; and is relevant and realistic in practice, such as recidivism reduction, crime desistance, or substance use reduction. EPIC’s focus is on building the necessary supports in the areas of staff competency, a hospitable organizational environment in which to perform the work, and leadership that is flexible and adaptive to meet the needs of the staff in carrying out the new policy or practice.

Implementation Science

“Implementation Science is the study of factors that influence the full and effective use of innovations in practice.”² While we have made improvements in the quality and adoption of evidence-based interventions within the justice field, the use of research-based implementation frameworks, processes, and tools is still not utilized by many organizations. According to the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), more than 90% of all public sector evidence-based practice implementations do not progress past the initial execution training because, in large part, staff classroom-style training events are the primary—if not the only—method of implementation.³ Using implementation science, EPIC works towards closing the gaps between research and service delivery, employing implementation science to develop high-fidelity use of EBPs and enhance an organization’s ability to produce measurable, intended outcomes. This is accomplished through the use of principles, assessments, and tools from implementation science, primarily from NIRN’s Active Implementation Frameworks, to close the gaps between research and real-world EBP implementation. These frameworks are:

- **Usable Innovations:** Use of an innovation that has: a clear description of the program, clear essential functions that define the program, operational definitions of the essential functions, and a practical performance assessment to measure use of the innovation.
- **Implementation Stages:** As opposed to being a discrete event, implementation is a process that takes place over time. Elements of the implementation take place within stages: Exploration

¹ Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (2009). *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

² Fixsen, D., Blase, K., Metz, A., & Van Dyke, M. (2015). *Implementation science*. In *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (pp. 695-702).

³ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

(assess how well selected EBPs meet the organization's needs, whether it is practical to implement, the extent to which the EBPs will address the specific problem or issue that the organization has identified is evaluated, how the EBPs meet the usable innovation criteria, and which specific EBP will be implemented), Installation (includes the development of communication and feedback loops, finance management for the implementation, development of initial knowledge and skills in staff for the innovation, and developing and/or acquiring the necessary resources for the implementation), Initial Implementation (begins at the point that the EBPP is first put into practice and involves coaching, improvement cycles, and organizational data collection), and Full Implementation (staff are effectively using the EBP to fidelity in a supportive environment and outcomes are produced).

- Implementation Drivers: The common components that should exist in the implementation of any evidence-based program or practice. These include competency drivers (training, coaching, selection, and fidelity measurement), leadership drivers (adaptive and technical), and organizational drivers (decisional-support data systems, facilitative administration, and systems intervention).
- Improvement Cycles: Cycles in which organizational practices are examined by creating action plans, activating on those plans, studying the outcomes of the actions taken, and modifying that action plan based on that outcome data.
- Implementation Teams: A cross section of agency staff, including decision makers to direct service providers, who are accountable for moving the implementation forward through planning, messaging, and organization of necessary activities.

Section Two: Fidelity, Learning Components, and Staff Selection

Fidelity Measurement

At its core, the term fidelity refers to the relationship between an intended program and the program as it is applied in practice. The level of fidelity of a new practice is dependent upon how closely the enacted program replicates the intended, or researched, program.⁴ To ensure that a new program will achieve its intended results, monitoring fidelity of the program and the practitioners who are using it are essential pieces of the implementation puzzle.

Prior to the implementation of a new program or practice, EPIC works with its partners to determine whether there are existing tools and processes that can be accessed to assist with fidelity monitoring, or if a tool and/or process must be developed in order to examine adherence to a model.

⁴ Century, J., Rudnick, M., & Freeman, C. (2010). A Framework for Measuring Fidelity of Implementation: A Foundation for Shared Language and Accumulation of Knowledge. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31(2), 199-218.

Many organizations perceive implementation to be a costly and resource intensive venture, seeing little value in coaching, practice, and fidelity checking. When an EBP is not accepted by an organization, whether it can be attributed to value clash, fear of acquiring new skills and perceived incompetence in the new EBP, or concerns that implementation will consume too many resources and too much time, efforts to monitor and support fidelity can be an uphill battle.

EPIC has found that using fidelity criteria based in research is an effective way to communicate principles that can easily be translated into practice, can be scaled, and are effective in determining a practitioner's grasp of the principle as well as his or her growth in understanding and incorporating these principles into practice.

Learning Components

Coaching and Training. Coaching is a process in which skills that have been trained can be more fully integrated into the working space through the employment of feedback. Coaches help practitioners bring together their knowledge, values, philosophies, and professional experience in the delivery of interventions.⁵ The role of the coach includes supervising staff in their use of new knowledge, providing further instruction in the practice setting, assessing the use of skills and providing feedback, and providing emotional support for the practitioner who is being coached.⁶

EPIC's staff development model utilizes multiple learning modalities to cater to all learning styles and reinforce content. By using various methods in crafting learning events, EPIC increases its ability to maximize the number of people who are engaged during the training, which better equips the participant to understand and use the skills being taught.

Practice Structure Installation. The installment of practice groups is a core component of EPIC's work. Communities of practice (CoPs) are a vehicle through which staff can come together and practice new skills, discuss their application of skills in the workplace, review challenges and successes that accompany the use of these new skills, and collaborate and give input around difficult workplace situations requiring the use of these acquired skills. CoPs add value to organizations by providing a space in which skills can be practiced and improved upon, ideas can be shared, challenges can be addressed, and improved processes can be generated.⁷ Many of the benefits CoPs can produce, including new employees learning the job more quickly, quicker responses to customer needs, reduction in duplicating efforts, and generation of new ideas, are linked to increases in social capital that the groups inspire.⁸

⁵ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

⁸ Lesser, E. L. & Storck, J. (2001). Communities of Practice and Organizational Performance. *IBM Systems Journal*, 40(4), 831-841.

Furthermore, CoPs also provide a space to drive strategy, innovate and start new practices, yield solutions more quickly than traditional methods, transfer best practices more efficiently, help to develop professional skills, and can assist in recruiting and retaining new talent.⁹

The use of CoPs holds a great deal of value in providing ongoing practice and support in using new and complex skillsets acquired through training. While CoPs are traditionally intended to be voluntary, organic practice spaces,¹⁰ the introduction of the concept in Colorado's justice system has necessitated a more directive and facilitated approach to align with the top-down culture that pervades the field. This more rigid system of mandated attendance and facilitated content that EPIC introduces in new agencies has made it easier to install CoPs and educate about how they can be used/applied. This can later give way to a more organic environment that staff come to appreciate and voluntarily attend to find solutions to their struggles and improve their service delivery, which EPIC has seen happen in several of the partnering agencies.

Staff Selection

Staff selection is a critical component of the competency driver in the context of implementation. Reportedly, implications on the staff selection in the implementation context is yet to be researched extensively,¹¹ however, there is no lack of information in both popular and academic literature around hiring the right person, be it for an organization or a job itself. Experimental research found that for practitioners of an intervention, using interviewing techniques that included role play and behavioral vignettes to demonstrate a candidate's fit with the required duties were strong indicators of success as well as retention on the job.¹² For existing staff members who must learn and adapt new skills and techniques with implementation, selection techniques still apply. The downfalls of not taking time to select staff for participation in the innovation thoughtfully and collaboratively includes wasted resources of training, coaching and development, "poisoning the well" amongst other staff members regarding the new practice, and ultimately, a botched implementation which can lead to a total failure of the new practice.

EPIC finds staff selection failures to be a significant challenge when assisting agencies with implementation. A recent project found that approximately 55% of staff chosen to take on a lead role in implementing a new case planning system turned over within the first year of implementation. Among those who turned over in the first year, 75% either opted out of the lead role or transferred laterally out of the role to another position. Conversely, EPIC's MI trainer and coach development procedure is a multi-phased process with an application and agreements that occur with and between the candidate,

⁹ Wenger, E. C., & Snyder, W. M. (2000). Communities of practice: The organizational frontier. *Harvard business review*, 78(1), 139-146.

¹⁰ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

¹¹ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).

¹² Ibid.

his or her supervisor, and EPIC staff members. These coaches have remained in their roles at much higher rates.

Section Three: Milestones and Accomplishments

Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. The following subsections will describe these activities. *(For a graphic description of the following projects, please see Appendix B.)*

Motivational Interviewing Direct Training and Coaching. The majority of trainings and coaching delivered by EPIC in the past 3 years have been in MI, though EPIC has also delivered training on coaching pertaining to case planning, Thinking for a Change, leading through adaptive change in an organization, and presentation preparation skills. Regarding MI, EPIC has delivered 54 trainings since the beginning of FY2014. Of these trainings, 29 were basic MI 101 trainings, 19 were advanced MI 102 trainings, five were coaching trainings to prepare prospective coaches to take that role within their agency, and one was a training for trainers to certify staff to train MI 101 and MI 102 for their own and other agencies.

EPIC delivered MI 101 training to 661 Coloradans working in the justice field between July 1st, 2014 and June 30th, 2017. In that same timeframe, EPIC trained 383 individuals in MI 102, 46 as MI coaches, and 23 as MI trainers. As such, a total of 1,113 seats were filled in EPIC trainings over the course of the last 3 years, building a significant knowledge and skill base in the Colorado justice community around MI. EPIC staff and contractors documented 785 coaching sessions since July 1st, 2014.

Motivational Interviewing Coach Development. Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. EPIC partnered with selected probation and community corrections programs to develop 57 coaches to ensure sustainability of Motivational Interviewing (MI) in these agencies, all of which are currently active. To measure quality and assess for inter-rater reliability, EPIC and its coaches utilize the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards and engage with the identified coach in a rigorous training and coaching program. Components of this program include numerous observations and feedback sessions, participation in statewide communities of practice (CoP) (practice groups), and maintenance of their MI competency through session audio recordings submitted every six months.

Since 2014, the greatest concentration of new coaches was developed in Jefferson, Mesa, El Paso, and Adams Counties and the greatest concentration of new trainers in Jefferson, El Paso and Mesa Counties.

EPIC Regional Working Group	Judicial District	Coaches	Trainers	Provisional Coaches
Jefferson	1st	8	7	1
Denver	2nd	3	1	0
Colorado Springs	4th	5	3	2
Larimer	8th	2	2	1
Glenwood Springs/Rifle	9th	2	1	0
Pueblo	10th	2	2	0
Buena Vista/Salida	11th	1	0	0
Alamosa	12th	1	0	0
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	13th	2	1	0
Moffat/Routt/Grand	14th	1	0	0
La Junta	16th	2	1	0
Adams	17th	8	2	2
Arapahoe	18th	0	0	1
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	19th	4	0	2
Grand Junction	21st	5	3	2

17th Judicial District Probation Department. EPIC commenced a three-year project with the 17th Judicial District Probation in 2014 to build the competency of their department in MI, increase their coaching capacity, and evaluate their use of CoPs.

To build MI competency throughout the organization, EPIC began by training staff with both a basic and advanced MI training to be taken sequentially. At the time of this writing, 90% of staff employed by Adam County Probation has received the basic training, while 49% have received the advanced training. To ensure the agency has the internal capacity to train new staff as they are hired, two staff members attended an EPIC training for trainers and are now certified to train MI. These efforts have been supplemented by EPIC staff providing coaching to up to 25 change agents at a time who have completed the advanced training. Approximately 14% of staff have reached MI competency at this juncture, and an additional 25% have either submitted tapes for evaluation in the past or are currently occupying change agent slots to move toward competency.

To further bolster the sustainability of MI in the 17th Judicial District Probation, those who have reached competency may apply to work toward becoming certified coaches. EPIC has fully certified 8 coaches in the 17th Judicial District Probation and two additional, provisional coaches are currently going through the process to earn their certification.

EPIC also installed a practice infrastructure (CoP) specific to the 17th Judicial District Probation that began in 2014. To understand how these CoPs were impacting skill development within the agency, EPIC conducted a process evaluation from July, 2015 through November, 2015. The results of this evaluation were used to redesign the practice groups to respond to mediocre levels of facilitation skill, engagement, challenging of ideas, modeling MI skills, and significant skill practice. The new model included facilitated practice groups with stable membership to encourage engagement, safety, and bonding and was implemented in late 2016. The implementation team identified and selected a number

of staff as “CoP leads” who would be trained in facilitating group learning and provided resources for ensuring meaningful practice within their groups.

Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC). EPIC worked with the DOC (Facilities) to implement the Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP), which consists of the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) and its accompanying case planning process. This project involved building coaches across the state’s facilities and developing leadership at facilities to lead adaptive changes in corrections. EPIC worked with over 80 case management staff that DOC leadership identified to engage in a coach development process to develop the remaining case management staffs’ capacity to effectively case plan using CTAP. Over the course of the two-year project, EPIC visited 23 of 24 facilities, meeting with facility leadership at each site, working with coaches, and assisting facilities in their development of practice groups. EPIC also provided monthly phone coaching and conducted regional practice groups in Denver, Pueblo, and Canon City on a monthly basis. Additionally and importantly, EPIC developed and presented an adaptive leadership curriculum to 98 leaders from across the department to help them adjust and excel at leading through this large system change.

Arapahoe Community Treatment Center (ACTC). EPIC partnered with the ACTC, a community corrections facility located in southwest Denver to implement the Progression Matrix (case planning system) and the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART) incentives and sanctions tool. Throughout this three-year collaboration, EPIC worked with ACTC to develop coaching, leadership and organizational capacity to support the implementation of these two innovations.

Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP). To support the implementation of CTAP within the Colorado Department of Corrections, EPIC trained over 80 case manager coaches on the Elicit-Provide-Elicit model of coaching to allow them to build the skills of other case managers learning to use the innovation. EPIC staff made available 473 phone coaching slots and conducted a total of 369 coaching sessions with the case manager coaches that were being developed, for a total of 553.5 EPIC hours spent coaching. EPIC also conducted facility visits and facilitated many regional CoPs over the two-year period. Lastly, EPIC conducted trainings available to facility leadership around leading through adaptive change to help facilitate the department-wide adoption of the CTAP tool. EPIC completed a total of 11 trainings spanning four content modules, with 220 seats filled by 98 individual invitees in facility leadership positions across the state. These activities led to a fidelity improvement score of nearly 18% across all coaches from the 23 facilities with whom EPIC worked.

Colorado Department of Public Safety. Beginning in February 2017, EPIC has been working within its own department to enhance staff members’ ability to effectively design presentations and trainings. Because staff within the department, and especially within the departments’ Division of Criminal Justice, have contact with many other justice agencies across many domains, EPIC prioritized this work. The two-part project, starts with the premise that the goal of any presentation or training program should not be to merely help someone learn something new, but rather to help them change the way they perform their jobs, and ultimately to improve outcomes for an agency and its customers. The following plan

incorporates this foundation into its design and is based in the science of learning. It is designed for any staff delivering presentations or training events.

- **“Fundamentals of Presentation Preparation.”** This workshop relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to lay the foundation for creating responsive, innovative, and impactful presentations. Rather than lessons on facilitation or training skills, this course focuses on the design and development of presentations. Two sessions of this course were delivered to 44 staff in February 2017.
- **“Designing Learning Using an Evidence-Based Approach.”** This course relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to provide participants with the skills to design and develop curricula using an evidence-based approach. Excellent curriculum designers need to possess the specialized knowledge and skills that are the purview of professionals who design learning experiences that don’t just help participants remember something, but rather transfer skills to staff that result in improved organizational outcomes. At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to describe and apply a blended model learning approach, and they will each create an outline for a curriculum using multiple methods of learning, informed by learning objectives. One session of this intensive course will be delivered in July 2017.

Thinking for a Change. EPIC also delivered its first Thinking for a Change training, an evidence-based program focused on cognitive-behavioral techniques to be used with justice clients, in March of 2017. The model includes not only classroom-type events, but coaching sessions between trainings. Eighteen participants were trained to facilitate this program, increasing Colorado’s capacity to implement this innovation in the state.

Coach Development Services. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by Implementation Specialists and trained coaches in the field, EPIC is conducting an additional smaller-scale project currently underway with the Office of Community Corrections to work on two live coaching projects, one in Larimer County Community Corrections (LCCC), and one with ACTC, Centennial Community Transition Center (CCTC) and Arapahoe County Residential Center (ACRC). This project is aimed at building coaching capacity not specific to any particular innovation, but that can be applied to any innovation.

This model of training and coaching allows EPIC to both move through the installation phase of implementation by ensuring the delivery of high-quality training and basic skill support, and to identify champions within the organization that can begin to take over some training and coaching for the organization as they move into the initial implementation phase. As the implementation progresses, more focus is placed on sustainability of the practice within the organization itself with a decreased reliance on outside entities to continue the use of the innovation.

Section Four: Implications, Future Directions, and Conclusion

Implications

EPIC's work within the state of Colorado brings a robust pool of empirical literature that had been primarily used in the scholastic and healthcare fields into the justice system. By working through program implementation with various agencies throughout Colorado, EPIC is able to both educate diverse sectors of the justice system on a successful implementation framework used in other disciplines, and show the utility of attending to factors beyond number of staff trained in a given innovation.

Working with agencies that represent both adult and juvenile probation, parole, correctional institutions, community corrections, pre-trial intervention, and other justice sectors, the concepts represented by and value of implementation science can begin to pervade the system. EPIC, through formal presentations and experiential learning methods, continues to work in Colorado to educate on the literature about the effects of evidence-based implementation and what is lost by not attending to the implementation drivers.

Since this method of implementation takes significantly more effort and time than traditional methods of program installation, some agencies feel they lack the resources to dedicate to such an involved process. The literature, however, indicates that agencies indeed lack the resources NOT to engage in effective implementation strategies. The limitations of simply training staff can make these lighter levels of implementation more costly in the long run than a more intensive implementation process, as the skills taught in training are never used effectively to realize the promised outcomes of the installed practice. When an agency understands the value of attending not only to the competency driver (i.e. training and coaching the right people), but also the leadership and organizational drivers, a cultural environment can be fostered that creates the necessary space that an EBP implementation requires to be successful.

Future Direction

EPIC created and began using a Request for Services (RFS) process beginning on January 1st, 2017 as a means for taking on new work and better understanding the scope of work before engaging. This RFS is aimed at gaining a preliminary understanding of what the agency is trying to implement. This new process is intended to streamline and standardize the way in which EPIC commits to new work, ensuring that the unit is able to work within its statutory purview and within its capacity. Understanding that implementation is an intensive process that requires a great deal of effort, EPIC realizes it will be able to have a greater and more sustainable impact by working intensely with a handful of organizations at a time as opposed to sparsely spreading out its resources through shallow implementation efforts.

Conclusion

EPIC's use of sound and empirically supported implementation practices has led to performance improvement within partner agencies. Satisfaction surveys, as noted in previous sections, indicate high

levels of perceived value for training, coaching, and practice facilitation offered by EPIC to direct service providers. Additionally, with improved program fidelity permeating the ranks partner agencies, EBPs are being used in a way that better reflects the researched form of the intervention compared to those same individuals when they had only receive training (where most implementation efforts tend to be marked as completed). The use of EBPs in the criminal justice system is intended to reduce recidivism, but this can only be accomplished if the interventions are delivered as intended. By attending to organizational factors, competency, and leadership within in agency, EPIC is able to assist in creating an environment that fosters and encourages the use of EBPs with fidelity. When criminal justice clients experience these practices as they are meant to be used, it reduces the odds that they will recidivate, making Colorado communities safer for everyone.

Section One: Evidence-Based Practices and Implementation Science

Evidence-Based Practices

*“Evidence-based practice (EBP) is the objective, balanced, and responsible use of current research and the best available data to guide policy and practice decisions, such that outcomes for consumers are improved”.*¹³

EBPs originated in the health care and social science fields and focus on effective approaches that are based in empirical research rather than anecdote or professional experience alone. When a practice is deemed to be “evidence-based,” it implies that the practice has a definable outcome; is measurable; and is relevant and realistic in practice, such as recidivism reduction, crime desistance, or substance use reduction.¹⁴

The term “EBP” has been used increasingly in the justice system over the past decade to the point where people often cringe upon hearing it. EPIC’s work revolves around assisting agencies in implementing practices and principles that are evidence-based for the purpose of helping agencies execute their work in proven manners. Additionally, agencies work to implement evidence-informed policies or practices (such policies are based in relevant research, but have not yet been rigorously tested for outcomes in their current use or field) for further evaluation as to whether they will be effective in their performed work. In either case, EPIC’s focus is on building the necessary supports in the areas of staff competency, a hospitable organizational environment in which to perform the work, and leadership that is flexible and adaptive to meet the needs of the staff in carrying out the new policy or practice.

Implementation Science

For decades, research has focused on developing evidence-based programs and practices to produce better outcomes for those involved in the justice system. In recent years, policy has focused on system implementation of these interventions to improve outcomes. While we have made improvements in the quality and adoption of evidence-based interventions, the use of research-based implementation frameworks, processes, and tools is still not utilized by many organizations. No matter how strong the science is behind the EBP, people and communities cannot benefit from the intervention if it is not implemented as intended. In many instances there still remain two primary gaps that prevent EBPs from being used to fidelity and/or producing the intended outcomes. The first is the science-to-service gap, which exists when what has been proven in the research to work is not what is done in practice within the organization. The second is the implementation gap. This results in an EBP that is not being used to fidelity and/or what is done to fidelity is not sustained over time or used on a large enough scale to

¹³ EBPs are also referred to as EBPPs (Evidence Based Programs and Practices) in the literature.

¹⁴ Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (2009). *Implementing Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Community Corrections*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections.

produce outcomes. Implementation science works towards closing these gaps to develop high-fidelity use of EBPs and enhance an organization’s ability to produce measurable, intended outcomes.

Traditionally, agency and department administrators adopt innovations to implement by simply training their staff and designing new written policies with the expectation that this will translate to daily practice. But research on organizational change and skill development shows that this approach does not achieve sustainable outcomes or high-fidelity use of the program or practice. EPIC uses frameworks derived from implementation science to provide technical assistance to agencies in the effective and sustainable implementation of EBPs. According to the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), more than 90% of all public sector evidence-based practice implementations do not progress past the initial execution training because, in large part, staff classroom-style training events are the primary—if not the only—method of implementation.¹⁵ For this reason, EPIC utilizes principles, assessments, and tools from implementation science, primarily from NIRN’s Active Implementation Frameworks, to close the gaps between research and real-world EBP application. This section includes a description of NIRN’s framework given that it is the key framework used by EPIC.

Active Implementation Frameworks

In 2005, Dean Fixsen, et al with the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) developed a monograph in that synthesizes implementation research across multiple fields.¹⁵ From this synthesis of the research, NIRN developed five overarching components that are referred to as the Active Implementation Frameworks. These components are used in the implementation of any EBP into an organization in which NIRN engages and are as follows:

- Usable Innovations
- Implementation Stages
- Implementation Drivers
- Implementation Teams
- Improvement Cycles

Usable Innovations

In order for an EBP to be used by an organization to produce measurable outcomes, the innovation needs to be clearly defined. This allows that program or practice to be learned, used to fidelity, replicated, and scaled-up. This also ensures that an organization will be able to identify the program’s intended population for which it should be used. An EBP that is clearly defined allows the organization to make better decisions about what needs to be added, removed, or adapted to support the program or practice. It also makes evaluation easier and enables the organization to better identify when the program or practice exists within the organization. Operationally defining the essential functions helps an organization to teach, use, and assess the program or practice’s components.

¹⁵ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231)

Implementation Stages

Implementation is not a single event, but rather it occurs over time. The Implementation Stages outline the process of implementation and the multiple activities and decisions that are made at various points of the implementation. Research indicates that implementation of an EBP that meets the usable innovation criteria can be expected to take two to four years. Four stages of implementation are included in NIRN's framework:

- Exploration
- Installation
- Initial Implementation
- Full Implementation

These stages overlap. One stage does not need to end before another begins, but they do tend to move forward in a linear manner.

The goal of the *Exploration* Stage is to assess how well selected EBPs meet the organization's needs, whether it is practical to implement, the extent to which the EBPs will address the specific problem or issue that the organization has identified is evaluated, how the EBPs meet the usable innovation criteria, and which specific EBP will be implemented. Implementation teams (discussed in an upcoming subsection) are created in this stage to conduct these assessments and decide which EBP to implement.

The *Installation* Stage sets the groundwork for the new EBP to be implemented. This includes the development of communication and feedback loops, finance management for the implementation, and developing and/or acquiring the necessary resources for the implementation. In this stage, development of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the organization's staff for the EBP are begun. Systems for training, coaching, feedback, practice, and data are developed in this stage as well.

Initial Implementation begins at the point that the EBP is first put into practice. It is critical to continually monitor progress to identify and address any issues with the implementation and use of the program or practice. Coaching, practice mechanisms, and feedback are also important in this stage to help staff build and incorporate new skills into their work in a way that can be measured by the organization. Data helps guide the process improvement and ongoing decision-making.

Full Implementation occurs when staff are effectively and sustainably using the EBP to fidelity and outcomes are produced. At this point, organizational and cultural shifts have been made to support the new innovation and the new program or practice is now incorporated into the work.

Implementation Drivers

Implementation Drivers are common components that should exist in the implementation of any evidence-based program or practice. These components develop infrastructure, policies and procedures, organizational activities and practices, and agency culture in ways that will support the effective and sustainable implementation of EBPs. The three categories of Implementation Drivers are:

- Competency
- Organization
- Leadership

Competency drivers include activities that improve the ability of organizational staff to learn a new program or practice and incorporate it into practice. The four competency drivers are:

- Staff Selection
 - o Staff selection is critical in determining who within the organization will assist in the implementation of a new EBP as well as who is chosen to be hired into the organization in the future. These staff need to be chosen based on appropriate criteria to ensure the best fit for the role and alignment with the organization.
- Training
 - o EBPs commonly require new skills that are initially learned through training. This may not necessarily be accomplished only through classroom training, but rather multiple learning methods that are based in adult learning theory and research.
- Coaching
 - o In order for the newly acquired knowledge to be developed and incorporated into daily practice, coaching and feedback is necessary. Coaching plans, multiple forms of feedback and observation, to include practice structures, are used to help staff build new skills.
- Fidelity Assessment
 - o It is important to know whether or not staff are using new EBP skills the way that the research intended. High-fidelity use of the program or practice by staff is necessary for the organization to predict outcomes. A fidelity assessment that uses multiple sources of data allows the organization to know at what level of fidelity staff are using the EBP as well as what improvements may need to be made.

The *organizational* supports and infrastructure that are necessary to create an environment that is suitable for the implementation of a new EBP are developed through the organizational drivers. They are:

- Decisional-Support Data Systems
 - o Sound organizational decisions are best made with the use of data to inform and support them. It is necessary for an organization to have data systems that collect and analyze the necessary data in a way that makes the data useful and easily accessible across the organization.
- Facilitative Administration
 - o This driver focuses on organizational components that facilitate the success of the new practice. Administrators and others within the organization tasked to oversee the implementation need to use data to inform decisions, and these decisions should be made in ways that facilitate and support the implementation and the new EBP. Administrators should also be continually identifying and addressing obstacles, creating and effectively utilizing communication and feedback loops, creating or adapting policy to support the new EBP, and examining ways to reduce barriers for staff and the EBP.
- Systems Interventions

- Systems interventions include strategies to help an organization better work with external systems to address systemic issue and barriers. This driver helps develop communication and processes with external entities and partner systems that may be necessary to address key issues.

Actively involved *leadership* across all levels within an organization is a critical component to any implementation. The two primary leadership drivers are:

- Technical Leadership¹⁶
 - Technical leadership can be considered good organizational management. Leaders are able to quickly identify and address issues that arise through the use of more traditional methods. The issues that are addressed are generally not very complex in their associated solutions, but are generally straight forward in nature.
- Adaptive Leadership¹⁷
 - Adaptive leadership is specifically about how leaders are able to support change that enables the organization's and staff's ability to thrive. This requires the use of new and innovative strategies and abilities to address complex problems and issues and lead an organization. Adaptive leadership builds a culture that values diverse views and relies less on central planning and top-down leadership.

Implementation Teams

Traditionally, organizations attempt to implement new programs and practices by simply training staff and potentially changing policies. This does not result in long-term sustainable implementations that produce measureable outcomes. The designation and use of a team that is dedicated to actively planning and coordinating an implementation leads to a more efficient implementation with higher likelihood of achieving the intended outcomes.

An implementation team is composed of a cross section of agency staff, from decision makers to direct service providers. The implementation team leads the effort to institutionalize a new program by taking the responsibility for removing barriers to implementation and ensuring quality planning and practice. These teams focus on enhancing readiness for an implementation, developing the infrastructure for implementation, assessing outcomes and fidelity to the EBP, establishing connections with external systems and partners, and removing barriers for sustainability.

Investigating the replication of EBPs, Fixsen et al. found that sites with an implementation team providing services such as training, on-site consultation, participant selection guidance, facilitative administrative supports, and routine evaluation, were much more likely to successfully implement the

¹⁶ Stacey RD. (2002). *Strategic management and organizational dynamics: the challenge of complexity*. 3rd ed. Harlow: Prentice Hall.

¹⁷ Heifetz, R. A., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business Press.

new program and also become sustainable over time.¹⁸ Specifically, with the use of competent implementation teams, over 80% of the implementation sites were sustained for six years or more (up from 30% without an implementation team) and the time for them to achieve certification of fidelity was 3.6 years. Additional research reveals that it takes an estimated average of 17 years for only 14% of new scientific discoveries to enter day-to-day clinical practice without the use of implementation teams.

Improvement Cycles

Continuous process improvement is necessary to identify and remove barriers to implementation. Organizations and staff can struggle with new EBPs, skills, policies, and practices. It can be easier to change the EBP to fit the current organization's way of work rather than changing the organization and culture to support the effective program or practice. The use of improvement cycles ensures that the barriers are addressed and solutions are developed and implemented in ways that make the organizational environment more conducive to the new program or practice. The purpose of these cycles is to continually improve the quality of the implementation and, therefore, the likelihood of achieving the desired outcomes of the EBP. Organizational change is inevitable, and process improvement cycles help to ensure that this change is done in a purposeful manner.

¹⁸Fixsen, D. L., Blase, K. A., Timbers, G. D., & Wolf, M. M. (2001). In search of program implementation: 792 replications of the Teaching-Family Model. In G. A. Bernfeld, D. P. Farrington & A. W. Leschied (Eds.), *Offender rehabilitation in practice: Implementing and evaluating effective programs* (pp. 149-166). London: Wiley.

Section Two: Fidelity, Learning Components, and Staff Selection

Fidelity Measurement

At its core, the term fidelity refers to the relationship between an intended program and the program as it is applied in practice. The level of fidelity of a new practice is dependent upon how closely the enacted program replicates the intended, or researched, program.¹⁹ All too often, EBPs are deemed ineffective and discarded because intended outcomes are not achieved and fidelity monitoring does not accompany the implementation of the practice. This can lead to staff frustration when an agency has overhauled their processes and practices to bring on an innovation, and cannot see any visible results produced by these efforts.²⁰ To ensure that a new program will achieve its intended results, monitoring fidelity of the program and the practitioners who are using it are essential pieces of the implementation puzzle.

Fidelity is a critical component of EPIC's work. Prior to the implementation of a new program or practice, EPIC works with its partners to determine whether there are existing tools or processes that can be accessed to assist with fidelity monitoring, or if one must be developed in order to examine adherence to a model. In many cases, checking for fidelity can be integrated into training and coaching processes. In other cases, where numerical scores accompany fidelity monitoring, practitioners can become preoccupied with achieving scores rather than investing in practice quality. EPIC works with agencies to incorporate fidelity measurement into a decision-support data system that can be used to monitor fidelity across the organization and make data-informed decisions as necessary to enhance fidelity.

Barriers. Whether EPIC is able to effectively engage with a partner around fidelity measurement in a way that is supportive of staff depends strongly on the acceptance of the EBP and implementation process by agency leadership. Several challenges may hinder progress on achieving fidelity.

EBP implementation can be most efficacious when there is a strong fit between the EBP and the values of the organization where it is being implemented.^{21,22,23} This principle has proven to be extremely contentious in the justice and corrections arenas with the EBPs that are currently being implemented across the state, particularly where the predominant culture is still rooted in punitive measures rather than efforts focused on offender behavior change and skill development.

¹⁹ Century, J., Rudnick, M., & Freeman, C. (2010). A Framework for Measuring Fidelity of Implementation: A Foundation for Shared Language and Accumulation of Knowledge. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31(2), 199-218.

²⁰ Howe, M. & Joplin, L. (2005) *Implementing Evidence-Based Practice in Community Corrections: Quality Assurance Manual*. National Institute of Corrections and the Crime and Justice Institute.

²¹ Linge Rv. (2006). *Innoveren in de gezondheidszorg; theorie, praktijk en onderzoek*. Maarssen: Elsevier gezondheidszorg.

²² Koekkoek, R., Linge, Rv., & van der Hooft-Leemans, G. (2011). Team and Organizational Learning and Implementation success; A study at the influence of Team and Organizational Learning on the Implementation Success of the innovation 'Zorgleefplan' in the context of the Innovation Contingency Theory.

²³ Os-Medendorp, Hv., Eland-de Kok, P., Linge, Rv., Buijnzeel-Koomen, C., Grypdonck, M., & Ros, W (2008). The tailored implementation of the nursing programme 'Coping with itch'. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 17(11), 1460-1470.

Research also shows that professionals who are earlier in their careers when the EBP is being rolled out are more likely to accept the change. Additionally, research indicates that an innovation that is perceived to be a good fit with organizational environment may be more well received because the EBP is more likely to be accepted.²⁴ These two factors may present challenges to many agencies in Colorado's justice system where EBPs are being implemented because the demographics of some agencies may not align with the acceptance of current practices that are more responsive to client needs.

Agency leadership sometimes see fidelity monitoring as a way to monitor staff performance and use fidelity results to negatively impact annual reviews and potential advancement. While some organizations may not even use fidelity as a way to monitor performance, staff may resist assessment due to a *perceived* threat of retribution around "screwing up." To overcome that angst, agencies that separate the fidelity scoring from the performance system by excluding it as an evaluation criteria or ensuring that a direct supervisor does not conduct such assessments of subordinates are more likely to see sustained improvements in the application of EBPs and retain a strengths-based supervision model. Leaders that take a more supportive and coaching approach to fidelity monitoring is more effective.²⁵

Finally, many organizations perceive implementation to be a costly and resource intensive venture, seeing too much work time consumed by the necessary coaching, practice, and fidelity checking. When an EBP is not accepted by an organization, whether it can be attributed to value clash, fear of acquiring new skills and being perceived incompetence in the new EBP, or concerns that implementation will consume too many resources and too much time, efforts to monitor and support fidelity can be an uphill battle.²⁶ But as was mentioned earlier, with the use of competent implementation teams, over 80% of the implementation sites were sustained for six years or more (up from 30% without an implementation team) and the time for them to achieve certification of fidelity was 3.6 years. Additional research reveals that it takes an estimated average of 17 years for only 14% of new scientific discoveries to enter day-to-day clinical practice without the use of implementation teams.

EPIC has found that using fidelity criteria based in research is sometimes an effective way to combat these concerns and communicate principles that can be easily translated into practice, can be scaled, and are effective in determining a practitioner's grasp of the principle. An added benefit can be

²⁴ Titler MG. The Evidence for Evidence-Based Practice Implementation. In: Hughes RG, editor. Patient Safety and Quality: An Evidence-Based Handbook for Nurses. Rockville (MD): Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (US); 2008 Apr. Chapter 7. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK2659/>

²⁵ Aarons, G. A., Sommerfeld, D. H., Hecht, D. B., Silovsky, J. F., & Chaffin, M. J. (2009). The Impact of Evidence-Based Practice Implementation and Fidelity Monitoring on Staff Turnover: Evidence for a Protective Effect. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 77*(2), 270–280. <http://doi.org/10.1037/a0013223>

²⁶ Sanders, S., Mackin, M. L., Reyes, J., Herr, K., Titler, M., Fine, P., & Forcucci, C. (2010). Implementing Evidence-Based Practices: Considerations for the Hospice Setting. *The American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Care, 27*(6), 369–376. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1049909109358695>

practitioner experiences of his or her own growth in understanding and incorporating these principles into practice. In subsequent sections describing EPIC's work with specific sites, fidelity measures will be described.

Learning Components

Coaching and Training. Coaching and training are key Competency Drivers. They focus on the development of new EBP skills. Combined with effective staff selection and practice as well as integration with the Leadership and Organizational Drivers, coaching and training lead to staff's understanding, skill, and high-fidelity use of an EBP.

Coaching is the process in which skills that have been trained can be fully integrated into the working space. Coaches help practitioners bring together their knowledge, values, philosophies, and professional experience in the delivery of interventions.²⁷ The role of the coach includes mentoring staff around their use of new knowledge, providing further instruction in the practice setting, assessing the use of skills and providing feedback, and providing emotional support for the practitioner who is being coached.²⁸ Paired with effective training practices, coaching ensures that practitioners understand how to use new skills and effectively know how to integrate them into their everyday work.

EPIC's training model utilizes multiple learning modalities to cater to all learning styles and reinforce content. This includes the use of visual aids, interactive discussions, small group work, role plays, lecture, and competitive games that display understanding of training concepts. By using each of these methods in crafting training events, EPIC increases its ability to maximize the number of people who are engaged during the training, which better equips the participant to understand and use the skills being taught.

The majority of trainings and coaching delivered by EPIC in the past three years have been in MI, though EPIC has also delivered training on coaching pertaining to case planning, Thinking for a Change, leading through adaptive change in an organization, and presentation preparation skills.

The combination of these training practices with effective coaching supports skill development, which leads to fidelity. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by trained coaches in the field, EPIC and contracted entities also complete direct coaching to assist in initial skill development, especially for those who plan to work towards becoming coaches or trainers themselves.

The use of a training and coaching model that involves both EPIC and partner agency has two purposes. First, it allows EPIC to both move through the Installation Stage of implementation by ensuring the

²⁷ Smart, D.A., Blasé, K.B., Smart, D.I., Graham, K., Collins, S.R., Daly, D.L., Fixsen, D.L., & Maloney, D.M. (1979). *The Teaching-Family Consultant's Handbook (Second ed.)*. Boys Town, Nebraska: Father Flanagan's Boys' Home.

²⁸Spouse, J. (2001). Bridging theory and practice in the supervisory relationship: a sociocultural perspective. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33(4), 512-522.

delivery of high-quality training and basic skill support. Second, it helps identify champions within the organization that can begin to take over some training and coaching for the organization as they move into the Initial Implementation Stage. Within this model, as the implementation progresses, more focus is placed on sustainability of the practice within the organization with a decreased reliance on outside entities to continue the use of the innovation. By selecting the right people to carry the innovation from within the organization, the steady transition of training and coaching from EPIC to the organization is smoother and has an increased chance of sustainment.

Practice Structure Installation. The installment of practice groups is a core component of EPIC’s work. A Communities of Practice (CoP) is a vehicle through which staff can come together and practice new skills, discuss their application of skills in the workplace, review challenges and successes that accompany the use of these new skills, and collaborate and give input around difficult workplace situations requiring the use of these acquired skills. CoPs add value to organizations by providing a space in which skills can be practiced and improved upon, ideas can be shared, challenges can be addressed, and improved processes can be generated.²⁹ By definition, CoPs are intended to be conducted in a flat structure, where no one person is in a lead or expert role in the group, and each participant is valued for their unique input and expertise.

Many of the benefits CoPs can produce, including new employees learning the job more quickly, quicker responses to customer needs, reduction in duplicating efforts, and generation of new ideas, are linked to increases in social capital that the groups inspire.³⁰ Furthermore, CoPs also provide a space to drive strategy, innovate and start new practices, yield solutions more quickly than traditional methods, transfer best practices more efficiently, help to develop professional skills, and can assist in recruiting and retaining new talent.³¹

One of the major challenges in implementing CoPs in the justice environment is that by nature, the environment is hierarchical. Often described as a para-military environment, staff are trained and conditioned to follow the direction of their leadership, leaving little room for innovation or discretion on the part of the subordinate. While this structure is more prevalent in law enforcement and corrections, probation and parole units also follow a similar structure of position titles and authority. EPIC has learned through its implementation experiences that the installation of CoPs in justice contexts requires an orchestrated transition from a facilitated group, where there is a designated lead organizer who establishes a structure for the group and facilitates accordingly, to more of a true “community” of ideas and input. Anecdotally, many CoP participants continue to refer to these practice groups as “training” throughout EPIC projects. Additionally, given the established culture of the agencies that EPIC partners with, managers typically do not grasp the value of practice and skill development progress; the

²⁹ Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

³⁰ Lesser, E. L. & Storck, J. (2001). Communities of Practice and Organizational Performance. *IBM Systems Journal*, 40(4), 831-841.

³¹ Wenger, E. C., & Snyder, W. M. (2000). Communities of practice: The organizational frontier. *Harvard business review*, 78(1), 139-146.

expectation is often that once staff members attend training, they are ready to implement their new skills perfectly.

The use of CoPs holds a great deal of value in providing ongoing practice and support in using new and complex skillsets acquired through training. While CoPs are traditionally intended to be voluntary, organic practice spaces,³² the introduction of the concept in Colorado's justice system has necessitated a more directive and facilitated approach to align with the top-down culture that pervades the field. This more rigid system of mandated attendance and facilitated content that EPIC introduces in new agencies has made it easier to install CoPs and educate about what they can be used for. This can later give way to a more organic environment that staff come to appreciate and voluntarily attend to find solutions to their struggles and improve their service delivery.

Staff Selection

Staff selection is a critical component of the Competency Drivers in the context of implementation. Reportedly, implications on the staff selection in the implementation context is yet to be researched extensively,³³ however, there is no lack of information in both popular and academic literature around hiring the right person, be it for an organization or a job itself.

Experimental research found that for practitioners of an intervention, using interviewing techniques that included role play and behavioral vignettes to demonstrate a candidate's fit with the required duties were strong indicators of success as well as retention on the job.⁴⁸ For existing staff members who must learn and adapt new skills and techniques with implementation, selection techniques still apply. Not everyone who was hired under former practices may be well suited for the implementation of new practices and under new policies. Based on EPIC's experiences, many justice agency staff members who are chosen to blaze trails in critical roles during implementation are more often selected on the basis of years of service or rank within a particular hierarchy, rather than good fit with a role. Staff selection as it applies to existing staff needs to start with a conversation and continue with a process of negotiation between manager and staff member. Staff members, when "voluntold" to fill a need, can often hinder or sabotage an implementation, even if they are technically a good fit. The potential downfalls of not taking time to select staff thoughtfully and collaboratively includes wasting of training and coaching resources, disgruntled participants "poisoning the well" amongst other staff members regarding the new practice, and ultimately, a botched implementation which can lead to a total failure of the new practice.

³² Wenger, E., McDermott, R., & Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

³³ Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231)

EPIC has found staff selection failures to be a significant challenge when assisting agencies with implementation. For example, data from a recent project found that approximately 55% of staff chosen to take on a lead role in implementing a new case planning system turned over within the first year of implementation. Among those who turned over in the first year, 75% either opted out of the lead role or transferred laterally out of the role to another position. Additionally, when staff members are not selected carefully, there is often a very limited amount of buy-in and interest in developing the skills to execute a new practice. Precious time that could be used for skill building is expended to address staff resistance.

Conversely, EPIC's MI trainer and coach development procedure is a multi-phased process with an application and agreements that occur with and between the candidate, his or her supervisor, and EPIC staff members. Briefly, candidates complete an application that requires agreement and sign off from their supervisors. They are required to engage in 24 hours of skill building training, participate regularly in CoPs, observe certified coaches in the coaching process, and be observed themselves. Candidates must also complete coaching reports, or a written summary of feedback. The process takes approximately one year to complete. A different level of commitment is expected and development is spent solely on skill building rather than breaking down resistance to the innovation.

Section Three: Milestones and Accomplishments

Overview of Projects

Since the last legislative report period (ending FY 2014), EPIC has been engaged with several partners to implement new programs and practices and facilitate system change and culture. The following subsections will describe these activities. *(For a graphic description of the following projects, please see Appendix B.)*

Motivational Interviewing Direct Training, Coaching and Practice Development. MI implementation began statewide in 2010. As part of the Installation Stage of implementation, it included direct training, coaching and practice group development for designated “Change Agents”³⁴ in probation, parole, behavioral health, community corrections, and prison facilities.

EPIC continued to provide MI training services since the writing of its last legislative report. The *number and type of MI trainings* held by year is listed below. Over this last report period, 1,113 justice professionals were served by these trainings. EPIC has delivered 48 trainings since the beginning of FY2014. Of these trainings, 27 were MI 101 trainings, 15 were MI 102 trainings, five were coaches trainings to prepare prospective coaches to take that role within their agency, and one was training for trainers to enable staff to train MI 101 and MI 102 for their own and other agencies.

Motivational Interviewing Trainings Provided	2014 (from 7/1)	2015	2016	2017 (through 6/30)	TOTAL (7/1/2014-6/30/2017)
MI 101	7	9	10	1	27
MI 102	1	2	11	1	15
MI Coaches Training	1	2	1	1	5
MI Train the Trainer	0	0	1	0	1

EPIC delivered MI 101 training to 661 Coloradans working in the justice field between July 1st, 2014 and June 30th, 2017. In that same timeframe, EPIC trained 383 individuals in MI 102. As such, a total of 1,113 training slots were filled in EPIC trainings over the course of the last 3 years, building a significant knowledge and skill base in the Colorado justice community around MI. As a part of the Installation Stage of Implementation, during this time frame EPIC developed 46 MI coaches and 23 MI trainers within EPIC’s partner agencies across the state as sustainable resources to continue long-term efforts to build agency capacity in Motivational Interviewing.

³⁴ A Change Agent is defined as a person who is willing, ready and able to impact the culture and outcomes of their organization by learning, employing and modeling day-to-day use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) with their clients and colleagues.

Staff trained in Motivational Interviewing	Total (7/1/2014-6/30/2017)
MI 101	661
MI 102	383
MI Coaches Training	46
MI Train the Trainer	23
TOTAL	1,113

Change Agents participated in an intensive skill development process, described in earlier sections. Their program included numerous coaching sessions, participation in local communities of practice (CoPs), audio-taping on regular intervals in order to reach MI competency as deemed by the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards. Using a recorded work sample of at least 20 minutes, these standards measure the practitioner's reflection to question ratio, percentage of open-ended questions, percentage of complex reflections, as well as the use of MI adherent approaches and skills.³⁵

From July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2017, 61 people achieved competency in MI. This means that they were able to adhere to a quality of MI that has been researched and confirmed to have an impact on behavior change.

Motivational Interviewing Coach and Trainer Development. An additional part of the initial implementation design was the development of MI coaches and trainers across all these agencies to facilitate agency independence and sustainability in growing MI in their respective departments. Consequently, EPIC continued to build coaches and trainers in Motivational Interviewing (MI) across the state throughout this period in an effort to enhance agency Competency Drivers. Ultimately, EPIC partnered with selected probation and community corrections programs to develop 57 coaches and 23 trainers to ensure sustainability of MI in these agencies. These coaches and trainers help the agencies continue to further staff learning in MI and the incorporation of the skills into everyday work in a long-term, sustainable way.

Current coaching curriculum targets providing effective feedback, technical skill development, creating hospitable working environments, leadership development and engagement, and responsivity practices. The trainer curriculum focuses on the skills of MI while also helping participants learn frameworks for helping others learn and incorporate new skills. These frameworks are often new to most agencies and participants at the beginning because of the incorporation of practice, feedback, and formal and informal coaching.

³⁵ Moyers, T.B., Martin, T., Manuel, J.K., Miller, W.R., & Ernst, D. (2010). Revised Global Scales: Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity 3.1.1 (MITI 3.1.1). Retrieved from <http://casaa.unm.edu/mimanuals.html>.

To ensure quality of coaching and assess for inter-rater reliability among coaches post-training, EPIC and its coaches also utilize Justice System Assessment and Training’s Skillbuilders tool that incorporates the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity code (MITI) 3.1 standards. EPIC engages with the identified coaches in a rigorous training and coaching program. Components of this program include numerous observations and feedback sessions with EPIC Implementation Specialists, participation in statewide communities of practice (CoP) (practice groups), and maintenance of their MI competency through session audio recordings submitted every six months.

Since 2014, the greatest concentration of new coaches was developed in Jefferson, Mesa, El Paso, and Adams Counties and the greatest concentration of new trainers in Jefferson, El Paso and Mesa Counties.

EPIC Regional Working Group	Judicial District	Coaches	Trainers	Provisional Coaches
Jefferson	1st	8	7	1
Denver	2nd	3	1	0
Colorado Springs	4th	5	3	2
Larimer	8th	2	2	1
Glenwood Springs/Rifle	9th	2	1	0
Pueblo	10th	2	2	0
Buena Vista/Salida	11th	1	0	0
Alamosa	12th	1	0	0
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	13th	2	1	0
Moffat/Routt/Grand	14th	1	0	0
La Junta	16th	2	1	0
Adams	17th	8	2	2
Arapahoe	18th	0	0	1
Greeley/Ft. Morgan/Sterling	19th	4	0	2
Grand Junction	21st	5	3	2
Total		46	23	11

17th Judicial District Probation Department. After being targeted as an initial EPIC site in 2010, EPIC once again commenced a three-year project with the 17th Judicial District Probation Department in 2014 to further build the competency of their department in MI, increase their coaching capacity, and evaluate their use of CoPs. These goals were formalized extensions of the work that had been taking place with the agency since 2010. Each of these areas of focus has consisted of multiple activities which were coordinated through the standing implementation team within the agency.

To build MI competency throughout the organization, EPIC began the early Installation Stage of implementation by training staff with both a basic and advanced MI training to be taken sequentially. The initial goal was to identify champions and early adopters (Change Agents) that would help the organization implement MI. Some of these champions and early adopters would progress to become trainers, coaches, and promoters of MI and the implementation. At the time of this writing, in the Initial

Implementation Stage of implementation, 90% of staff employed by the 17th Judicial District Probation Department has received the basic training, while 49% have received the advanced training. To ensure the agency has the internal capacity to train new staff as they are hired, designated staff members attended an EPIC training for trainers and are now able to train MI. These efforts have been supplemented by EPIC staff providing individual coaching to up to 25 Change Agents at a time who have completed the advanced training. These individualized coaching sessions focus on the needs of the Change Agent to help them refine their skills and ultimately reach competency. Approximately 14% of staff have reached MI competency at this juncture, and an additional 25% have either submitted tapes for evaluation in the past or are currently actively moving toward competency.

To further bolster the sustainability of MI in the 17th Judicial District Probation Department, those who have reached competency may apply to work toward becoming coaches of MI to coach their fellow staff members and improve their skills. To do this, MI competent individuals participate in a two-day coaches training, then shadow a certified or EPIC coach during multiple coaching sessions before being shadowed themselves whilst conducting coaching sessions. This rigorous process ensures that certified coaches adhere to evidence-based coaching processes and are capable of coaching the correct skills effectively. EPIC has fully certified 8 coaches in the 17th Judicial District Probation Department and two additional, provisional coaches are currently going through the process to earn their certification. These internal coaches, along with the certified trainers, allow the agency to take new employees from having no MI experience all the way through competency and becoming certified coaches without reliance on any external consultants or resources. These resources are critical as the agency moves through the Full Implementation Stage of implementation into long-term sustainability and high-fidelity use of MI.

To continue strengthening the Competency Drivers within the organization, EPIC also helped the 17th install a practice infrastructure specific to their department that began in 2014. The installed CoP structure was created for the 17th Judicial District Probation Department to operate an independent practice space and replaced county-wide practice groups, which originally developed from EPIC-facilitated CoPs. The 2014 practice structure was heavily facilitated and voluntary, which led to sparse attendance. In 2015, this was transitioned to a mandatory attendance model in which staff had to attend at least six CoPs per year and had the flexibility to choose when to attend.

To understand how these CoPs were impacting skill development within the agency, EPIC conducted an evaluation from July, 2015 through November, 2015. Goals for this evaluation were to determine what aspects of their practice structure were functioning effectively and which may be hindering their efficacy, and to extrapolate for application with other sites incorporating CoP.

For this endeavor, EPIC empaneled an evaluation staff comprised of two EPIC staff members and two staff from Justice System Assessment & Training (JSAT), a local consulting firm under contract to EPIC. This evaluation team determined they were able to access several sources of data to complete a process evaluation and develop deeper understanding of the agency's CoP process:

1. Direct observation of CoPs

2. Anonymous survey data from all agency officers and managers regarding the current MI CoP program
3. EPIC centralized tracking data for staff MI status and CoP attendance
4. Post-observation Focus Group from a stratified sample of staff

Both quantitative and qualitative information were pulled from these sources. Improvements in the learning community – the essence of the CoP experience, were deemed a function for how Facilitation, Engagement and Learning/ Practices are aligned. Based on the survey and focus group results, various themes emerged. Facilitators and participants alike noted that facilitation of these CoPs was relatively weak based on low skills. Many participants also had little experience with MI when these CoPs were being conducted. As such, topics were very basic in nature which left those with more MI experience feeling bored and disengaged during the practice groups. This skill differential created a low energy environment in which people participated when they had to and were not invested enough to challenge incorrect practice or thoughts. While there was still some MI modeling and skill practice, these components were rather basic due to low MI skills of some in the room.

The survey and focus group indicated a need for greater investment and engagement within CoPs if they were to continue. There was also a desire to have more relevant and varied practice for their jobs, which varied based on unit. These desires reflected the evaluation results explained above as well.

The results of this evaluation were used to redesign the practice groups once more in late 2016. A new CoP structure was co-created with the 17th Judicial District Probation Department that stabilized group membership, provided each group the autonomy to practice how and what they wanted relating to MI, and provided the option to incorporate other job-related activities into their CoP practice. The implementation team identified and selected a number of staff as “CoP leads” who would be trained in facilitating group learning, provided resources for ensuring meaningful practice, and who would facilitate practice groups with stable membership to encourage engagement, safety, and bonding. The leads of these new groups attend quarterly CoPs with an EPIC staff member to adaptively troubleshoot problems, share successes and resources, and discuss facilitation strategies to foster greater learning and engagement.

The new practice structure also increases the autonomy of all staff involved, as each stable group decides together what to practice and how to do so. Based on feedback received at the lead CoPs and group CoPs that EPIC staff has attended, participation, engagement, and relevant skill practice have increased significantly since the installation of the new model. EPIC plans to conduct a smaller scale CoP evaluation later this year and will again collect data using similar measures to compare time one to time two.

Colorado Department of Corrections. EPIC also worked with Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities to implement the Colorado Transitional Accountability Plan (CTAP), which consists of the Ohio Risk Assessment System (ORAS) and its accompanying case planning process. This project involved implementing a coaching model for case management across the state’s facilities. EPIC helped DOC

develop an implementation team representing various levels and responsibilities from across the department to develop the implementation plan. Additional activities included developing coaches through phone coaching, facility visits that included live coaching, CoPs, and leadership development.

Over the course of the two-year project, EPIC initiated or completed coach development with 81 case management staff that DOC leadership identified to engage in a coach development process to develop the remaining case management staffs' capacity to effectively case plan using CTAP. EPIC provided monthly phone coaching, making available a total of 473 coaching slots, with 369 slots being used by case manager coaches. This amounted to a total of 553.5 hours being dedicated to coaching and preparation by EPIC staff. EPIC also conducted regional practice groups in Denver, Pueblo, and Canon City on a monthly basis to help reinforce the concepts originally presented in training. During this time, EPIC also visited 23 state and private facilities, addressing facilitative support issues with facility leadership at each site, working with coaches, and assisting facilities in their development of practice groups.

Throughout work with DOC (2015-2017), EPIC's focus on fidelity was designed to have case managers work toward using CTAP as designed so client outcomes could be attributed to the intervention as opposed to adaptations or other practices occurring with clients that lack current, empirical support.

EPIC coaches were spread over 22 public and private facilities. At the time DOC terminated its relationship with EPIC, 38 coaches were actively coaching facility staff and 21 were in the process of onboarding as coaches. Over the course of EPIC's involvement with DOC, 22 people left their role as coaches, primarily due to retirement, promotion or transferring out of case management (55%). The remaining staff opted out of the coaching role (45%).

Coaches who had completed training were asked to participate in at least one coaching session per quarter. Coaches who were in the onboarding process were required to engage in phone coaching with an EPIC staff member at least once a month. Of the 38 active coaches, 61% were on target with quarterly coaching requirements. Among the 21 coaches who were onboarding, all but three people were meeting the minimum monthly coaching requirements.

EPIC coached to and measured progress data in accordance with the fidelity worksheet criteria. Final case plan fidelity criteria were determined by the implementation team and were derived from the Eight Guiding Principles to Reducing Risk and Recidivism,³⁶ the Prisoner Reentry Initiative's Coaching Packet Series: Effective Case Management³⁷ and training materials provided to CDOC by the University of Cincinnati's Corrections Institute:

³⁶Bogue, B. et al. (2004). Implementing evidence-based practice in community corrections: The principles of effective intervention. Boston, MA: Crime and Justice Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.nicic.org/pubs/2004/019342.pdf>

³⁷Domurad, F., & Carey, M. (2010). Coaching packet: Implementing evidence-based practices. Silver Spring, MD: Center for Effective Public Policy.

1. Case plan prioritizes top two criminogenic need areas as determined by the assessment.
2. Each criminogenic need area breaks out at least two objectives.
3. Each objective is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic/Relevant, Timebound).
4. At least one objective enhances intrinsic motivation.
5. At least one objective utilizes skill training with directed practice.
6. At least half of the objectives use a “face to face” technique.

The average baseline fidelity score for the original coaches that remained in the role were slightly higher than the average original score for all that were included in the original cohort, which exemplifies the utility of effective selection criteria. Those who dropped out due to a lack of fit with the role (not to include those who were promoted out of the role or dropped out for emotional health reasons) had an average original fidelity score approximately 32% lower than those who elected to stay in the role throughout the implementation. Though the original selection process was based on seniority as opposed to fit for the role, the individuals who remained as coaches happened to be good selections based on other characteristics that more closely tie to successful case planning practices.

In tracking improvements to fidelity measures used during the CTAP implementation, EPIC saw improvements in the adherence to the evidence-based principles underlying the use of case planning with justice clients. In comparing aggregated fidelity data available for active coaches who sent EPIC a case plan within the first few months of coaching and coaches who had sent a case plan that was completed by July 1, 2017, there was marked improvement in the adherence to the outlined fidelity principles. Overall, the average recorded improvement between these coaching cohorts was 17.89%. Though some coaches included in this analysis were new to the coaching role, there was still a strong skill gain noted. When controlling for new coaches and analyzing fidelity improvement for original coaches only, the observed effect improved slightly with an 18.18% increase in fidelity score. EPIC also looked at fidelity increases for coaches who started and remained in the role for the entirety of the implementation partnership by comparing their original scores with their final scores. These individuals also saw an average increase of approximately 18% when controlling for coaches who dropped out of the role. The final average fidelity score for active coaches was 4.44 out of 6.

As was mentioned, CoPs are a key component of the learning process in which EPIC engages agencies. The results from the 17th Judicial District Probation Department CoP Analysis were used to inform the evolving CoP structure used in the DOC implementation of CTAP, and evidence-based risk assessment and case planning system. While these CoPs were originally similar to interactive trainings due to a need for more exposure to content before organic discussion of concepts could occur, EPIC transitioned these to providing greater autonomy as early in the process as possible. This meant bringing fewer preordained topics for discussion and allowing each group to identify their struggles and desired topic areas in real time and facilitating conversation around these areas. EPIC also began this process with stable CoPs in which identified coaches would attend the same CoP each month, providing greater levels of safety and comfort within each group to explore topics unabashedly. Finally, EPIC allowed space early into this process for attendees to air their concerns and frustrations with the fast implementation process of CTAP. Providing a safe space for this dialogue to occur increased trust among participants and

facilitators and created more engagement around the innovation content practiced and discussed in subsequent CoPs.

Additionally and importantly, to support the implementation of CTAP within the Colorado Department of Corrections, EPIC developed and presented an adaptive leadership curriculum to leaders from across the department to help them adjust and excel at leading through this large system change. EPIC completed a total of 11 trainings spanning four content modules, with 220 seats filled by 98 individual invitees in facility leadership positions.

The topics for the leadership series were chosen because they are central to leading an implementation of adaptive skills. Implementing adaptive skills requires leadership to attend to engaging staff and attending to issues such as autonomy, mastery, and purpose, which are predictive of improved performance and outcomes. The leadership series therefore began with creating an engaged workforce and the ability to identify and reverse disengagement of employees. Other topics included enhancing employee motivation, preventing burnout, supporting employees through paradigm shifts, developing lead and lag indicators of progress, coaching and giving difficult feedback, and developing skills in forging effective relationships with higher ranking staff members.

In examining the impact of the leadership workshops through post-training evaluations, EPIC staff were most interested in knowing attendees levels of interest in the material, what they wanted to learn more about, what they were learning about themselves as leaders, and what their takeaways were from the workshops. These data indicated an overwhelmingly positive response to the material presented in the trainings, as 100% of respondents indicated that they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with each module, with approximately 76% reporting that they were highly satisfied.

Overall, narrative responses included many self-reflective statements about how the material was inspiring them to look at themselves through some of the lenses presented and challenge themselves to go beyond their own limitations to become better leaders. To facilitate the change process, they wanted to be better listeners, take into account others' personality styles, paradigms and perspectives, explain better why the change is needed, help folks deal with burnout and stress around it, and better engage staff through understanding underlying assumptions and commitments staff have about their work and the world. The great majority of participants wanted to continue the learning and expressed many topics they in which they were interested to learn more. Unfortunately, the work with DOC was cut short at DOC's request and the leadership workshops, along with all the other components mentioned, were not completed.

Arapahoe Community Treatment Center (ACTC). EPIC partnered with the ACTC, a community corrections facility located in southwest Denver to implement the Progression Matrix (case planning system) and the Behavioral Shaping Model and Reinforcement Tool (BSMART) incentives and sanctions tool. Throughout this three-year collaboration, EPIC worked with ACTC focused on two primary targets: to develop a coaching model that could be applied to any innovation and the enhancement of leadership and organizational capacity to support the implementation of these two innovations. These

targets were identified by the implementation team to be of highest importance and consequence through a drivers best practices assessment (DBPA)³⁸ conducted by EPIC. This DBPA established a baseline score around how each driver was functioning in the organization. Because this phase of the work with ACTC is officially wrapping up at the end of July 2017, EPIC recently conducted a closing DBPA with the implementation team. The reassessment revealed that overall, the composite score increased from the baseline (.74 in 2016 to .95 in 2017, on a 0-2 point scale) and for the respective target areas, subscale scores for the coaching driver increased from 0 to .75 and leadership, 1.0 to 1.3. These score increases represent significant growth in these two areas of focus. The overall organizational support driver score increased from .5 to 1.2, demonstrating an increase in the infrastructural components critical to supporting the newly implemented innovations.

Colorado Department of Public Safety. Beginning in February 2017, EPIC has been working within its own department to enhance staff members' ability to effectively design presentations and trainings. Because staff within the department, and especially within the department's' Division of Criminal Justice, have contact with many other justice agencies across many domains, EPIC prioritized this work. The two-part project, starts with the premise that the goal of any presentation or training program should not be to merely help someone learn something new, but rather to help them change the way they perform their jobs, and ultimately to improve outcomes for an agency and its customers. The following plan incorporates this foundation into its design and is based in the science of learning. It is designed for any staff delivering presentations or training events.

- ***“Fundamentals of Presentation Preparation.”*** This workshop relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to lay the foundation for creating responsive, innovative, and impactful presentations. Rather than lessons on facilitation or training skills, this course focuses on the design and development of presentations. Two sessions of this course were delivered to 44 staff in February 2017.
- ***“Designing Learning Using an Evidence-Based Approach.”*** This course relies on adult learning theory and the latest research on professional development to provide participants with the skills to design and develop curricula using an evidence-based approach. Excellent curriculum designers need to possess the specialized knowledge and skills that are the purview of professionals who design learning experiences that don't just help participants remember something, but rather transfer skills to staff that result in improved organizational outcomes. At the conclusion of this course, participants will be able to describe and apply a blended model learning approach, and they will each create an outline for a curriculum using multiple methods of learning, informed by learning objectives. One session of this intensive course will be delivered in July 2017.

³⁸ Fixsen, D., Blase, K., Naoom, S., & Duda, M. (2015). *Drivers Best Practices Assessment* [Measurement instrument]. Retrieved from <http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources/implementation-drivers-assessing-best-practices>

Thinking for a Change. EPIC also delivered its first Thinking for a Change training, an evidence-based program focused on cognitive-behavioral techniques to be used with justice clients, in March of 2017. 18 participants from various behavioral health and community corrections entities were trained to facilitate this program to clients in the field, increasing Colorado’s capacity to implement this effective, well-researched innovation in the state.

Coach Development Services. In addition to the coaching sessions completed by Implementation Specialists and trained coaches in the field, EPIC is conducting an additional smaller-scale project currently underway with the Office of Community Corrections to work on two live coaching projects, one in Larimer County Community Corrections (LCCC), and one with ACTC, Centennial Community Transition Center (CCTC) and Arapahoe County Residential Center (ACRC). This project is aimed at building coaching capacity not specific to any particular innovation, but that can be applied to any EBP.

In 2015, when the rollout of the Office of Community Corrections (OCC) Progression Matrix case planning tool was nearly completed, EPIC partnered with LCCC to develop and pilot a live (in-person) coaching process to coach staff on the Progression Matrix. EPIC and LCCC worked together to establish a process of observation and coaching of case managers as they met with clients. Components of the Progression Matrix, including skill training with directed practice and enhancing intrinsic motivation, using basic motivational interviewing techniques, were tested. Upon completion of the pilot, a report was developed on the feasibility of using the coaching model to help build capacity around the Progression Matrix and what elements needed to be in place in order to implement a successful live coaching model.

In 2016, EPIC conducted a Drivers Best Practice Assessment (DBPA) with the management/implementation team at ACTC. The results of the DBPA highlighted a coaching deficit within the agency. The team decided they would like to begin with tackling the coaching driver as this presented as an attainable goal. Once ACTC agreed this is what they wanted to focus on, a live coaching model was discussed and presented by EPIC to assist with moving them forward. Upon approval of the model by the ACTC implementation team, OCC and EPIC began planning what would be the Live Coaching Workshop. Two other community corrections facilities in Arapahoe County also chose to adopt the live coaching model and integrate it into their programs.

Section Four: Implications and Future Direction

Implications

EPIC's work within the state of Colorado brings a robust pool of empirical literature that is primarily used in the scholastic and healthcare fields into the justice system. While the use of EBPs has been on the rise in this field, the science behind evidence-based implementation remains a relatively foreign and novel concept. By working through program implementation with various agencies throughout Colorado, EPIC is able to both educate diverse sectors of the justice system on successful implementation frameworks and change strategies used in other disciplines, and show the utility of attending to factors beyond the number of staff trained in a given innovation.

Working with agencies that represent probation, parole, correctional institutions, community corrections, pre-trial intervention, and other justice sectors, the concepts represented by and value of implementation science can begin to pervade the system. To begin changing the perception of what constitutes successful implementation as opposed to simply training and changing policy, understanding the research that has been done on the implementation process is integral. EPIC, through formal presentations and experiential learning methods, continues to work in Colorado to translate the effects of evidence-based implementation and what is lost by not attending to the implementation drivers.

Since this method of implementation takes significantly more effort and time than traditional methods of program installation, some agencies feel they lack the resources to dedicate to such an involved process. The literature, however, indicates that agencies indeed lack the resources NOT to engage in effective implementation strategies. The limitations of simply training staff can make these lighter levels of implementation more costly in the long run than a more intensive implementation process, as the skills taught in training are never used effectively to realize the promised outcomes of the installed practice. An investment in a more holistic and purposeful implementation process with the primary goal of transferring learned skills into routine professional use is an investment that can produce changes in how staff do their jobs, which is the purpose (but not necessarily the outcome) of training alone. When an agency understands the value of attending not only to the Competency Drivers (i.e. training and coaching the right people), but also the Leadership and Organizational Drivers, a cultural environment can be fostered that creates the necessary space that an EBP implementation requires to be successful. This is at the heart of what EPIC aims to accomplish through the use of active implementation frameworks.

Future Direction

EPIC created and began using a Request for Services (RFS) process beginning on January 1st, 2017 as a means for taking on new work and better understanding the scope of work before engaging. This RFS is aimed at gaining a preliminary understanding of what the agency is trying to implement. Upon reception of an RFS, a rotating committee of three-four EPIC staff (that always includes the unit manager) review the application, assess the scope of the request, and determine whether or not a subsequent meeting with the agency to gain more information about the request is needed.

This new process is intended to streamline and standardize the way in which EPIC commits to new work, ensuring that the unit is able to work within its statutory purview and within its capacity. Understanding that implementation is an intensive process that requires a great deal of effort, EPIC realizes it will be able to have a greater and more sustainable impact by working intensely with a handful of organizations at a time as opposed to sparsely spreading out its resources through shallow implementation efforts.

As communities have embraced the initial offerings of EPIC the EBP market in Colorado's correctional and justice systems has advanced in their understanding of and value for wise expenditures of resources. EPIC's more intensive focus in select agencies will allow for more impactful outcomes, smoother management of change processes, and more purposeful collection of implementation and EBP data. EPIC seeks to collect data that will demonstrate the impact of and need for effective implementation practices in the justice system, document the process within a justice organization for replication, approximate up-front implementation costs and savings long-term, and will indicate that efficient use of research-based implementation practices produces high-fidelity use of EBPs and predictable, measurable outcomes for organizations.

Numerous implementation frameworks, models, tools, and assessments exist. Many have come from NIRN's synthesis of the implementation research. All of these have been created from varying levels of research as well as multiple fields of study. While EPIC primarily uses the NIRN framework, along with theories of change management and organizational development, it seeks to continually learn about effective strategies from all these fields so that it is always at the forefront in the use of these methodologies.

Conclusion

EPIC's use of sound and empirically supported implementation practices has led to performance improvement within partner agencies. Satisfaction surveys, as noted in previous sections, indicate high levels of perceived value for training, coaching, and practice facilitation offered by EPIC to direct service providers and leaders. Additionally, with improved program fidelity permeating the ranks within partner agencies, EBPs are being used in a way that better reflects the researched form of the intervention compared to those same individuals when they had only receive training (where most implementation efforts tend to be marked as completed). The use of EBPs in the justice system is intended to reduce recidivism, but this can only be accomplished if the interventions are delivered as intended. By attending to organizational factors, competency, and leadership within in agency, EPIC is able to assist in creating environments that fosters and encourage the use of EBPs with fidelity. When justice clients experience these practices as they are meant to be used, it reduces the odds that they will recidivate, driving down costs to the state and counties, and making Colorado communities safer for everyone.

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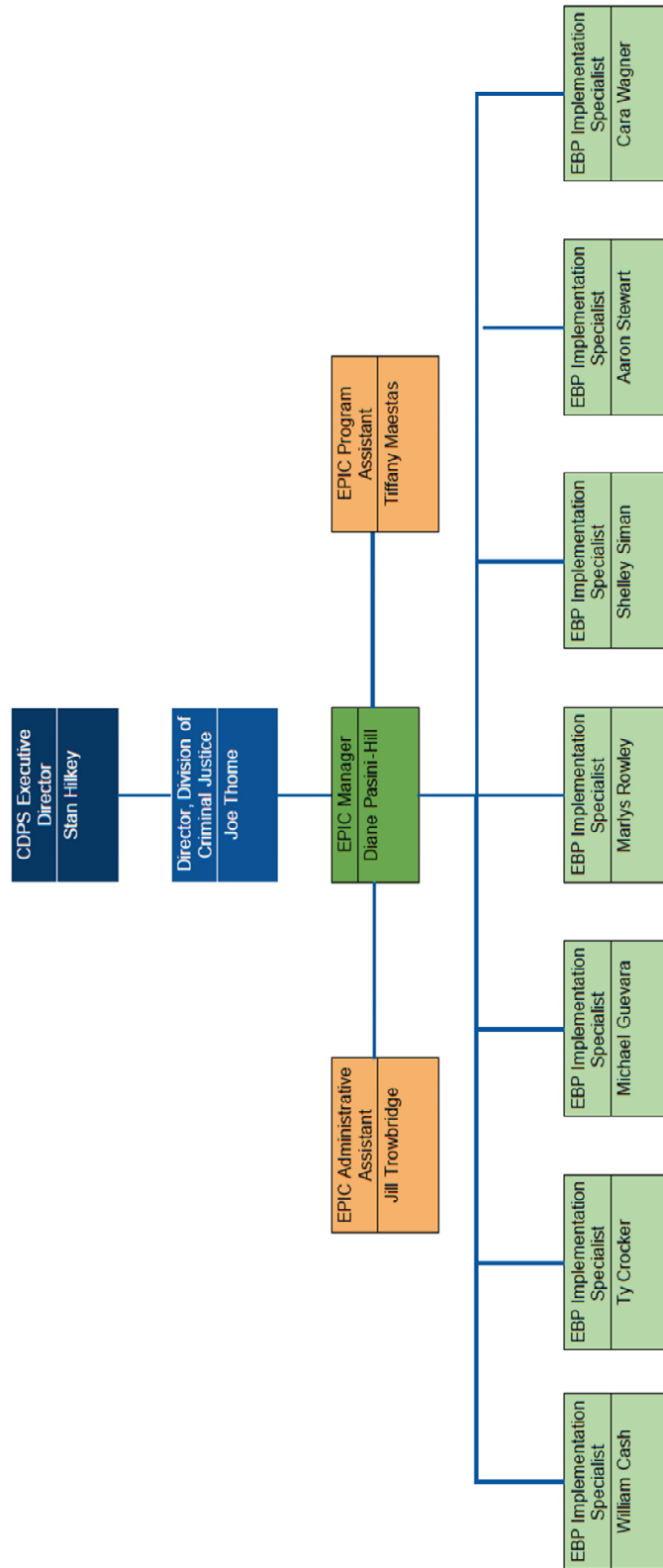
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Appendices

APPENDIX A

EPIC Organizational Chart Effective 06/2017



APPENDIX B
EPIC Projects Overview FY2014 to FY2017

Evidence-Based Practices Implementation for Capacity: 2017 Legislative Update

