

EMPOWER QUERI

Enhancing Mental and Physical Health of Women through Engagement and Retention

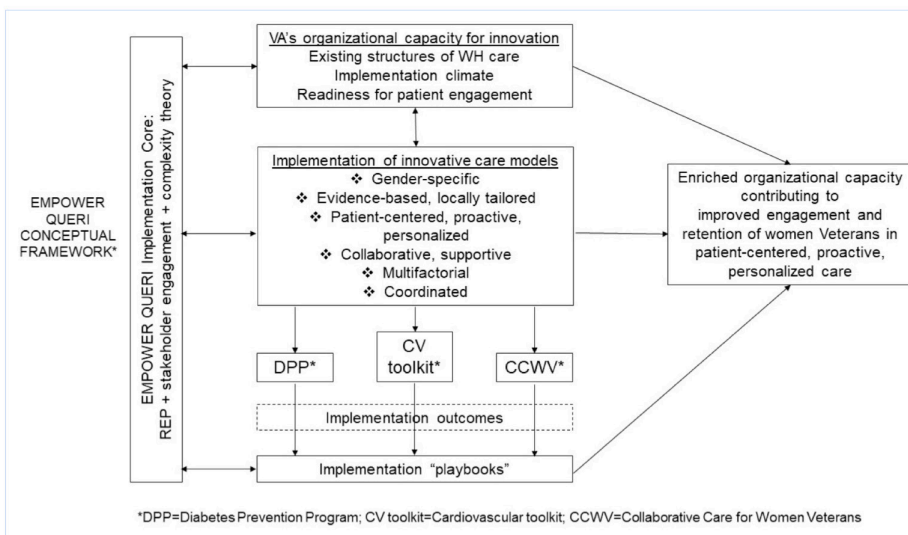
Los Angeles, CA

Overview

Women Veterans are the fastest growing segment of VA healthcare users, but this dramatic growth has created challenges. Gender disparities persist in cardiovascular (CV) and diabetes risk-factor control, and rates of depression, anxiety, and mental health comorbidity are disproportionately high among women Veterans. Moreover, a high rate of women Veterans' attrition from VA care, along with organizational barriers to care, substantiate that organizational changes are needed in order to engage and retain women Veteran VA users in evidence-based, patient-centered care.

The Enhancing Mental and Physical Health of Women through Engagement and Retention (EMPOWER) QUERI is designed to improve women Veterans' engagement and retention in evidence-based care for three high-priority health conditions (pre-diabetes, cardiovascular risk, and mental health) through the following aims:

- Apply an evidence-based implementation strategy that emphasizes local tailoring of care models, multi-level stakeholder engagement, and systematic evaluation of complex implementation processes in order to enrich organizational capacity for innovations in VA healthcare for women Veterans.
- Implement personalized, proactive, patient-centered innovations in VA women's healthcare that are acceptable, feasible, satisfactory, relevant, and effective for providers and patients, thereby encouraging women's engagement, retention, and sustainability of the innovations.
- Generate implementation "playbooks" for program partners that are scalable and that serve as guidance for future implementation of a broader array of evidence-based women's health programs and policy.

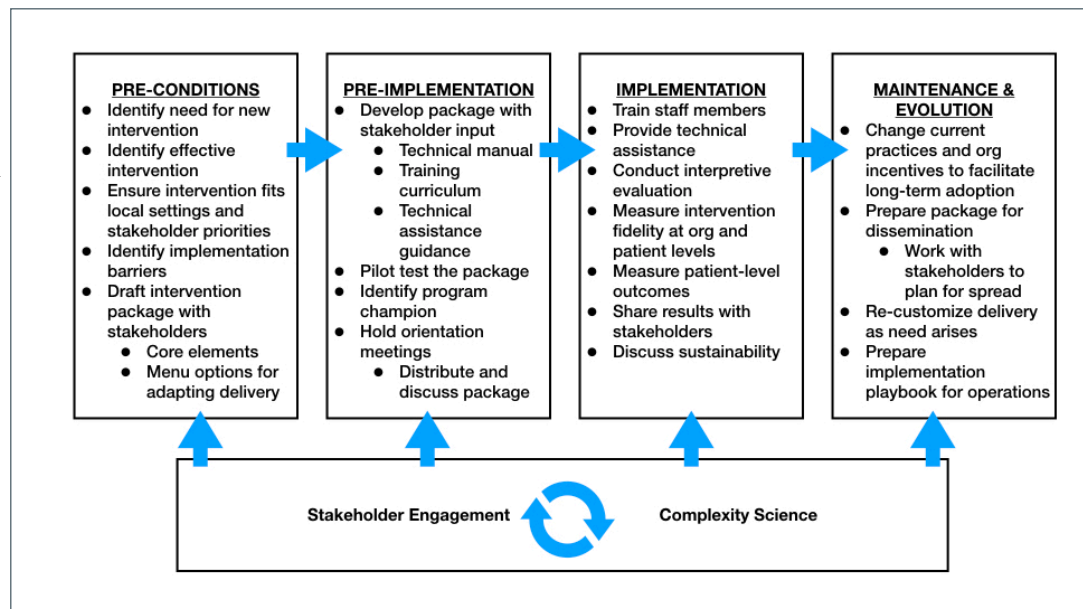


Implementation Strategy

Across all EMPOWER QUERI projects, investigators will use the Replicating Effective Programs (REP) implementation strategy, enhanced with multi-level stakeholder engagement and complexity theory. As depicted on the next page, REP provides a phased framework for implementation, with different discrete implementation strategies being employed in different phases. REP's demonstrated effectiveness in promoting uptake of evidence-based practices

(Over)

allows investigators to focus on its application in varied settings and care models. One of the implementation science goals will be to track the relative importance of each discrete strategy in each phase at each site and across sites, as well as in each project and across projects. This will allow for the development of user-friendly, implementation practice “playbooks” for operations partners.



Findings and Anticipated Impact

Tailoring VA's Diabetes Prevention Program to Women Veterans' Needs is a quality improvement project conducted in VA Greater Los Angeles women's health clinics, resulting in a 187% increase in the number of women aware of their pre-diabetes diagnosis. Women Veterans with prediabetes selected an in-person, peer-led or online gender-specific diabetes prevention program to address their risk behaviors and health conditions. Pre-implementation interviews revealed that women Veterans value having treatment options and preferred women-only groups; high demand for the program resulted in delivery to triple the number of Veterans originally planned.

The Facilitating Cardiovascular Risk Screening and Risk Reduction in Women Veterans (CV Toolkit) project is implementing a multifaceted, evidence-based toolkit in four VA Women's Health Practice-Based Research Network sites to:

- Increase identification of cardiovascular (CV) risk among women Veterans
- Enhance patient/provider communication and shared decision-making about CV risk
- Provide a supportive, coordinated health coaching intervention to facilitate women Veterans' engagement and retention in appropriate health services.

The Implementation of Tailored Collaborative Care for Women Veterans (CCWV) project is evaluating implementation of an evidence-based collaborative care model tailored to enhanced treatment for women Veterans with anxiety, depression, and/or PTSD thereby improving the effectiveness of organizational primary care-mental health integration (PC-MHI), as well as women Veterans' engagement and retention in PC-MHI.

By improving women Veterans' engagement and retention in evidence-based care models for prediabetes, cardiovascular risk, and mental health, EMPOWER QUERI aims to increase organizational capacity for innovations in women Veterans' VHA health care.

Operations Partner(s)

VA Women's Health Services; National Center for Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; Women's Mental Health Services; Primary Care-Mental Health Integration; Office of Patient-centered Care and Cultural Transformation.