

PRESENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTERVENTION RESEARCH

CONTEXT

One of the objectives of population health intervention research (PHIR) is to demonstrate the effectiveness of interventions acting on the distal and proximal determinants of health. However, due to their complex nature, the evaluations of such interventions cannot be limited to the demonstration of their effectiveness, but must also examine the mechanisms of action underlying this efficiency. It implies to explore the "black box" of interventions, their mechanisms and the interactions between context and action. This includes not only exploring the efficiency of interventions, but understanding why, how, for whom, to what extent and under what conditions interventions are working, or not. This exploratory approach is essential in order to consider the sustainability and the transfer of interventions that have demonstrated their effectiveness in population health.

In this context, the Medical Research Council Guidance (Craig et al., 2000¹; 2008²) is stressing recommendations to guide researchers in designing, developing and evaluating complex health interventions, more specifically process evaluation (Moore, 2015)³. However questions remain unanswered regarding those methodological guidelines:

- Might process evaluation be nested in a trial or is it an alternative design?
- Which methods can be mobilized?
- What is the temporality of process evaluation (competitive, sequential...)?
- How to report the results produced, so they can participate in programs transfer?

OBJECTIVES

By giving French researchers the opportunity to meet leading international intervention researchers, this workshop is a unique opportunity to shed light and provide answers on the issues that are currently structuring the field of intervention research. The final objectives of this seminar are to provide written recommendations on process evaluation and to publish an article in a scientific peer reviewed high ranking journal.

Three working groups will be held throughout the day. In each working group, a moderator will previously send materials (articles), prepare a brief presentation of key issues to debate, and three or four discussants will present concrete examples. These three working groups will all be followed by an open and plenary discussion. Then a moderator will conclude the roundtable.

THEMES OF THE WORKING GROUPS

1. The place of theory into process evaluation: does it highlight the role of mechanisms? Should process evaluation be theory-driven? How? How to consider what might be anticipated in the program-theory? What are the current logic models and frameworks that are combining theory and process of interventions?
2. The place of pilot studies in process evaluation: objectives, contribution (co-construction of a theory, validation/invalidation of a planned theory, evaluation of the mechanisms, pilot studies to contrast the effects of context or to test different modalities of interventions (in terms of feasibility, recruitment, inclusion, participation, etc.)?
3. Which methodologies might be combined in process evaluation (qualitative, quantitative, mixed-method, realist approach), and how?

¹ Campbell, Michelle et al. "Framework for Design and Evaluation of Complex Interventions to Improve Health." *BMJ: British Medical Journal* 321.7262 (2000): 694–696.

² Craig, Peter et al. "Developing and Evaluating Complex Interventions: The New Medical Research Council Guidance." *The BMJ* 337 (2008): a1655. PMC. Web. 4 July 2016.

³ Moore, G. F., Audrey, S., Barker, M., Bond, L., Bonell, C., Hardeman, W., Moore, L., O’Cathain, A., Tinati, T., Wight, D., and Baird, J. (2015). Process evaluation of complex interventions: Medical Research Council guidance. *British Medical Journal* ; 2015 : h 1258.