ADDRESSING COMPLEX CHALLENGES IN CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM REFORM - CHOOSING REALIST EVALUATION TO STUDY THE CHOICE AND PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

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2011 - Identified need for a consistent model of service delivery within IWK Mental Health and Addictions (MHA) services

Choice and Partnership Approach (CAPA) model chosen for high client and family satisfaction and improved systems-level outcomes.
Transformation required a philosophical shift from "clinician as expert and patient as help-seeker" to a collaborative partnership between client and clinician based on shared decision-making

2012 - Established a CAPA Provincial Network to share knowledge and facilitate success of the model

2015 - CAPA selected as the province-wide model for child and adolescent MHA services

2016 - Initial assessment identified partial, inconsistent provincial implementation of CAPA; Provincial Lead Team established

2018 - Engaged with members of an emerging IWK Health Centre/Dalhousie University "Active Partnerships" research network

2017 - Sobey Family Chair engaged CAPA provincial leadership, clinical, community, client, and other partners through project incubators

The need to evaluate CAPA implementation identified at BRIC NS Project Incubator

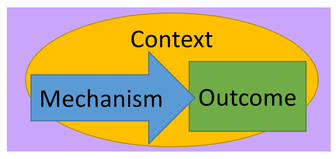
2018 - Co-developed research aim: In child and adolescent MHA, **"To what degree does CAPA work in Nova Scotia, for whom, and under what circumstances?"**

Application submitted for an Establishment Grant with support from MSSU and other partners

2019 - Establishment Grant received from Research Nova Scotia

Realist framework guides the evaluation to understand *"what works, for whom, and under what circumstances"*. Departs from traditional approaches that may oversimplify impact of contextual variation on outcomes.

Framing: Initial, "rough" theories as *hypotheses*
Collecting: Gather data regarding context, proposed mechanisms, and outcomes using mixed methods
Analysing: Identify patterns to compare to the initial theory
Refining: Review and adjust for congruence with interpretations yielded by the data



Strengths of Realist Evaluation
- Accounts for diverse stakeholder perspectives
- Increases transferability of findings due to context-sensitive analysis
- Provides both pragmatic and theoretically-relevant insights

Implications:
1. Inform knowledge gaps in complex system transformation
2. Generate a foundational, theory-based understanding of mental health systems transformation to address health system complexity
3. Maximize utility for policy development.
4. Inform CAPA implementation planning for all provincial child and adolescent teams

Articulate initial theories via CAPA **logic model** and **scoping review**

Data collection using CAPA Fidelity Assessment and Component Evaluation **(FACE) questionnaire** and **document review** to assess implementation, mechanisms, and outcomes

Focus groups and interviews with clients and families, MHA clinicians, staff, and managers to identify key outcomes

Patient engagement strategy includes clients and families, IWK Family Leadership Council, IWK Youth Advisory Council, and organizations

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