



NIRN Hexagon Tool can provide additional guidance to assist with exploring curricular change.

A Not-So Trivial Pursuit: Using Implementation Science to Develop a Competency-Driven Curriculum

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OBJECTIVE

- Implementation science tools, like the National Implementation Research Network's (NIRN) Hexagon Exploration Tool, can be utilized to determine the need, evidence, fit, usability, capacity, and supports for implementing change.
- We used this method to explore the "fit and feasibility" of revising the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) curriculum to a competency-driven model.

METHODS

- The Hexagon Tool provided context in the exploration stage of curricular change by utilizing questions for each **Program** and **Site** Indicator and ratings on a five-point scale (1 – does not meet need/fit, 5 – strongly meets need/fit).
- After engaging in multiple interactions and focus groups with students, preceptors, and faculty, the Curriculum Revision Taskforce (CRT) members used the discussion questions and ratings to determine whether to pursue and adopt this change.

SOMEWHAT SUPPORTED:

Some resources are available to support competency development or organizational development, but not both.

NORTHEASTERN:

Faculty development, policies/procedures, and existing technologies were available to assist with curricular change. Needed supports included space, additional administrative support, and effective communication practices.

MEETS NEED:

Site has demonstrated an understanding of how program meets needs of focus population. Site included two or more data sources when conducting needs assessment (e.g., administrative, staff perspectives, community partners) and disaggregated these data to identify needs of specific and relevant subpopulations.

NORTHEASTERN:

A switch to 6-month co-operative model (from 4-month) was necessary to meet University standards. Need identified to ensure equity between different entry pathways into the program and updating/modernization of curriculum.

ADEQUATE CAPACITY:

Site adopting program has most of the capacity necessary, including 3 of the following: qualified workforce financial supports, technology supports and administrative supports required to implement and sustain program with integrity.

NORTHEASTERN:

Additional budgetary, staff, and faculty would not be necessary as we worked within the confines of what was available. Leadership was supportive of the change. New academic and assessment plans needed to be devised.

SOMEWHAT USABLE:

Program has operationalized principles and core components that are measurable and observable, but does not have a fidelity assessment; modifiable components are not identified.

NORTHEASTERN:

Little information exists about this type of curricular model in pharmacy, although this is an emerging topic from the academy. As one of the first, assessment tools and guidance will need to be created.

EVIDENCE:

Program has demonstrated effectiveness with one rigorous, external research study with the focus population and a control group.

NORTHEASTERN:

Evidence of this model exists in medicine, veterinary, nursing, and other disciplines. Based on preceptor and student focus groups, there is a desire for skills-focused curriculum with goal of future-proofing. Curricular hoarding and bloat is also a concern, this process allows us to make decisions about material delivered within our curriculum that is need-to-know vs. nice-to-know.

FIT:

Program fits with all priorities of the site and community values; however, the values of racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically specific populations and alignment with other initiatives have not been assessed.

NORTHEASTERN:

Competency-driven curriculum aligns with new outcomes from accreditation. Modernizing the curriculum and integrating meets academic goals set by college and university. Need to work within constructs of workload demands and structures in place at university.

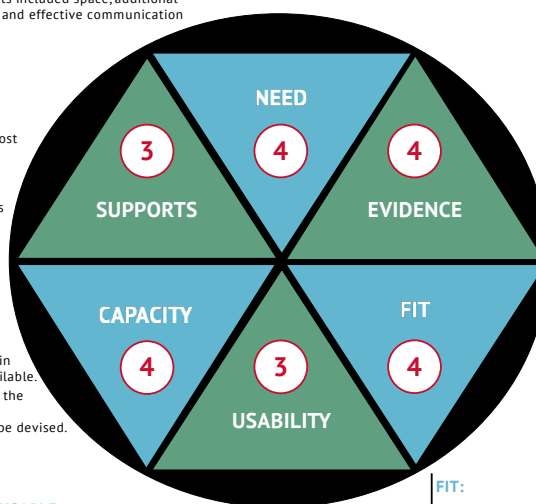


Image adapted from NIRN Hexagon Tool. Metz A, Louison L. The Hexagon Tool: Exploring Context. Chapel Hill, NC: National Implementation Research Network, Frank Porer Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. 2020. Available at https://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/NIRN-Hexagon-Discussion-Analysis-Tool_September2020_1.pdf.



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