

Translating Research into Practice

How to use the latest in telehealth innovation to the benefit of your patients and staff

As new information becomes available, it often takes time before those findings are put into practice. This process is known as **knowledge translation**. Follow these steps to integrate knowledge translation into your telehealth practice workflow.



STEP 1: Stay up to date



Knowledge translation starts with knowledge acquisition. Helpful resources include:

- ▶ Telehealth.HHS.gov's [Research](#) page
- ▶ Telehealth [Best Practice Guides](#)
- ▶ National Institutes of Health's [National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences](#)
- ▶ Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's [Guide to Integrate Patient-Generated Digital Health Data into Electronic Health Records in Ambulatory Care Settings](#)
- ▶ Newsletters and announcements
 - [Health Resources and Services Administration](#)
 - [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#)

Example: Knowledge Translation in Action

A renal care team observes that kidney failure among patients in their area is higher than the national average. After reading about a potential link between multidisciplinary diabetes care and lower rates of end-stage renal disease in a medical journal, the team collaborates with local primary care providers to integrate better care for kidney disease within the context of routine diabetes care. The primary care team used telehealth to conduct regular diabetes checkups with patients, offer dietary recommendations, and monitor urine sodium remotely.

STEP 2: Understand your practice's needs



Clearly defining your needs and goals allows you to select the most translatable research.

What gaps exist in your telehealth program? What areas would you like to see improved? Examine internal and community-level data to identify where your patients' health outcomes fall short of national standards.

STEP 3: Overcome implementation barriers



Your practice will inevitably face obstacles that make knowledge translation more difficult. Common implementation barriers include:

- ▶ A lack of funding or staff
Solution: Apply for [federal grants](#). Find telehealth-specific funding opportunities [here](#).
- ▶ Knowledge/skill gaps for personnel
Solution: Participate in free telehealth [webinars and trainings](#).
- ▶ Workflow-related obstacles
Solution: Create a quality improvement (QI) program. Use the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's [Creating Quality Improvement Teams and QI Plans](#) (PDF).

STEP 4: Observe and evaluate



Monitor the implementation process, making adjustments as necessary. Once implementation is complete, conduct an evaluation. Did the research recommendation improve the telehealth program? What kinds of process-based changes can be made to allow for smoother implementation in the future?

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