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Title	Icons: identifying continence options after stroke trial: utility of a logic model in the design and implementation of a process evaluation
Type	Article
URL	https://clock.uclan.ac.uk/17281/
DOI	##doi##
Date	2013
Citation	Thomas, Lois Helene orcid iconORCID: 0000-0001-5218-6546, Burton, Christopher, French, Beverley, Leathley, Michael John, Forshaw, Denise orcid iconORCID: 0000-0001-5725-3736, Sutton, Chris J orcid iconORCID: 0000-0002-6406-1318, Roe, Brenda, Chesworth, Brigit orcid iconORCID: 0000-0001-7936-5536 and Watkins, Caroline Leigh orcid iconORCID: 0000-0002-9403-3772 (2013) Icons: identifying continence options after stroke trial: utility of a logic model in the design and implementation of a process evaluation. <i>Trials</i> , 14 (S1). O90.
Creators	Thomas, Lois Helene, Burton, Christopher, French, Beverley, Leathley, Michael John, Forshaw, Denise, Sutton, Chris J, Roe, Brenda, Chesworth, Brigit and Watkins, Caroline Leigh

It is advisable to refer to the publisher's version if you intend to cite from the work. ##doi##

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ORAL PRESENTATION

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Icons: identifying continence options after stroke trial: utility of a logic model in the design and implementation of a process evaluation

Lois Thomas^{1*}, Christopher Burton², Beverley French¹, Michael Leathley¹, Denise Forshaw¹, Christopher Sutton¹, Brenda Roe³, Brigit Chesworth¹, Caroline Watkins¹

From 2nd Clinical Trials Methodology Conference: Methodology Matters
Edinburgh, UK. 18-19 November 2013

Background

ICONS is a cluster randomised controlled pilot trial designed to provide preliminary evidence of the effectiveness of a systematic voiding programme (SVP) for the management of continence after stroke. Stroke services were randomised to receive the SVP, the SVP plus supported implementation, or usual care. Process evaluations are designed to evaluate fidelity and provide explanatory evidence around trial outcomes; these need to be underpinned by a theoretical framework to explain linkages between intervention processes and outcomes.

Process evaluation

We conducted an evaluation to describe SVP implementation and assist in explaining intervention outcomes. Reflecting best practice in complex intervention research, we developed a logic model to underpin the evaluation representing practitioners' implementation activities. To increase explanatory power of the model, we synthesised principles from theoretical frameworks underpinning the study (e.g. the Normalisation Process Model) into mechanisms of action to explain conditions necessary for activities to impact on outcomes. Mechanisms were:

- **Understanding and agreeing:** conceptual work associated with the SVP, e.g. increasing awareness.
- **Driving and aligning:** organising systems or processes to align and drive new practice.
- **Building and supporting:** enacting the SVP.
- **Learning and evaluation:** reflecting on performance and progress.

Findings

We will discuss the utility of the logic model in explaining conditions necessary for the intervention to work, the success of implementation strategies adopted and variations in patient outcome across trial arms. We will also consider the challenges of synthesising across multiple data sources to understand variation in intervention delivery, maintenance and outcome in cluster trials.

Authors' details

¹University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK. ²Bangor University, Bangor, UK. ³Edge Hill University, Ormskirk, UK.

Published: 29 November 2013

doi:10.1186/1745-6215-14-S1-O90

Cite this article as: Thomas et al.: Icons: identifying continence options after stroke trial: utility of a logic model in the design and implementation of a process evaluation. *Trials* 2013 **14**(Suppl 1):O90.

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¹University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK
Full list of author information is available at the end of the article