The Future of Health Services Research: *Innovation, Improvement, and Equity*

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President and CEO  
AcademyHealth

@DrSimpsonHSR
Outline

1. Understanding Perspective
2. HSR Past and Present
3. A Framework to Shift the Paradigm
4. Three Areas of Critical Focus
Let’s Warm Up! Zoom Poll!

• What is your discipline?
Let’s Warm Up! Zoom poll!

- What is your primary discipline?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health services research</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understanding Perspectives
About AcademyHealth and One Career
Vision
A world in which evidence informs decisions for optimal health for all.

Mission
AcademyHealth improves health and health care for all by advancing evidence to inform policy and practice.
Four Goals

I. Impact
II. Workforce
III. Engagement
IV. Innovation

Three Cross-Cutting Priorities

I. Science Innovation
II. Health Systems Improvement, Resilience and Capacity
III. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Core Values

- Evidence for Action
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Leading Based on Continuous Learning
- Collaboration and Community
- Trust and Integrity
Diverse Programs to Advance the HSR Field

Scholarships & Fellowships
- Delivery System Science
- Diversity Scholars
- Senior Scholars
- Education Council
- Student Chapters

Learning Networks
- Annual Research Meeting
- Science of Dissemination & Implementation
- National Health Policy Conference/HDP
- Health Policy Orientation

Methods and Data
- Methods and Data Council
- Workshops
- Health Data Leadership Institute
- Webinars

Conferences
- Annual Research Meeting
- Science of Dissemination & Implementation
- National Health Policy Conference/HDP
- Health Policy Orientation
An Ongoing Journey in HSR

• Preparation:
  • Pediatric & preventive medicine training
  • Public health pivot
  • AHRQ NRSA Postdoc in HSR & policy at IHPS

• Career
  • Shaping HSR
  • Doing HSR
  • Elevating & Advancing HSR field
Various Identities Along the Way

- Outsider
- IMG
- Pediatrician
- Researcher
- Teacher
- Academic
- Administrator
- Executive
- Influencer
HSR Past and Present

A brief review
Your Turn!

How familiar are you with the field of health services research?

- Very
- Somewhat
- Not very much
- Not at all
Your Turn!

How familiar are you with the field of health services research?

- Very: 62%
- Somewhat: 32%
- Not very much: 3%
- Not at all: 3%
“Health services research is the multidisciplinary field of scientific investigation that studies how social factors, financing systems, organizational structures and processes, health technologies, and personal behaviors affect access to health care, the quality and cost of health care, and ultimately our health and well-being.

Its research domains are individuals, families, organizations, institutions, communities, and populations."
The Questions HSR Answers

- What works?
- How well does it work?
- For whom?
- Under what circumstances?
- At what cost?
- And once we know what works, how do we scale and sustain it?

Dominant Frame in 1990’s: Cost, Quality and Access
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase in Annual Federal Funding</th>
<th>HSR Funding is a Small Portion of Total NIH $</th>
<th>NIH Remains Dominant Funder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1.9 billion to $2.9 Billion FY 2010-2016 (Annual Federal HSR Budget)</td>
<td>5% of total annual NIH budget</td>
<td>Annual % of Projects Funded in 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

↑ 55%
Evolution of HSR Domains, RAND, 2020

“Input” Domains
- Organization of Care
- Financing of Care
- Social Factors
- Personal Preferences and Behaviors

“Output” Domains
- Quality of Care
- Access to Care
- Cost and Utilization
- Equity

Research Methods and Tool Development
### Table S.1. Key Cross-Cutting Gaps in Research Approaches to HSR and PCR Identified by Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Domain</th>
<th>Gaps in HSR and PCR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cross-Cutting   | • Examining health care outcomes for a **fuller range of populations and settings**  
|                 | • Following change in implementation and outcomes of health care interventions over time  
|                 | • Communicating results that are actionable by health care delivery stakeholders  
|                 | • Producing relevant and timely results for health care delivery improvement  
|                 | • Using theory to connect findings and advance knowledge on health care change  
<p>|                 | • Leveraging <strong>digital health</strong> and linking various new sources of <strong>health care-related data</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Domain</th>
<th>Gaps in HSR on ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization of Care</td>
<td>• Health care workforce needs, composition, and roles in new delivery models(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reducing burdens of health IT on health care providers(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing of Care</td>
<td>• Effects of evolving models of financing on the range of health care outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Effects of health care payment models on different patient populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Factors</td>
<td>• Role of health care systems in addressing social determinants of health(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Effect of social factors on demand for health care services(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Preferences and Behaviors</td>
<td>• Integrating patient preferences into care(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Addressing health and health care misinformation(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Care</td>
<td>• Developing harmonized measures to meaningfully, accurately, and feasibly assess quality of care(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Care</td>
<td>• Identifying both root causes and evidence-based solutions for barriers to access(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost and Utilization</td>
<td>• Challenge of lowering cost while improving care(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reducing waste in health care(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Costs of new care therapies and delivery models(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reducing costs across the health care system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>• Solutions to reduce disparities in health care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Types of HSR Impact, RAND 2020

- Scientific
- Professional knowledge and practice
- Health care systems and services
- Policy
- Patient
- Societal
The Impact of Health Services Research (2018)

- Significant impact on health care policy and the way health systems operate in areas such as cost sharing, quality improvement, payment models, and patient safety.

- Need for efforts to focus on translation, communication, and implementation of results.

- Especially needed at this time is a deepened capacity and commitment with a broader vision—one of a transformed capability for health systems research and practice embedded in health-related initiatives throughout the nation.
Polling Question: Which of these do you think holds the most potential for advancing the HSR field?

- Increasing Relevance
- Timeliness
- Funding
- New Tools & Technology
- Data Access & Quality
- Addressing Social Determinants
- Other
Polling Question: Which of these do you think holds the most potential for advancing the HSR field?

- Increasing Relevance: 18%
- Timeliness: 9%
- Funding: 18%
- New Tools & Technology: 3%
- Data Access & Quality: 9%
- Addressing Social Determinants: 36%
- Other: 6%
The Paradigm Shift
A framework for transformation
HSR Needs to Develop and Embrace a New Paradigm

• **Why?** Relevance and timeliness of HSR for health care decisions too often fall short of the mark

• **Why now?** Broader societal trends present opportunities and a need for change:
  • New data and computing capabilities
  • Demand for greater diversity among workforce and institutions
  • Growing expectations for transparent institutions
  • Growing expectations for social impact
Addressing Six Thematic Challenges in HSR

1. Cohesive vision and shared sense of purpose
2. Asking the right questions
3. Involving the right people and partners
4. Using the right data and methods
5. Utilizing the right messengers and messages
6. Leveraging the right incentives
Multiple Modes of Influence/Change

Human Centered Design

Thought Leadership

Expert Meetings

Commissioned Papers
“Incubator” Fuels Collaboration & Implementation

Innovation Testing Underway

Team Formation
- CBO
- Researcher
- Provider/System

Literature Review
- Understand challenge
- Define options from evidence

Workplan
- Team roles
- Fidelity and adaptations
- Metrics & sustainability

Online Repository captures lessons to improve evidence base
Polling Question: Which of these do you think is most important for us to focus on as a field?

- Grounded in a cohesive vision & shared purpose
- Asking the right questions
- Involving the right people
- Using the right data & methods
- Utilizing the right messengers & messages
- Leveraging the right incentives
Polling Question: Which of these do you think is most important for us to focus on as a field?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grounded in a cohesive vision &amp; shared purpose</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking the right questions</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving the right people</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the right data &amp; methods</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilizing the right messengers &amp; messages</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leveraging the right incentives</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three Priorities
Innovation, Equity, Health System Transformation
Embrace Science Innovation
Addressing Key Aspects of Research Life Cycle

• How are questions formulated?
  • Patient and stakeholder engagement
• How is funding allocated?
• What data and methods are used?
• Who are the partners on the research team?
• How are results communicated?
• The nature of incentives and rewards
“Incubator” Fuels Collaboration & Implementation (T4)

Innovation Testing Underway

Team Formation
- CBO
- Researcher
- Provider/System

Literature Review
- Understand challenge
- Define options from evidence

Workplan
- Team roles
- Fidelity and adaptions
- Metrics & sustainability

Online Repository captures lessons to improve evidence base

AcademyHealth
Your Turn!

Where have you seen the most change, or readiness for change, in the research lifecycle of HSR?
Polling Question: Where have you seen the most change, or readiness for change, in the research lifecycle of HSR?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formulating questions</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient &amp; stakeholder engagement</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How funding is allocated</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of data and methods</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research team partners</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication of results</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentives &amp; rewards</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advance Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODEL</th>
<th>LEAD</th>
<th>INFLUENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessing Ourselves</td>
<td>Working with Our Members &amp; Partners</td>
<td>Facilitating Changes in the Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Training</td>
<td>Diversity Audit of Leadership Committees,</td>
<td>Advisory Group on Diversity, Equity and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Bag Discussions</td>
<td>Conferences &amp; Vendors</td>
<td>Inclusion in HSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring &amp; Retention Policies</td>
<td>Center for Diversity, Inclusion</td>
<td>Education, Training &amp; Publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning Priorities</td>
<td>&amp; Minority Engagement</td>
<td>Strategy to Reduce Bias in Data &amp; Analytics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collection of Syllabi on Racism</td>
<td>Workplace Culture Survey Findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&amp; Equity Topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentoring &amp; Networking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your Turn!

What do you see as our biggest challenges in achieving genuine diversity, equity and inclusion in the HSR field?
What do you see as our biggest challenges in achieving genuine diversity, equity and inclusion in the HSR field? (select all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of recruitment of underrepresented populations</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for better policies that support diversity, equity, and inclusion</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of funding for programs that support diversity, equity, and inclusion</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture of systemic racism in academic institutions</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for more diverse leadership in academic institutions</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Health Systems Improvement, Resilience and Capacity
Health Systems Improvement: Breadth and Depth

- Breadth: Supporting our Interest Groups
  - Workforce
  - Quality and Value
  - Mental Health and Substance Abuse
  - Disparities
  - Learning Health Systems

- Research in and with health systems
  - Embedded Research

- Professional development
  - Delivery Systems Science Fellowship
  - VA Learning Health Systems Fellowship
Your Turn!

What do you see as the biggest barrier to the implementation of truly evidence-based health care delivery?
What do you see as the biggest barrier to the implementation of truly evidence-based health care delivery? (Select all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research/evidence lacks relevance</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of incentives/rewards for researchers to focus on implementation</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of leadership knowledge of how to implement</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different time frames for research and care delivery</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misaligned financial incentives for health systems</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance to change</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition and intellectual property concerns</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient infrastructure to support change</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Final Reflections
Making Sense of the Journey
Final Reflections

- HSR is a dynamic, exciting field that can significantly improve care and health
- Learn what you love
  - Clinical care spurred questions and frustrations
  - Drawn to gaining new knowledge as well as wanting to “make things better”
  - Pushing the boundaries and frustration with status quo
- Understand the underlying patterns in your choices
  - Achieving and maintaining credibility
  - Skilled at bridge building
  - Accept when you are ready
Let’s Talk!