ABSTRACT SUBMISSION AIC 2016: #23

1. Title:

Using Normalization Process Theory to explore implementation of an Enhanced Recovery after Surgery Programme

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3. Key words:

Qualitative research, Healthcare professionals, Implementation, Enhanced Recovery after Surgery Programme

4. Abstract Text:
a. Background and aims

The Enhanced Recovery after Surgery Programme (ERAS) is a complex approach to the perioperative care of patients encompassing multiple interventions and actors. Despite the strength of the evidence-base in its support, implementation has been slow. This paper explores the utility of Normalization Process Theory (NPT) as a methodological framework to aid exploration of ERAS implementation, focussing on the core NPT construct *coherence*.

b. Methods

Semi-structured interviews guided by NPT conducted with twenty-six health care professionals working in three specialities (thoracic, colorectal, head and neck) in a UK hospital. Data were analysed using adapted Framework Approach.

c. Results

Coherence (sense-making work) was key to successful implementation; believing in ERAS both as an individual and a team was important. In order to invest in ERAS, individuals needed to be able to differentiate its practices favourably with those enacted pre-implementation (differentiation); understand their specific tasks and responsibilities (individual specification); and build shared understandings (communal specification). Belief in the worth of ERAS was aligned to evidence for effectiveness or patient benefit (internalization). Sense-making work had strong links with aspects of implementation related to other NPT constructs, including resource issues such as funding for data collection (reflexive monitoring: systemization) and failure to replace key staff members (collective action: skill set workability).

d. Conclusions

NPT was useful in facilitating recognition of the importance of *coherence* work to successful implementation. Despite participants' strong beliefs in the worth of ERAS, it was in translating these beliefs into action that barriers were encountered, highlighting the interconnectedness of NPT constructs.