APPENDIX A. SEARCH STRATEGY

TOPIC 1 – SCALING/SPREAD OF HEALTH INTERVENTIONS TOPIC 2 – IMPROVING LOW-PERFORMING ORGANIZATIONS TOPIC 3 – LEARNING HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

SEARCH TOPIC 1 – SCALING/SPREAD:

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

PubMed – From inception to 1/4/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

scale-out[tiab] OR scaling-out[tiab] OR scaling[ti] OR scaling-up[tiab] OR scale-up[ti] OR spread*[ti] OR spread*[ot] OR scale-out[ot] OR scaling-out[ot] OR scaling[ot] OR scaling-up[ot] OR scale-up[ot] OR large-scale OR "large scale" OR national[ti] OR system-wide OR "system wide" OR multiinstitutional system* OR "Multi-Institutional Systems"[Mesh] AND "organizational culture"[ti] OR "organisational culture"[ti] OR organizational chang*[ti] OR organisational culture"[ti] OR "organizational innovat* OR "diffusion of innovation" AND interven*[tiab] OR interven*[ot] OR initiative*[tiab] OR initiative*[ot] OR implement* OR practice[tiab]

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

PubMed – From inception to 1/4/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

SIMILAR ARTICLE SEARCHES -

Aarons, Gregory A. "Scaling-out" evidence-based interventions to new populations or new health care delivery systems. Implement Sci. 2017 Sep 6;12(1):111.

Yano, Elizabeth M Implementation and spread of interventions into the multilevel context of routine practice and policy: implications for the cancer care continuum. J Natl Cancer Inst Monogr. 2012 May;2012(44):86-99

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

WorldCat – From inception to 1/3/2018

LANGUAGE: English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

ti: scale-out OR ti: scaling-out OR ti: scaling OR ti: scaling-up OR ti: scale-up OR ti: spread* OR ti: large-scale OR ti: large w scale OR ti: system-wide OR ti: system w wide OR ti: multi-institutional w system OR ti: multi-institutional w systems)) or (su: scale-out OR su: scaling-out OR su: scaling OR su: scaling-up OR su: scale-up OR su: spread* OR su: large-scale OR su: large w scale OR su: system-wide OR su: system w wide OR su: multi-institutional w system OR su: multi-institutional w systems)) not mt: juv) not mt: fic and (dt= "bks" or dt= "ser" or dt= "url") AND ti: medical OR ti: health* OR ti: hospital OR ti: hospitals AND

ti: chang* OR ti: innovat* OR ti: implement* OR ti: initiative* OR ti: interven* OR ti: cultur* or su: chang* OR su: innovat* OR su: implement* OR su: initiative* OR su: interven* OR su: cultur* AND

ti: quality OR ti: improv* or su: quality OR su: improv*

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

Web of Science – From inception to 1/3/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

ti=(scale-out OR scaling-out OR scaling OR scaling-up OR scale-up OR spread* OR large-scale OR large near scale OR system-wide OR system near wide OR multi-institutional near system OR multi-institutional near systems)

AND

ts=(medical OR health* OR hospital OR hospitals)

AND

ts=(chang* OR innovat* OR implement* OR initiative* OR interven* OR culture*)

AND

ti=(quality OR improv*)

Refined by: [excluding] WEB OF SCIENCE CATEGORIES: (FOOD SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY OR GREEN SUSTAINABLE SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY OR URBAN STUDIES OR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES OR VETERINARY SCIENCES OR BIOCHEMICAL RESEARCH METHODS OR BIOCHEMISTRY MOLECULAR BIOLOGY OR BIOLOGY OR EDUCATION SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES OR BIOPHYSICS OR ENERGY FUELS OR BUSINESS OR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES OR BUSINESS FINANCE OR METEOROLOGY ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES OR CELL BIOLOGY OR MULTIDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES OR CHEMISTRY MULTIDISCIPLINARY OR COMPUTER SCIENCE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE OR AGRICULTURE DAIRY ANIMAL SCIENCE OR COMPUTER SCIENCE HARDWARE ARCHITECTURE OR AGRICULTURE MULTIDISCIPLINARY OR COMPUTER SCIENCE INFORMATION SYSTEMS OR AUDIOLOGY SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY OR COMPUTER SCIENCE SOFTWARE ENGINEERING OR SPORT SCIENCES OR BIOTECHNOLOGY APPLIED MICROBIOLOGY OR CONSTRUCTION BUILDING TECHNOLOGY OR CHEMISTRY PHYSICAL OR CRYSTALLOGRAPHY OR COMPUTER SCIENCE INTERDISCIPLINARY APPLICATIONS OR EDUCATION SPECIAL OR COMPUTER SCIENCE THEORY METHODS OR ELECTROCHEMISTRY OR DEMOGRAPHY OR ENGINEERING CIVIL OR WATER RESOURCES OR ENGINEERING ELECTRICAL ELECTRONIC OR EDUCATION EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH OR ENGINEERING MANUFACTURING OR ECOLOGY OR ENGINEERING MECHANICAL OR GEOGRAPHY OR



ETHICS OR EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY OR MARINE FRESHWATER BIOLOGY OR FORESTRY OR MATHEMATICS INTERDISCIPLINARY APPLICATIONS OR GENETICS HEREDITY)

OR

ts=(implementation science) AND ts=(system* near chang*) Refined by: WEB OF SCIENCE CATEGORIES: (NEUROSCIENCES OR HEALTH CARE SCIENCES SERVICES OR IMMUNOLOGY OR HEALTH POLICY SERVICES OR MEDICINE GENERAL INTERNAL OR PSYCHOLOGY CLINICAL OR PSYCHOLOGY DEVELOPMENTAL OR PSYCHOLOGY EDUCATIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGY MULTIDISCIPLINARY OR ONCOLOGY OR PHARMACOLOGY PHARMACY OR SOCIAL SCIENCES BIOMEDICAL OR CLINICAL NEUROLOGY OR MEDICAL INFORMATICS OR SOCIAL SCIENCES INTERDISCIPLINARY OR HEMATOLOGY OR INFECTIOUS DISEASES OR SOCIAL ISSUES OR MEDICINE RESEARCH EXPERIMENTAL)

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

Web of Science – From inception to 1/4/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

"Forward" search on the following article:

Yano, Elizabeth M Implementation and spread of interventions into the multilevel context of routine practice and policy: implications for the cancer care continuum. J Natl Cancer Inst Monogr. 2012 May;2012(44):86-99

SEARCH TOPIC 2 – LOW-PERFORMING ORGANIZATIONS

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

PubMed – From inception to 11/21/2017

LANGUAGE: English

SEARCH STRATEGY #1 (ORIGINAL VERSION)

organization* AND perform*[ti] AND low OR lower OR lowest OR low-perform* OR poor* OR substandard AND interven* OR improv*

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

PubMed – From inception to 1/3/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY #2 (REVISED VERSION)

low perform* OR low-perform* OR lower perform* OR lower-perform* OR lowest perform* OR lowest-perform* OR perform* poor* AND

"organizational culture"[ti] OR "organizational culture"[mh] OR "organisational culture"[ti] OR organizational chang*[ti] OR organizational innovat* OR "diffusion of innovation"

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

Business Source Complete – From inception to 11/21/2017

LANGUAGE: English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

SU organizational performance AND TI (low OR lower OR lowest OR low-perform* OR poor* OR substandard) AND interven* OR improv* Search modes - Find all search terms

SEARCH TOPIC 3 – LEARNING HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

PubMed- From inception to 1/10/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

learning health system* OR learning healthcare system* OR "learn from every patient" OR

("learn from every patient" OR lfep) AND ("nationwide children's hospital" OR "nationwide childrens hospital"

OR

"SIMILAR ARTICLE" SEARCHES ON THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES:

Grumbach, Kevin, "Transforming from centers of learning to learning health systems: the challenge for academic health centers," JAMA. 2014 Mar 19;311(11):1109-10.

Lowes, Linda P., "Learn From Every Patient': implementation and early results of a learning health System," Dev Med Child Neurol. 2017 Feb;59(2):183-191.

Smoyer, William E., "Creating Local Learning Health Systems: Think Globally, Act Locally," JAMA. 2016 Dec 20;316(23):2481-2482.



OR

JOURNAL - "Hospitals and Health Networks" for all issues in 2017

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

WorldCat: - From inception to 1/10/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

kw: learning w health w system* OR kw: learning w healthcare w system* OR kw: learn w1 every w1 patient

AND

DOCUMENT TYPE= BOOKS OR SERIALS OR ARTICLES OR URL

NOT

SUBJECT= education OR MEDIA TYPE=juvenile OR MEDIA TYPE=fiction

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

Web of Science - From inception to 1/10/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY #1:

ts=("learning health system" OR "learning health systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learn

SEARCH STRATEGY #2:

Forward searches on Grumbach, Lowes, & Smoyer articles

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

Scopus - From inception to 1/10/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY #1:

TITLE-ABS-KEY ("learning health system" OR "learning health systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learn from every patient")

SEARCH STRATEGY #2:

Forward searches on Grumbach, Lowes, & Smoyer articles

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

IEEE XPLORE - From inception to 1/10/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

"learning health system" OR "learning health systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learn from every patient"

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

Embase - From inception to 1/10/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

'learning health system' OR 'learning health systems' OR 'learning healthcare system' OR 'learning healthcare systems' OR 'learn from every patient'

AND

Humans

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

ACM Digital Library - From inception to 1/10/2018

SEARCH STRATEGY:

"learning health system" OR "learning health systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learn from every patient"

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

CINAHL - From inception to 1/10/2018

LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

TI ("learning health system" OR "learning health systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learning health systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learning he

DATABASE SEARCHED & TIME PERIOD COVERED:

PsycINFO - From inception to 1/10/2018





LANGUAGE:

English

SEARCH STRATEGY:

TI ("learning health system" OR "learning health systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learning health systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "learning healthcare systems" OR "learning healthcare system" OR "

NOTE: RESULTS OF ORIGINAL PUBMED AND BUSINESS SOURCE COMPLETE SEARCH VERSIONS WERE REVIEWED AND ONLY SELECTED RELEVANT ITEMS WERE INCLUDED IN FINAL SET

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APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS – QUERI Interviewees

[QUESTIONS FOLLOW INTERVIEW GUIDE INTRODUCTORY SECTION]

We understand you were the Principal Investigator for the QUERI project [PROJECT NAME]. We are particularly interested in this project because it was an example of spreading an existing project.

- 1. Please tell us about your experience with this project.
- 2. Can you describe the strategy for the spread of [INITIATIVE/PRACTICE]?
 - a. Who was involved in making the decision to spread beyond the earlier sites?
 - b. Who was involved in the spread effort itself?
- 3. What factors [national/regional/local/site specific] facilitated the spread of the project?
- 4. What factors [national/regional/local/site specific] impeded the spread of the project?
- 5. Were certain sites more difficult to engage?
 - a. If so, what factors contributed to this?
 - b. Potential factors to probe: leadership, resources, lines of reporting/authority to make changes, structural factors
 - i. Was low performance a factor?
 - ii. Were there specific challenges?
 - c. Were there specific strategies used for engaging or working with this group of sites?
- 6. During spread efforts, was fidelity of implementation monitored?
 - a. If so, how?
 - b. During spread, was fidelity to original model strong?
 - c. Were modifications made to the model or strategy?
 - i. If so, why?
 - ii. What changes to the strategy were most successful?
 - iii. Which were less successful?
- 7. From the time the idea for [INITIATIVE/PRACTICE] was first conceived, could you briefly describe the key time points in the process?

Eg, initial idea, first piloting/demo, early spread, full/national roll-out

Is there anything else you would like to share with us, particularly about working with hard-toengage sites? Please feel free to draw on other experience you may have had.

Thank you for your time!

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS – SAIL Improvers

[QUESTIONS FOLLOW INTERVIEW GUIDE INTRODUCTORY SECTION]

The [SITE] facility had improved its overall SAIL score around [YEAR]. We are particularly interested in your site because it was able to make these improvements and maintain them. We understand that you were there during these changes, and would like to hear, from your perspective, more about how this improvement happened.

- 1. Can you describe your role?
- 2. From your perspective, what is the story of the improvement during [BEGINNING YEAR] until now? How did the improvement happen?
- 3. What were one or 2 underlying approaches that were necessary to make the change happen?
- 4. What factors at your site contributed to the improvement? Leadership changes, leadership support/engagement, structure, lines of reporting, analytics/data, etc.
- 5. Did you specifically focus on any particular metrics? Did this change over time?
- 6. Did you have specific interventions or tools your site used during this improvement process? Where did they come from?
- 7. When did the SAIL improvement begin and what motivated it?
- 8. What role has the VISN played over the course of these improvements? What types of SAIL-related resources or interactions have you shared?

Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

Thank you for your time!

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APPENDIX C. SAIL DATA EXEMPLARS

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*Data were only collected once in FY2011

APPENDIX D. QUERI AND SAIL TEMPLATES USED IN ANALYSIS

QUERI

Project/	What makes sites hard to	Strategies/facilitators to	Description of	Timeline (How long	Other stuff
Transcript	engage?	engagement (or lack	intervention (how much	different steps took, and	
ID		thereof, include mandates	effort on part of sites,	was full scale/spread	
		and other external	fidelity of	achieved?)	
		factors, changes over	practice/changes over		
		time to implementation	time)		
		strategy)			

SAIL

Project/	Why started/what	Overall approach over	How used	Who is involved?	Other stuff/activities
Transcript	motivated/initial	time?	analytics/data/coding in	Leadership	
ID	catalyst?	Key strategies used, changes over time, specific metrics focused on, where did they find materials or resources (eg homegrown or from a group or person)	process	role/activities, autonomy of people involved to make decisions, stability of personnel	

APPENDIX E. PEER REVIEW COMMENTS/AUTHOR RESPONSES

Reviewer	Comment	Response
Reviewer #1	 Multiple objectives, unclear which is highest priority; discussion focuses primarily on the interview data, which does not fully reflect what has been learned from the literature. Mismatch between literature review objectives and interview objectives, not fully addressed or described. I would strongly advise providing clear synthesis of what was learned from the literature before going into the interview data. Primary bias is towards internal VA information, which is not from published literature, but comes from interviews. As I note above, the objectives of the literature review and those of the interviews do not seem well meshed, and the presentation is not very clear as a result. I would strongly recommend dividing into 2 sections: the review of the literature, and the interviews focusing on issues of hard to engage sites, and other issues which are not well covered in the literature, but not really with the central questions of the literature review. 	Both the literature and interview data were used to address the same research aim, which is now broken into 2 sections rather than the 4 original sections. This change was made for clarity and to align with other reviewer comments related to re-organizing the content. We have clarified the objectives of the report and we have described more explicitly how both the literature review and interviews contributed to each section and the relevant findings therein. We also describe the bias towards internal VA information in the limitations section.
Reviewer #2	As indicated by the authors, by nature of the topic, there are potentially projects/studies missed because of either different search terms or simply because of the work, projects of spread may not be reported in the literature. The other bias as indicated by the authors is the VA-centricity of the report which is fine to ensure an appropriate scope, but there may other lessons/experiences learned that may be beneficial and generalizable to the VA. In general, I would not recommend add anything different to the report, but ensuring these limitations are clear and possibly making some recommendations for future projects on authors should report results regarding disseminating and spreading best practices.	We have revised the limitations section to emphasize these points and ensured that the recommendations for future research describe ways reporting could be strengthened (<i>eg</i> , describing adaptations/tailoring or how efforts work with hard to engage sites specifically).
Reviewer #3	 The focus on "late adopters" (or low performing?) sites needs to be more explicitly stated up front – including in the executive summary. The authors present the Rogers Diffusion of Innovations' curve of adoption and in some places use that language (<i>eg</i>, late adopters, etc) 	We have added language to emphasize our focus on hard-to- engage sites in the executive summary and discuss in more detail the late adopter/hard-to-engage site terminology in the introduction.



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	but in other places use the term "low performers." These are not necessarily the same sites or contexts. Late adopters are in this category simply because they are slow to adopt a particular innovation and may be in this category for quite rational reasons, some of which the authors acknowledge (<i>eg</i> , sites have already "invented" a solution in place of the targeted innovation). Low performers, on the other hand, are low performers on a particular quality metric or cluster of metrics (and could be a "high performer" on other metrics) and need "solutions" which a particular innovation may or may not align with; <i>eg</i> , a low performer may need innovations targeted to reducing hospital-acquired infections but a particular innovation may address a topic that is less important for them to address. This distinction needs to be clarifiedincluding both is ok but the authors need to be careful not to conflate the terms. It may be best to focus on the term "late adopter" where one reason for late adoption may be because the topic that a particular innovation is designed to address is not aligned with quality gaps experienced by "low performers." Another reason for late adoption might be a general inability or incapacity to implement innovations, often seen in pervasively low performing sites. Who is hard to engage? This question is unclearis the focus on characterizing 'late adopters?"	We agree that low performers are a distinct, if potentially overlapping group. We have rephrased all instances where we conflate them with the other group, so that they are more distinct and intentionally described as low performers where applicable, rather than lumping them with the adopter categories.
Reviewer #3	adopters/low performers The authors highlight the need to define terms,	We have reviewed and updated our
	stating that the terms "scale-up" and "spread" are often used interchangeably (I would go further and say, "conflated") and then suggest a definition that continues conflation of these terms. In fact, these are distinctly different terms. Eg, Ilot et al 2013 (https://implementationscience.biomedcentral.c om/articles/10.1186/1748-5908-8-128) suggest distinct definitions with citations. It is important to distinguish these terms because these topics are a central focus of this synthesis. If the definitions adopted by Ilot et al are used, scale-up typically relies on a planned top-down strategy to diffuse innovation while "spread" is related to horizontal diffusion of innovations. The distinctions are nuanced but important when attempting to identify strategies and moderators of increasing use of an innovation. The authors, in fact, seem to recognize these as	own use of terminology related our own use of terminology related to scaling/spreading throughout the report and have added more discussion in the limitations about the conflation and our use of terms in the report.

	distinct terms on p 11, where they introduce IHI and QUERI frameworks and position that innovations may be first tested for "scale-up before moving to full scale/spread." The authors "sought to define what forms large magnitude spread take (what do you mean by "forms") and what should be considered prior to engaging in large magnitude spread take (is this the same as large-scale? scale-up? spread? Be consistent in use of terms), and what should be considered prior to engaging in large magnitude spread	
Reviewer #3	Is this a "rapid review?" If so, this needs to be specifically stated. If not, then this synthesis needs a much deeper description of methods and demonstration that the content of the included articles was methodically abstracted using a defined/described process and template (<i>eg</i> , were both qualitative and quantitative findings used? If so, how were they integrated? Also, how was interview data integrated with published articles). As it is, it reads as a "rapid review" meaning that findings are presented as relatively high level with less in-depth and systematic analysis of themes derived from findings.	This is not a rapid review, and we have revised our data abstraction description in the methods section to add more details of our process. We have also revised our description in the methods section of our integration of the interview and literature synthesis findings to provide more clarity here as well.
Reviewer #3	Figure 3 shows "macro models" that "describe the organizationof spread efforts." This diagram can be simplified by taking out the circle with 52 publications. " <i>Eg</i> ," needs to be added to the examples to make clear that <i>eg</i> , Geisinger Learning Health System is an example The brief bullets describing the 3 models are not clearly described – especially in relation to how successful they are. These seem to be purely descriptive. It would be more useful to characterize success within each type of model with reflections on their applicability as an intentional strategy	We have added " <i>eg</i> " into the figure, but kept the 52 publications circle to provide the denominator for the smaller circles. While we would have liked to include information about how successful these different models are, the original articles often did not provide this information, and we were not able to draw conclusions that compared these models in terms of success.
Reviewer #3	Page 21, 2 nd paragraph is quite awkwardly worded with reference to Figure 4 that needs more explanation. I imagine that these preconditions may differ depending on the "macro model" contextor do these principles apply regardless of model?	We have revised this text to be more descriptive, and to clarify that these seemed to be principles that apply regardless of the model.
Reviewer #3	Figure 5 lists "potential benefits" first but the text describes "common challenges first." Order in text versus figure order needs to be aligned. The characterization of "benefits" is unclear and unexpected. An overall description of the meaning of this term here is needed.	This figure has been updated to reflect the correct order of the text and we provide clarification about the term benefit.



Reviewer #3	It is hard to know what to do with the information offered related to each benefit – can these insights be leveraged intentionally and strategically to turn these into earlier adopting sites? Regarding "challenges" – reflections on how to overcome and/or whether the presence of these challenges means that efforts to force use of an innovation should be abandoned, would be helpful. For example, if a site has created a "local innovation" that addresses a quality gap, should that site be "forced" to use the new innovation?	In the later section with Figure 7 and the corresponding text these benefits are connected to suggested strategies that may help with engagement. While these sites may not become early adopters, a better understanding of the variety of hard- to-engage sites may help with tailoring strategies and approaches, rather than treating all hard-to- engage sites the same. More discussion of this has been added to the text in this section to presage the later discussion.
Reviewer #3	Figure 6 would be better understood within the "macro model" section of findings. "re-personalize" is confusing the authors state it is something used in earlier phases and yet the earlier phases do not discuss "personalization."	We have moved this Figure earlier in the report. We now emphasize the personalized nature of the early phases to justify our later use of the re-personalize term.
Reviewer #3	Figure 7 is very hard to understand. Linkages are made that do not make sense, nor do the explanations help to make these linkages more clear. <i>Eg</i> , the Figure shows that Low bandwidth is linked to external facilitation. The text refers to "facilitation" (not "external facilitation") and needs to describe what "low bandwidth" is and how facilitation addresses this. These linkages each need to be described in text.	We have worked to be more consistent with our terminology in this section (<i>eg</i> , using external facilitation throughout) and have clarified the connections between our earlier description of types of hard-to-engage sites and this section. We have also added more language describing how these linkages were made, either by literature or interviewees.
Reviewer #3	 What about the "pull" perspective? This question is meaningless on its own. "Pull" must be defined more clearly with explanation about why it is an important question to answer. Figure 8 doesn't relate to text and needs better explanation. <i>Eg</i>, how does "deep dive- to understand local needs" relate to "pull?" 	This has been re-organized to a new section of the report and more language has been added to explain the figure (now "VA preconditions and networks for spread"). The "Pull" terminology has been removed, as we determined it was distracting from the purpose of the content.
Reviewer #3	The Summary should include more concrete recommendations derived from findings presented.	Recommendations for future work have been highlighted with bullets in the abstract and end summary sections.
Reviewer #3	It is not clear how data from interviews were integrated with findings from published literature. Findings from literature (based on the 52 articles) should be presented within each section and then clearly and separately extended or further explicated by the	We have described more explicitly how both the literature review and interviews contributed to each section and the relevant findings therein.



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Reviewer #3	 interviews. Readers need to know the relative strength of evidence for the assertions made in this synthesis – published, peer-reviewed articles provide stronger evidence though the interviews can provide deeper insights or confirmation of published findings. The QUERI and IHI "models" should be characterized as frameworks – they are highlevel, conceptual processes. I'm not sure of the appropriateness of combining these to guide this synthesis. QUERI is very much focused on moving research evidence to practice; characterizing the process as a "pipeline." This pipeline has a core premise that innovations must be "evidence-based" – a top-down process is then assumed to get that innovation broadly implemented. IHI, on the other hand, is very much focused on grassroots process improvement. Scientific evidence is not germane, rather, local demonstration of improvement is necessary (through piloting and initial testing as the authors state) before scaling up and/or spreading more broadly. It is important to highlight these distinctions and to clarify whether this synthesis truly draws on head to get the synthesis truly draws on head to get the synthesis of the synthesis is truly draws on head to get the synthesis of the synthesis truly draws on head to get the synthes	We have highlighted this key distinction in our discussion of these frameworks and have noted that while there is a fundamental difference between the evidence- based approach and the grassroots process improvement approach, the similarities in the later stages of these frameworks is the key factor we wanted to emphasize in this report, and that in many cases it was not clear from published reports which approach had been used, so we chose to draw from both scenarios. We also now refer to these as frameworks.
	both scenarios or is focused on a more "QUERI pipeline" approach to identifying evidence-based innovations which then need to be scaled up and spread more broadly.	
Reviewer #4	Methods section (p.13), included mention of the TEP. Although this was defined earlier, it was not immediately clear who this was. It is recommended that the authors use the full term "Technical Expert Panel," especially since this seems to be the main place that the TEP was references.	This has been updated
Reviewer #4	Methods section (p.13), guiding question #3 (How can you work with hard-to-engage sites?) ends in a question but is a statement.	We have revised our framing of the questions and this question no longer appears here.
Reviewer #4	In Search Strategy (p.13), you reference the "Error! Reference source not found" which I had difficulty locating in the document. Could you perhaps include a page number to help others locate this (and other appendices) more easily? This is especially important when your search approach/search terms are not presented in the body of the document but instead as an appendix.	We have fixed the error message and also added page numbers for all referenced appendices throughout the report.
	It would be nice to make it easier for readers to access this information while reading the body of the document, perhaps by including page numbers in the text.	

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Reviewer #4	In Study Selection (p.14), you might consider offering some additional information to support your decisions related to studies that were rejected from your sample. More specifically, why were low-income country settings excluded? What was the basis of excluding studies that spread to less than 10 sites?	We now describe the rationale for excluding low-income countries and studies that spread to less than 10 sites.
Reviewer #4	In the SAIL Improvers section (p.15), you state the some sites were non-responsive and that site interviews were still ongoing. This suggests that data collection and analysis were not complete for the version of this report that was reviewed. Is this a concern? Will there be additional edits/expansions to this report after review by myself and the other reviewers?	At the time of the report drafting, all interviews had been conducted and notes from these interviews were taken into account, but some later interviews were not transcribed and formally analyzed. We have now conducted our process as described in the methods section and found no grounds for changing any of our findings or conclusions. However, we had wanted to be transparent about this issue at the time of draft report.
		We have also now included more specific information in the methods section, as described by the COREQ guidelines, about the non-responsive sites.
Reviewer #4	The Preconditions for Large Magnitude Spread (p.21) section was a bit confusing. Is the figure presenting a tool to be used by sites hoping to support spread? Areas that need to be assessed prior to beginning a spread effort? The presentation of this information seemed to introduce this topic for later exploration, but then left it without providing findings or recommendations. Again, there seemed to be a lack of continuity, as the topic of "Preconditions for Spread" appears to encompass all sites, while the later discussion mainly focuses on Hard-to-Engage sites. It felt as if there needed to be more exploration of the concept of "Spread Preconditions" and/or more of a transition to a focus on hard-to-engage sites.	The organization of the sections has been updated and more language to help with flow has been added. We have also added language to better contextualize this figure/section.
Reviewer #4	I wonder if it might be helpful to more explicitly link these strategies to challenges in the text by creating some sub-headers within the text that would mirror the organization presented in Figure 7? The current write-up does a nice job of focusing on the strategies but could use more emphasis on the ways that these strategies could be used to address the specific challenges, and build from the benefits, characteristics of hard-to-engage sites.	Sub-headers in this section have been added and brief descriptions have been added to summarize the links between characteristics of sites and strategies.



Reviewer #4	In the "What About the 'Pull' Perspective?" section (p.33), it might be helpful to briefly talk about how these local/"pull" approaches interact/relate to "push" or spread approaches. As this is currently written, it feels a bit too reductionistic and missed opportunities for explanation/big picture views of these 2 forces that I fear would not be available to your average reader naïve to QI methods.	This has been re-organized to a new section of the report and more language has been added to explain the figure (now "VA preconditions and networks for spread"). The "Pull" terminology has been removed, as we determined it was distracting from the purpose of the content.
Reviewer #4	p. 34 - Existing VA Hubs of Information - you do not capitalize "Shark Tank" or the names of the other hubs. Should these be capitalized?	Yes, these are now capitalized.
Reviewer #4	The transition from "hard to engage sites" discussion, which is based on interviews and literature reviews, to the "what about the 'pull' perspective," which is based on interviews alone, is a bit jarring (p.33). Perhaps it would be helpful to provide a bit more framing to explain that you are transitioning from a consideration of the perspectives/lessons learned from research/interviews with persons who support practice spread to sites that are the recipients of these spread efforts? It seems that this is what you were intending - to understand the spread process from both sides, correct? Either way, this section would benefit from more framing and introduction as the tone is very different from the previous sections.	We have re-organized the report, which we hope addresses this concern.
Reviewer #4	 p.35 - your summary of your findings related to practice spread were confusingly stated: " activities described in our data split the final phase of full-scale spread into 2 phases with distinct strategies. The third phase, or first part of the full-scale spread, which we are calling the 'mass broadcast' phase, uses strategies The fourth phase, or second part of the full-scale spread phase" Perhaps it would be easier to read/understand if you proposed that the current spread model be expanded or relabeled, to avoid this confusion related to first/third and second/fourth stages. 	We have revised and edited our language for clarity as suggested.
Reviewer #4	p.36 - In the "What about the 'Pull' Perspective?", "Pull" should be capitalized. Also, I would recommend that you drop "in the SAIL interviews" from the end of the first sentence in this section - as it is currently written, it sounds as if sites are seeking out information from the interviews, rather than the sites were discussing their sources of information within the interviews that you conducted.	These updates have been made.
Reviewer #4	You make the distinction between "late adopters" and "low performing" sites in your Summary section (p.37). It may be useful to	We have added more discussion of the late adopter/low performer/hard- to-engage site terminology in the



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	provide a little more information about the value of distinguishing between these 2 types of sites. You mention that "while there may	introduction to help support this later discussion.
	(be) substantial overlap, some distinctions were also made, particularly in the QUERI interviews." Can you briefly summarize these distinctions in this section? Keep in mind this may be the only section that some readers read.	We have also now added brief examples to the summary section.
Reviewer #5	I think there are 2 problems with applying the Diffusion of Innovations adopter groups in this setting.	We have now incorporated a more thorough discussion about Diffusion of Innovations in the Introduction section, and removed some of the
	The most important problem is that Rogers may have misunderstood the association between innovation adoption and the group characteristics. Instead of those in the early adopter group being generally more innovative and those in the late adopter group being generally skeptical and slow to change, it may be that those found in the early adopter group are generally higher status (<i>eg</i> , more educated, more metropolitan, wealthier) and are more likely to be copied than those in the late adopter group. It calls into question the idea some people are (in many/most aspects of life) generally more innovative and some generally more resistant to change. See John Henrich's paper Henrich, J. (2001). Cultural transmission and the diffusion of innovations: Adoption dynamics indicate that biased cultural transmission is the predominate force in behavioral change. American Anthropologist, 103(4), 992-1013.	later references to this theory to de- emphasize it.
	Another conceptual problem is that Rogers' adopter groups were based on observations about individuals, and many of the defining characteristics of those individuals do not translate or translate imperfectly to organizations, <i>eg</i> , innovators being more metropolitan and educated than late adopters.	
	I don't think this critique is a serious one in terms of the validity of the findings, but as a conceptual guiding model I think it's probably important to point out that it has some potential flaws. The authors might bring this up in the discussion of who is hard to engage (page 22).	
Reviewer #5	I think there needs to be greater emphasis and discussion about allowing sites to say no to a change initiative. The authors do an excellent job of acknowledging and describing how late adopters were observed to have some beneficial characteristics. But other than the observation about taking the long view (page	This is a key point, and is now included in the discussion section.



	24), there doesn't seem to be an acknowledgement that the best decision for a given site might be to say no to the change initiative, particularly in situations where there is low bandwidth, large sets of competing demands, or a homegrown solution that works. Virtually any change initiative is stressful and disruptive. I can understand that it may be that this was not a finding (i.e., the wisdom of declining to adopt/participate did not emerge in interviews or the literature), and therefore it is not appropriate to interject it with empirically- grounded findings. But perhaps the authors could note in the limitations or elsewhere in the discussion that a key assumption here was that a given initiative was broadly desirable or	
	necessary, and we all know that there are initiatives and programs that don't work well for every site.	
Reviewer #5	I would like to see more concrete examples. I like the use of the quotes, but they're often too vague to really illustrate the findings for the reader. For example, page 29, on creating a web of support, it would be helpful to know what the setting was that the quotes come from; who the team leader was; who the other team members in the web were, etc. Another example is on page 31, with the quote about evidence-based quality improvement. It would be very helpful to provide some details about the project and how sites shaped the project to their needs and context.	We have added specific examples to the first quote described, but we went back to the interview and unfortunately we did not have more site-specific information to give about the evidence-based quality improvement work.
Reviewer #5	Page 5, line 38, I'm not sure I understand why findings from low income settings wouldn't be applicable in high-income settings. There may be resource issues, but many of the dynamics in my experience are similar, <i>eg</i> , issues of planning, competing priorities, clarity about roles and goals.	We now describe the rationale for excluding low-income countries.
Reviewer #5	Page 6, line 42. The sentence, "these included spread efforts that were embedded spread within a system of care" is hard to understand. I think I understand after reading it 4 or 5 times.	We have clarified this wording.
Reviewer #5	Page. 6, line 48-49. The sentence, "for sites spread initiators intend to work with," is another very difficult to understand phrase.	We have clarified this wording.
Reviewer #5	Page 13, line 56. There's an error note from citation software (Error! Reference source not found).	This has been corrected.
Reviewer #5	Page 13, line 53-54. The number of non- responsive sites still has the XX placeholder	At the time of the report drafting, all interviews had been conducted and notes from these interviews were



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	and there's an editorial note in brackets to fill it in.	taken into account, but some later interviews were not transcribed and formally analyzed, so we wanted to wait to finalize these last parts of the report. We had wanted to be transparent about this issue at the time of draft report.
Reviewer #2	there were terms like 'hard to engage' used that lacked clear operationalization	We have added more discussion around several terms as suggested by this and other peer reviewers, including "hard-to-engage."
Reviewer #2	why were articles that evaluated spread in 10 or more used? were there a lot of studies under 10 excluded? did this impact the potential conclusions	We have now added a justification for this exclusion code, we excluded 20 such studies and felt that, when looking at them as a group, they were not discussing large-scale spread, but more focused on a regional or first-iteration scale-up effort. Thus, they did not address the objectives of this report and would not change the conclusions we reached.
Reviewer #2	would recommend considering a section or in the conclusion, some potential recommendations that may be gathered from the review.	We have now added recommendations to the summary section.
Reviewer #2	page 6 - not sure what is meant by similar articles. also would be helpful to confirm if these are mesh term and if not, how were the terms confirmed - that is, where possible terms missed?	"Similar articles" search is a type of search available in several databases. In the appendix that describes the full search strategy those terms that are MeSH terms are noted, however almost none of the terms we used were MeSH terms. As we note in the limitations section, this is definitely an issue with searches of this nature.
Reviewer #2	page 7 - it states that 16 stakeholders were invited to participate, did all agree to participate? if not what percentage? any characteristics you can provide?	We now describe in further detail our interviewees and non- respondents within the methods section.
Reviewer #2	page 16 - how was the one person closely involved in the SAIL improvement activities identified?	This is now described.
Reviewer #2	page 18 - why is discussion of spread not relevant? clarify what constitutes piloting or initial testing and why not included - less than 10 sites?	Both of these exclusion criteria are now discussed further in the report.

APPENDIX F. CITATIONS FOR EXCLUDED STUDIES

Learning health system but not spread (n=62)

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Duplicate (n=1)

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APPENDIX G. EVIDENCE TABLES

Author, year	Focus area/topic	Size of rollout Setting	Described hard-to- engage sites?	Hard-to- engage strategies?
SYSTEM (n=2	29)			
VA	T	1	-	
Blue-Howells 2013 ⁶⁷	Veterans Justice Programs (VJP) to address the needs of justice-involved veterans by offering services to veterans at multiple points in their involvement in the criminal justice system	National VA	No	No
Box 2009 ⁶⁸	Implementation of EMR for cardiac catheterization procedures called the Cardiovascular Assessment, Reporting and Tracking (CART) system	77 hospitals, national VA	No	No
Damschroder 2013 ⁶¹	MOVE! w8 management program	55 medical centers & 872 community-based outpatient clinics VA	Yes	No
Goetz 2008 ⁶⁹	A system-wide intervention to improve HIV-testing in the Veterans Health Administration	18 sites within southern Nevada, California VA	No	No
Mills 2003 ⁷⁰	Quality Interagency Coordination Task Force (QuIC) initiative to reduce medical errors	22 hospitals VA	No	No
Resnick 2007 ⁷¹	Supported employment for veterans	21 sites across the VA VA	No	No
Resnick 2009 ⁷²		166 VA medical centers VA	No	No
Rubenstein 2010 ⁷³	Implementation of Translating Initiatives in Depression into Effective Solution (TIDES) aimed to translate research-based collaborative care for depression	Medium-sized primary care practices within the VA VA	No	No

Author, year	Focus area/topic	Size of rollout Setting	Described hard-to- engage sites?	Hard-to- engage strategies?
Curran 2011 ⁷⁴	Implementation of collaborative care for depression in HIV clinics (HIV Translating Initiatives for Depression into Effective Solutions, HITIDES)	3 sites VA	No	No
Luck 200975				
Sherman	Implementation of Translating Initiatives in Depression into Effective Solution (TIDES) aimed to translate research-based collaborative care for depression	National VA	No	No
2007^{76}				
	Implementation of Translating Initiatives in Depression into Effective Solution (TIDES) aimed to translate	National VA	Yes	No
Smith 200877	research-based collaborative care for depression			
	Development of a national dissemination plan for collaborative care for depression	National VA	No	No
Yano 2015 ⁷⁶	The Collaborative Research to Advance Transformation and Excellence (CREATE) Initiative for comprehensive care for women veterans	National VA	No	No
Non-VA				
Best 2016 ⁷⁷	British Columbia Ministry of Health's Clinical Care Management (CCM) initiative, with particular focus on sepsis; surgical checklist and surgical site infection; and venous thromboembolism (VTE)	British Columbia National	No	No
Cheyne 2013 ⁷⁸	Keeping Childbirth Natural and Dynamic (KCND), a maternity care program that aimed to support normal birth by implementing multi-professional care pathways and making midwife-led care for healthy pregnant women the national norm	NHS, Scotland Scotland	Yes	Yes
Clarke 2014 ⁷⁹	The National Dementia Strategy for England	40 NHS sites UK	Yes	No

Author, year	Focus area/topic	Size of rollout Setting	Described hard-to- engage sites?	Hard-to- engage strategies?
Hendrich 2007 ⁸⁰	Ascension Health's "Healthcare That Works, Healthcare That is Safe, and Healthcare That Leaves No One Behind" with goal of zero preventable injuries or deaths	Ascension Health hospitals (65 sites) USA	No	No
Hung 2017 ⁸¹	LEAN redesign in clinic	All primary care in Sutter Health (13 sites) USA	Yes	No
Kellogg 2017 ⁸²	Tested a new method of intra-organizational process development and spread of quality improvement innovations	10 sites within North Shore Physicians Group USA	No	No
Lennon 2017 ⁸³	Delivering Assisted Living Lifestyles at Scale (dallas), a national digital health program	NHS UK	No	No
Liu 2016 ⁴⁸	Quality of sepsis care	Kaiser Permanente Northern California (21 hospitals) USA	No	No
Lorig 2004 ⁵⁹	The six-week peer-led Chronic Disease Self- Management Program	10 of 12 regions within Kaiser Permanente USA	Yes	Yes
Marshall 2014 ⁸⁴	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) quality improvement program	189 general practices in 4 Northeast London boroughs UK	Yes	No
Noyes 2014 ⁸⁵	Nurse-led implementation, optimization, and evaluation of a complex children's continuing-care policy	12 sites within the NHS UK	Yes	No
Ovseiko 2014 ⁸⁶	Health Innovation and Education Clusters (HIECS)	NHS UK	No	No

Author, year	Focus area/topic	Size of rollout Setting	Described hard-to- engage sites?	Hard-to- engage strategies?
Penna 2009 ⁴⁹	Implementation of a consultative model of interdisciplinary, inpatient-based palliative care (IPT)	7 of 8 regions, Kaiser Permanente USA	Yes	Yes
Psek 2015 ⁵⁰	Operationalizing the learning health care system (LHCS) in an integrated delivery system	Geisinger Health System (8 hospitals) USA	No	No
Robert 2011 ³⁷	The "Productive Ward," a national quality improvement program	10 strategic health authorities (SHA), NHS UK	Yes	Yes
Schmittdiel 2017 ⁸⁷	The Delivery Science Rapid Analysis Program (RAP)	Kaiser Permanente in Northern California USA	No	No
COLLABORA	ATIVE (n=14)			
Azar 2015 ⁸⁸	Indiana University Center for Healthcare Innovation and Implementation Science (IU-CHIIS)	Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute, Regenstrief Institute, Inc., Indiana University School of Medicine, and their clinical healthcare partners USA	No	No
Boustani 2012 ⁵³	Indianapolis Discovery Network for Dementia (IDND)	5 health care systems in Indiana, including Regenstrief Institute, Inc., and Indiana University School of Medicine USA	No	No

Author, year	Focus area/topic	Size of rollout Setting	Described hard-to- engage sites?	Hard-to- engage strategies?
Cyr 2009 ⁸⁹	Intervention to reduce door-to-balloon (D2B) time for myocardial infarction	12 community hospitals within University of Massachusetts Memorial Health Care's service area USA	No	No
Duckers 2014 ⁹⁰	Quality improvement collaboratives (QIC) involvement to predict dissemination of projects within hospitals	24 hospitals the Netherlands	No	No
Elson 2013 ⁵²	Athena Breast Health Network	5 University of California health systems and cancer centers USA	No	No
Harris 2016 ⁵¹	Pediatric Rheumatology Care and Outcomes Improvement Network	17 sites USA & Canada	No	No
Johnson 2017 ⁹¹	Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Qorus learning health system	20 adult IBD care USA	No	No
Kwon 2012 ⁹²	Washington State's Surgical Care and Outcomes Assessment Program (SCOAP)	60 of 65 hospitals in State of Washington USA	No	No
Lannon 2013 ⁹³	Pediatric Collaborative Improvement Networks to improve pediatric subspecialty care	Multi-institution USA	No	No
Nolan 2005 ⁴	Advanced Clinic Access (ACA) initiative to reduce waiting times for patients	National VA	Yes	No
Ramsey 2017 ⁹⁴	ImproveCareNow Network to facilitate personalized medicine for children and adolescents with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)	92 care centers USA, England, Qatar	No	No

Author, year	Focus area/topic	Size of rollout Setting	Described hard-to- engage sites?	Hard-to- engage strategies?
Rocker 2017 ⁹⁵	INSPIRED COPD outreach program	19 teams in 10 provinces Canada	No	No
Rogers 2014 ⁶⁰	The Society of Hospital Medicine's Glycemic Control Mentored Implementation (GCMI)	114 sites within Society of Hospital Medicine's network USA	Yes	No
van Schendel 2017 96	Non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT) for an euploidy in prenatal healthcare	National (8 medical centers) the Netherlands	Yes	No
INITIATIVE-	SPECIFIC (n=9)			
Clark 2014 ⁵⁵	State-wide clozapine management system	Adelaide metropolitan area South Australia	No	No
Gardner 2010 ⁶²	The Audit and Best Practice for Chronic Disease (ABCD) project	12 indigenous primary health care services in the Northern Territory of Western Australia	Yes	Yes
Grayson 2011 97	Australian National Hand Hygiene Initiative (NHHI); infection control initiatives	521 hospitals Australia	No	No
Lustig 2016 ⁶³	Measure Up/Pressure Down hypertension control campaign	Summit Medical Group (SMG) and Cornerstone Health Care (CHC) USA	Yes	Yes
McMullen 2015 ⁹⁸	HIV testing	40 of 45 practices in a London borough the UK	Yes	No

Author, year	Focus area/topic	Size of rollout Setting	Described hard-to- engage sites?	Hard-to- engage strategies?
Parv 2016 ⁹⁹	A national e-prescription service	National Estonia	Yes	No
Patel 2016 ⁶⁵	HPV vaccination program	23 provinces Argentina	Yes	Yes
Pearce 2014 ¹⁰⁰	Personally controlled electronic health record (PCEHR)	74 practices across metro Melbourne Australia	Yes	No
Septimus 2016 ⁵⁴	Implementation of universal decolonization to reduce healthcare associated Central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI)	136 ICUs in 95 hospitals affiliated with Hospital Corporation of America USA	No	No