

Overcoming the T2 Translation Block: Practice-based Networks Perspective

AAMC Advisory Panel on Research

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Rowena J. Dolor, MD, MHS

*Director, Duke Primary Care Research Consortium
Assistant Professor, Duke General Internal Medicine
Research Associate, Durham VA Center for Health Services Research
in Primary Care*



Outline

- **PBRN definition**
- **Types of PBRN studies**
- **Challenges/Barriers to PBRN Translation**
- **PBRN components for successful translation**
- **PBRN interface with others within Research Enterprise**



Practice-based Research Networks

- **A group of ambulatory practices devoted principally to the clinical care of patients, affiliated with each other in order to investigate questions related to community-based practice**
 - 111 primary care networks, 44 states
- **Includes a sense of ongoing commitment to the research endeavor and an organizational structure that transcends a single study**



PBRN Research

“Research into Practice *and* Practice into Research”

- Clinical researchers work closely over time with community-based providers
- Study the full range of patient populations and understand the realities of community practice
- Community providers involved in design, conduct and analysis
- Primary data gathered in the routine course of providing health care
- Fill research void between hospital-based/specialty research and population-based research



Types of PBRN Translational Studies

■ Evidence-Generating

- Efficacy trials (Phase III)
- Effectiveness trials (Phase IV studies, Practical Clinical Trials)
- Delayed Treatment Control Design
 - True randomization would require investigators to withhold effective treatment from participants
- Multiple Baseline Across Settings (Interrupted time series)
- Bradley “Choice” Design (partially randomized patient-centered design)



Practical Clinical Trials

- **Select clinically relevant alternative interventions to compare**
- **Include a diverse population of study participants**
- **Recruit patients from heterogeneous practice settings**
- **Collect data on a broad range of health outcomes**
- **Simple protocols, Multiple Sites**
- **Limited patient exclusions**
- **Limited data collection**
- **Minimize cost and participant burden**

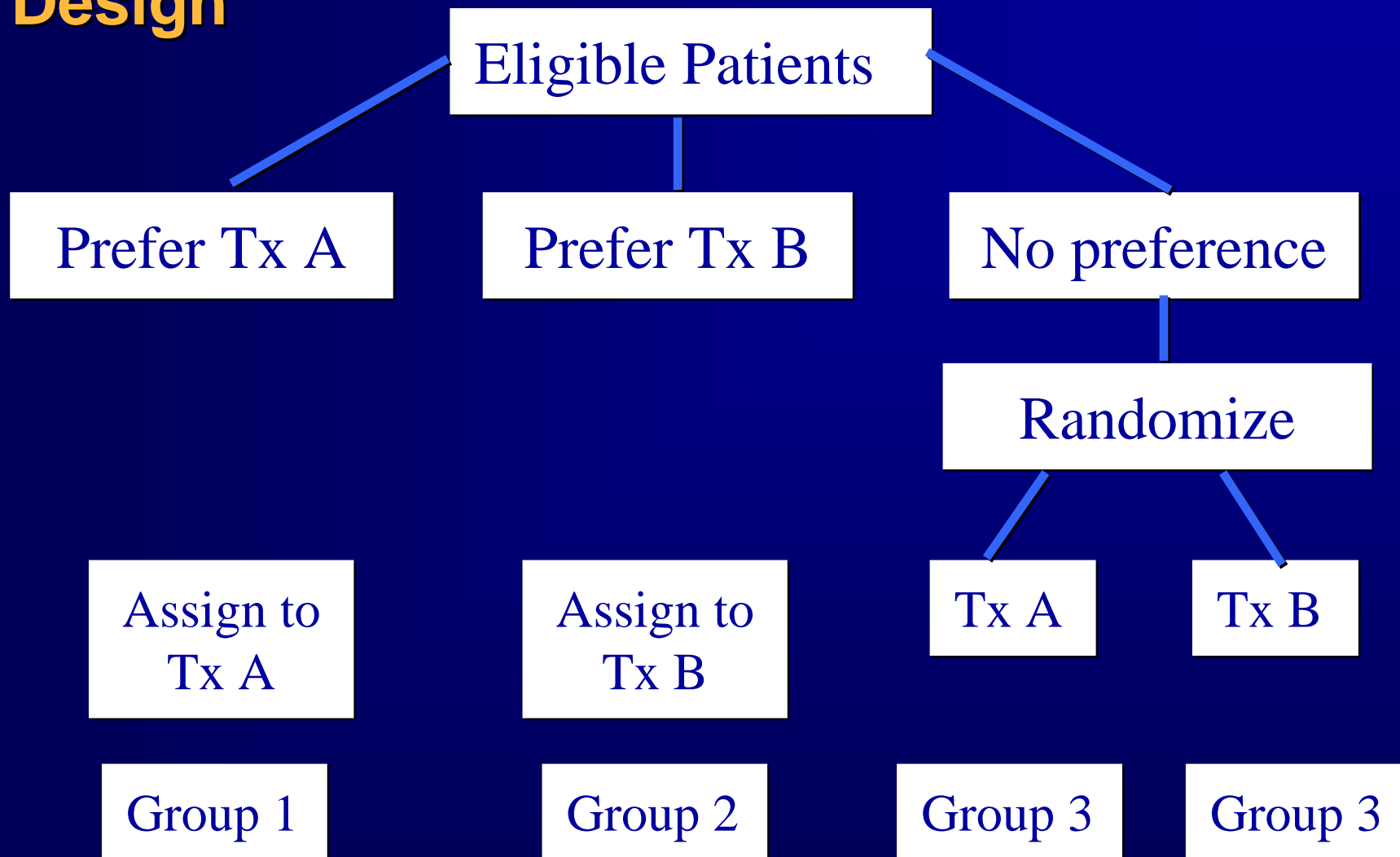


PCTs

- **Include multiple relevant health outcomes**
 - Document time, expense, intervention delivery by staff with different levels of training and expertise
 - Outcomes relevant to patients, purchasers, clinicians, policy makers, and public
 - Include QOL and economic outcomes
- **Design trials to meet the needs of decision makers**
- **Supply of PCTs in short supply because major funders do not focus supporting such trials (except VA)**
- **Need expansion of infrastructure to conduct clinical research within health care delivery system**



Partially Randomized Patient-Centered Design



Other Types of PBRN Translational Studies

■ Health Services Research

- Cross-sectional Surveys (e.g. QOL), Observational (longitudinal) studies, Patient registries, Focus groups, Chart reviews

■ Translation of Research into Practice

- Dissemination, Implementation, Tailoring, Adoption
- Best Practices/QI collaboratives



PBRNs are quality improvement collaboratives

Practice Partnership Research Network (PPRNet): “Blurring the distinction between research and quality improvement”

- Collaboration between Medical University of SC and Physicians Microsystems, Inc
- Common EMR
- Quarterly Practice performance reports
- Practice site visits (all staff involved)
- Network meetings



PBRNs are quality improvement collaboratives

OKPRRN: Oklahoma Research and Resources Network

- Best practices research

Tap into wisdom off practicing clinicians to identify effective, field-tested solutions or partial solutions, combining the best of these into a single unified approach

- Practice enhancement assistants (PEAs)

Identify and exchange ideas, methods, questions, and challenges between practices within their pod, and through the central office, to the rest of the networks; facilitate QI and assist in network-wide projects



Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

Research conducted collaboratively with communities, where the goals are community-based outcomes, and all phases of the project are approved by a committee that includes stakeholders and methodologists

- Community programs, faith-based organizations, schools



PBRN Challenges/Barriers for Translation

- **Dependence on Study-to-study funding**
- **Decreased time to foster collaborations**
- **Lack of Health IT or limited access to researchers**
- **Sustainability of Intervention falls after funding ends**
- **Succession plan for PBRN leadership is underdeveloped**



PBRN Components for Successful Translation

■ Strong Support of Senior Leadership

- Target diffusion efforts towards organizations that have or can develop strong senior management support for adoption of the innovation
- Identify and support clinical champions in the adopter organization who can enhance buy-in from clinicians

■ Network Infrastructure

- Director(s) – partnership between HSR, PBRN, CBPR; representing Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, and Pediatrics
- Administrative coordinator(s)
- Advisory board
- Communications – newsletter, website, listserv
- Meetings – face to face; teleconferences



PBRN Components for Successful Translation

Education & Training

■ PBRN research

- Case Western Reserve University,
<http://blog.case.edu/jjw17/>

■ Community research

- Duke Community & Family Medicine,
<http://chtraining.mc.duke.edu>

- Offer fellowships as well as ‘practical’ training for medical students, housestaff, faculty, community clinicians, and patients



PBRN Components for Successful Translation

■ Funding

- Infrastructure support similar to VA HSR, NIH-funded Clinical Research Networks (\$70 K for basic, \$300K for moderate complex)
- Diverse project funding from Contracts and Grants

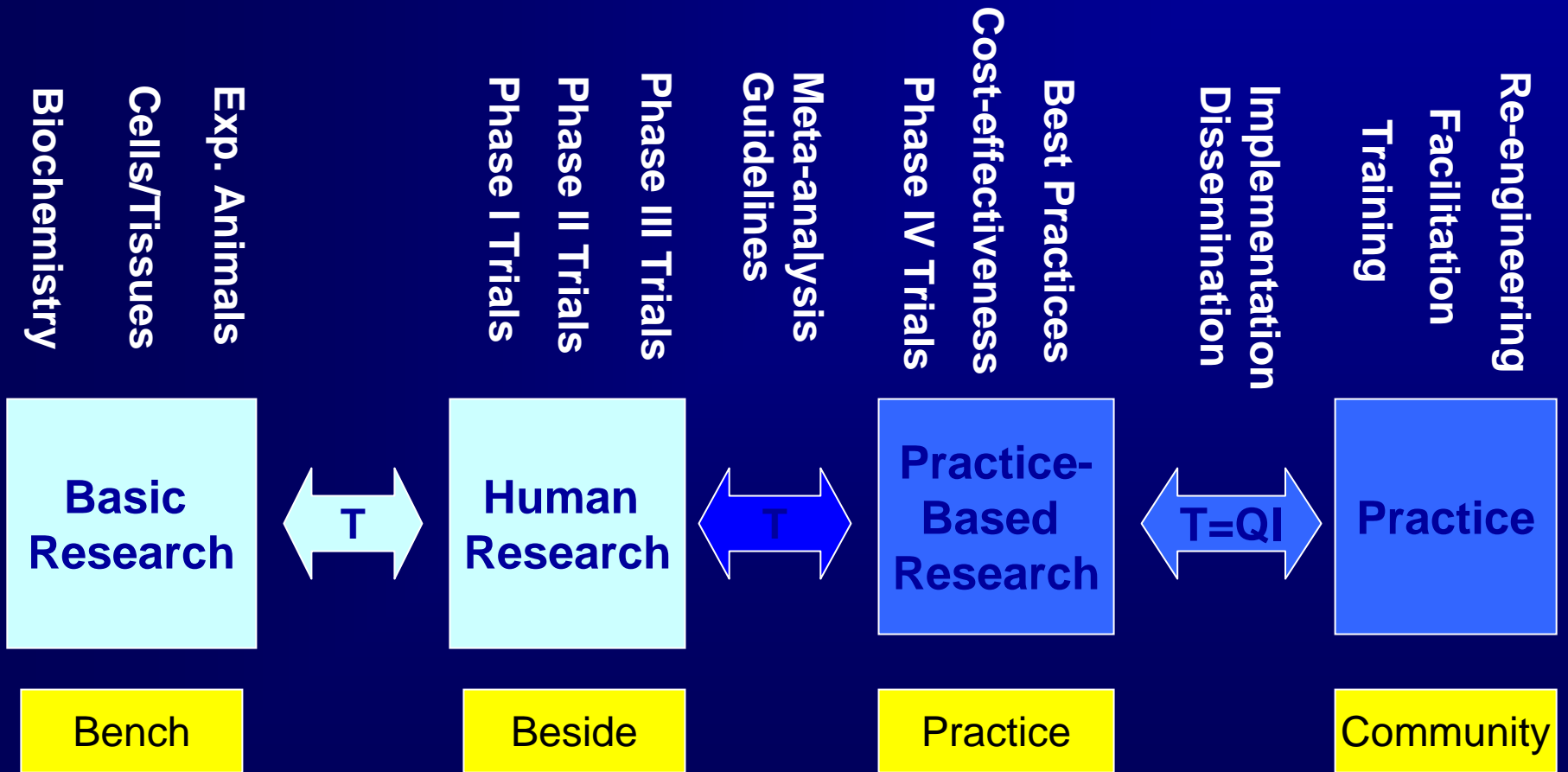
■ Health IT that includes modification/integration of research

■ Partnerships

- Academic faculty, Federal agencies, Foundation, Quality Improvement Organizations, State & Professional Societies, community organizations



Translational Medicine



Conclusions

- **PBRNs can contribute to T2 translation**
 - Generate research findings, form learning collaboratives
- **PBRNs can learn from the growing TRIP knowledge base**
 - VA QUERI, Commonwealth Fund, AHRQ TRIP conferences, IHI collaboratives
- **TRIP is challenging**
 - Collaborations between payors, employers, health systems, providers, researchers, patients
 - Variable funding support



References

- **“Contemporary Challenges for Practice-Based Research Networks” Annals of Family Medicine 2005; 3(1): S1-S60.**
- **“Special Practice-Based Research Issue” Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine 2006;19(1): 1-97**

