



ISCRR

Institute for Safety, Compensation
and Recovery Research

Shifting the cultural mindset

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National Workers' Compensation Summit

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A joint initiative of



TRANSPORT
ACCIDENT
COMMISSION

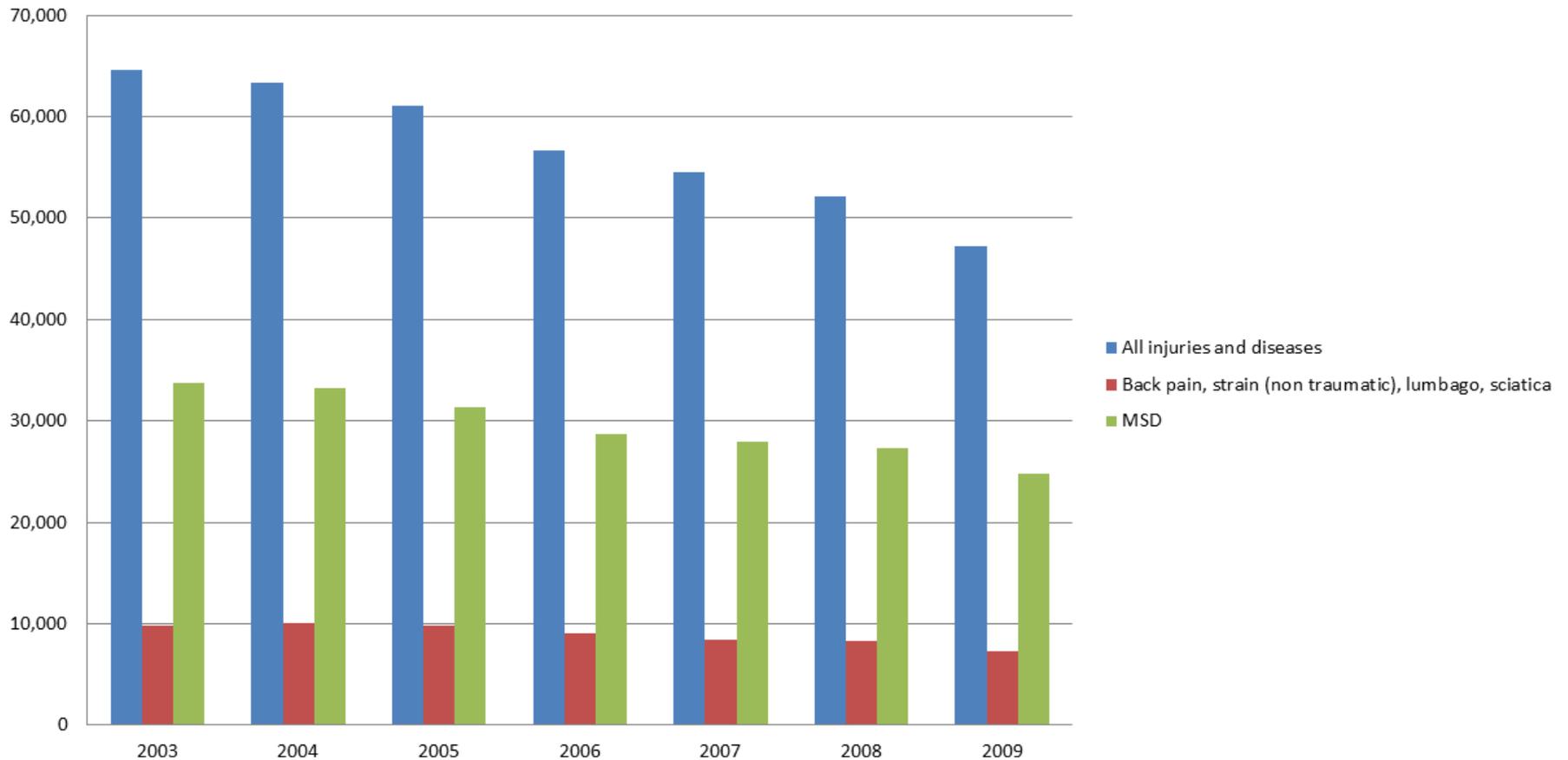


MONASH
University

Research
to Action

Musculo-skeletal disorders: a stubborn problem

Total number of claims by type



2012

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Study of 2808 employees across 28 Norwegian organisations followed over two years found that the most consistent predictors of back pain were:



Decision control



Empowering leadership



Fair leadership

Source: Christensen JO, Knardahl S, Eur J Pain, July 2012

Los Angeles Times

8 MARCH 1991

Boeing study presented at a conference of 9,000 orthopaedic surgeons found that

“Other than a history of back pain, workers most likely to claim a back injury were those who said they hardly ever enjoyed their jobs

or those who rated themselves unhappy”, the surgeons reported.

1998

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Award-winning UC Berkley study proves that work-related back aches are not

“all in your head”

ScienceBlog, 1/12/98

“We can show that both physical and psychosocial conditions in the workplace play a role in causing back injury ...after accounting for physical workload, a stressful job with high psychological demands, low satisfaction and low supervisor support can cause spinal injury”

1997

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Executive Summary

“ Because the relationship between exposure to physical work factors and the development and prognosismay be modified by psychosocial factors, the literature about psychosocial factors ...(and MSDs) ... is reviewed ”

NIOSH 1997

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Chapter on psychosocial factors

“There is increasing evidence that psychosocial factors related to the job and work environment play a role in the development of MSDs”

“Perceptions of intensified workload, monotonous work, limited job control, low job clarity, and low social support are associated with ...MSDs”

“The effects of these factors on MSDs may be, in part or entirely, independent of physical factors”



2006

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Literature review commissioned and published by Safe Work Australia concludes risk factors for WMSDs are:

- Hazardous tasks and job demands:
physical, excessive amounts of work,
excessive cognitive demands for time
available, excessive emotional demands
- Inadequate resources for coping with work
demands
- Other psychosocial hazards
- Individual characteristics
- Resultant fatigue

Source: MacDonald W, Evans O, Safe Work Australia, 2006



safe work australia

2011

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The Code of Practice on how to identify hazardous manual tasks and control the risks of workers being affected by musculoskeletal disorders, updated in 2011, makes no mention of psychosocial risk factors. Hazardous tasks are defined as:

- Repetitive or sustained force
- High or sudden force
- Repetitive movement
- Sustained or awkward posture
- Exposure to vibration

Source: Safe Work Australia



safe work australia

THE STORY SO FAR

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- Boeing study interpreted as “all in the head”
- This led to studies which showed back pain was caused by physical and psychosocial risks
- NIOSH allows psychosocial factors “may modify” physical hazards in 1997
- Reviews and quality studies continue to show the importance of psychosocial determinants

THE STORY SO FAR

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- Safe Work Australia commissions a literature review which concludes psychosocial and physical risk factors in 2006
- Yet model code for manual handling makes no mention of psychosocial factors
- MSDs remain a major problem in Australia, if not THE major problem, yet we refuse to acknowledge overwhelming evidence that job design and relationships at work are important factors.

A CONUNDRUM

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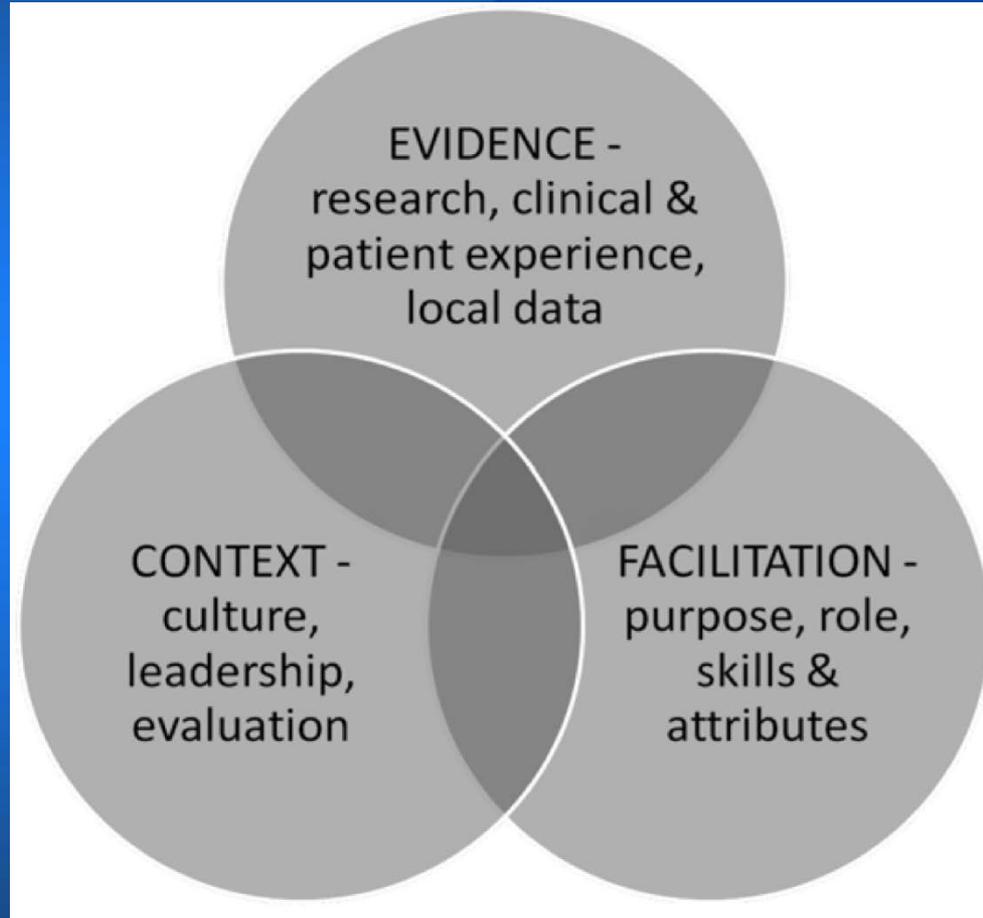
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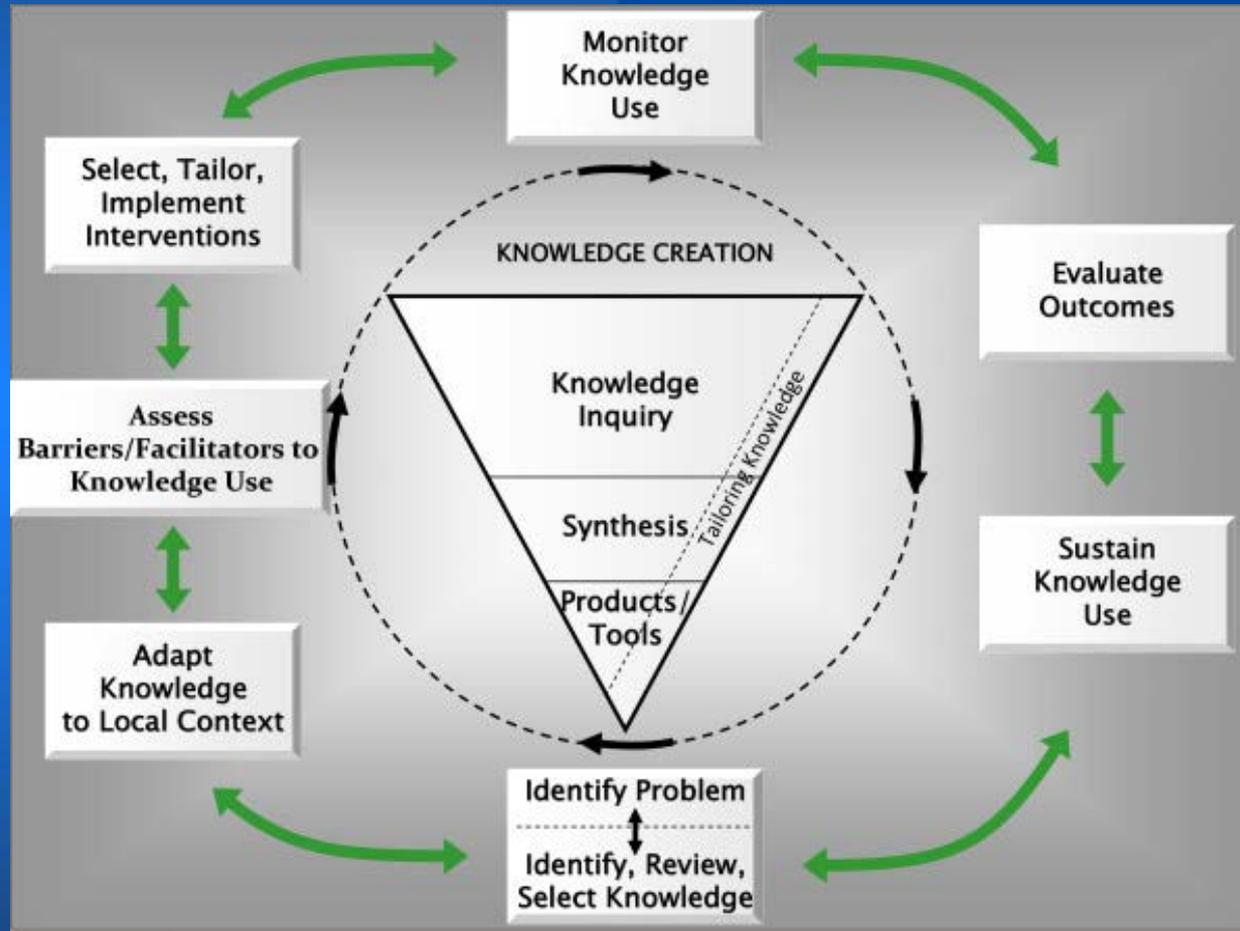
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WHY?

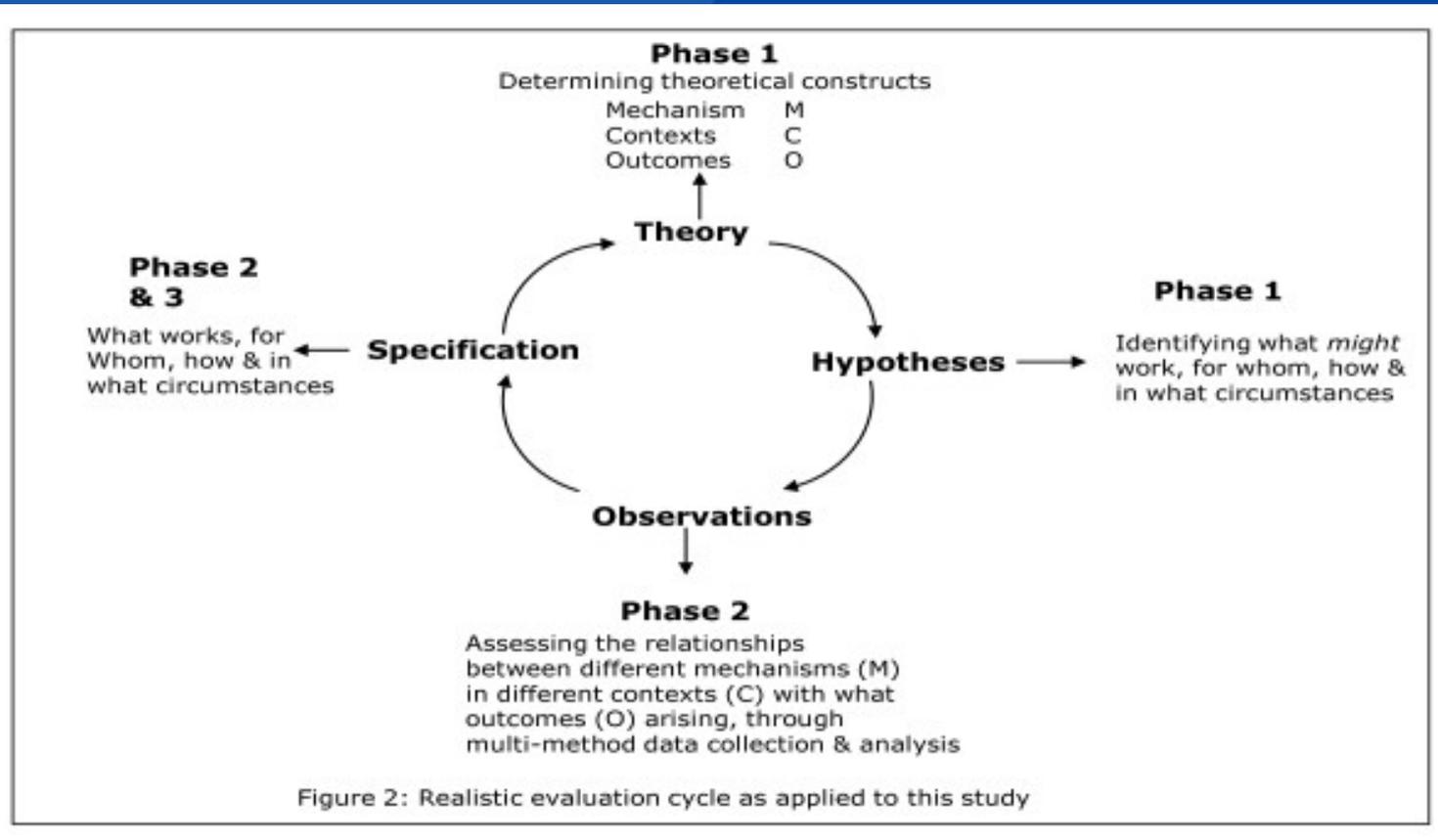
Implementation Science



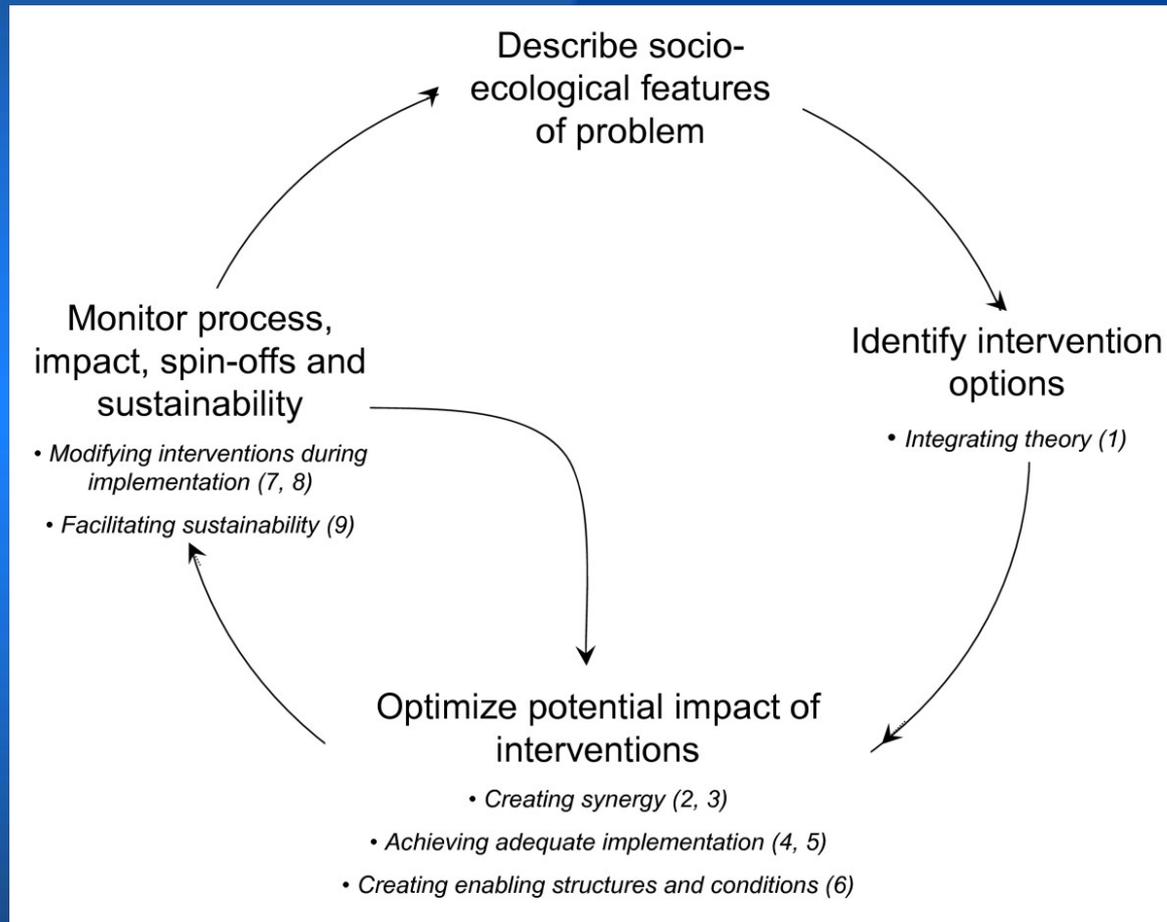
Implementation Science



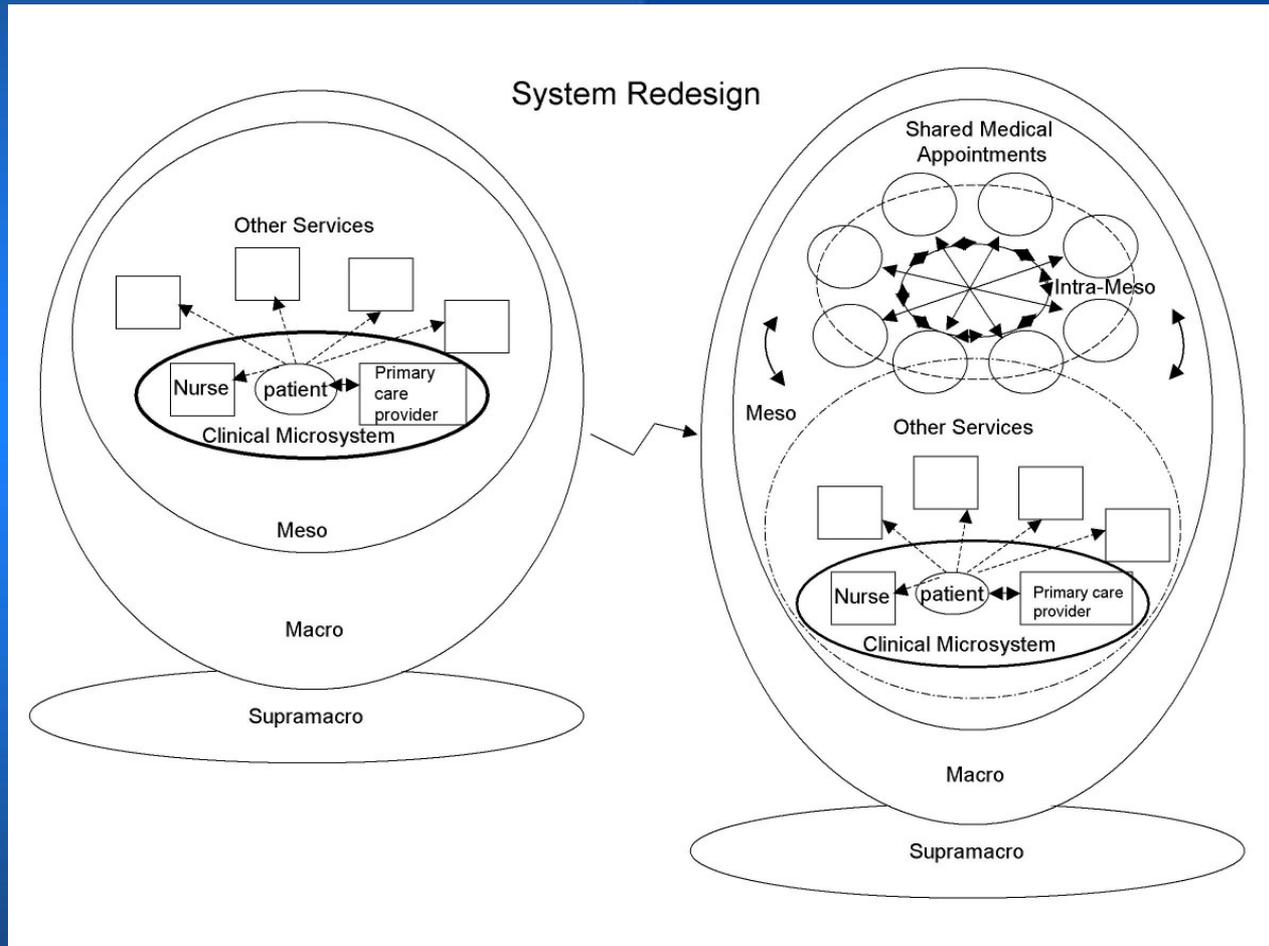
Implementation Science



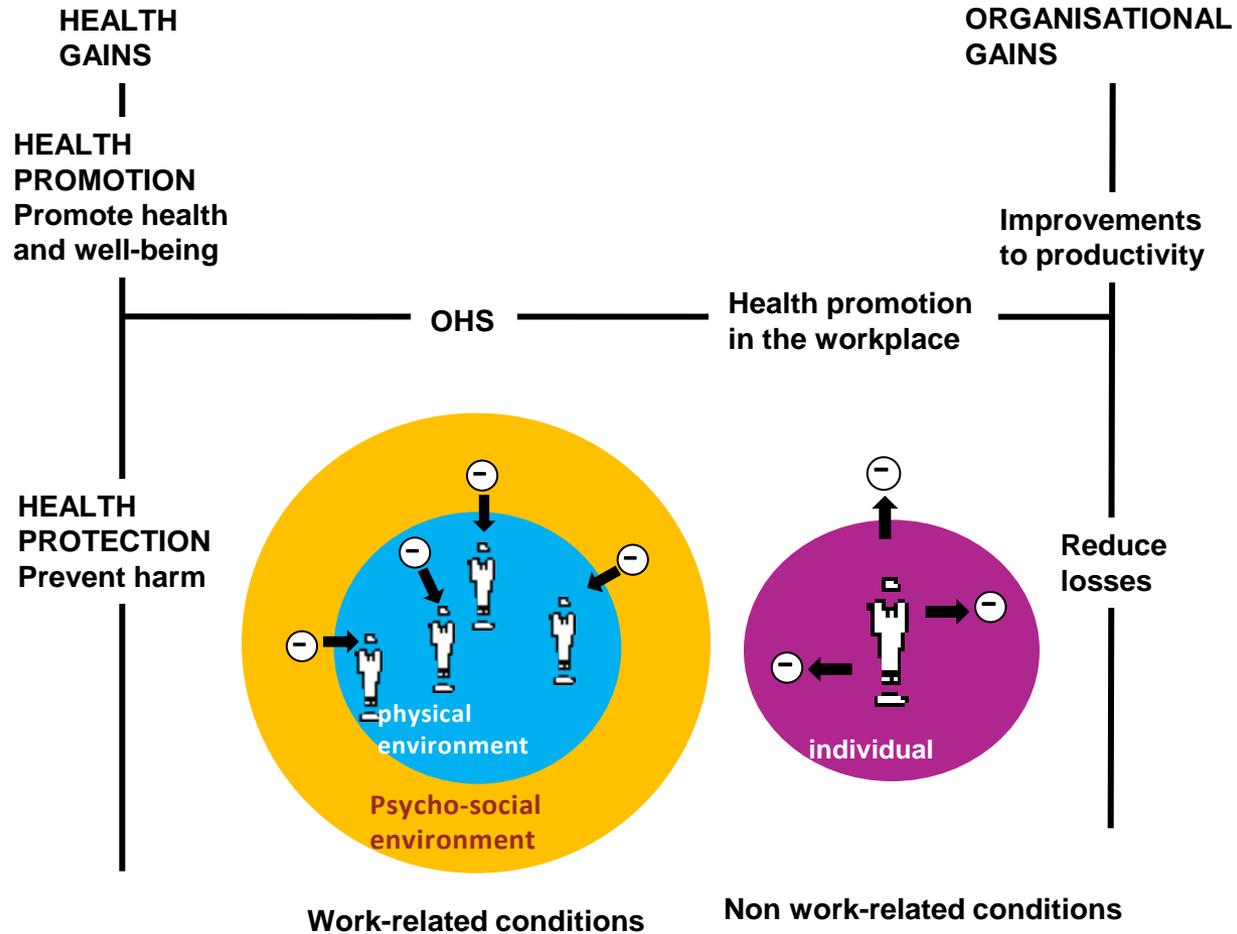
Implementation Science



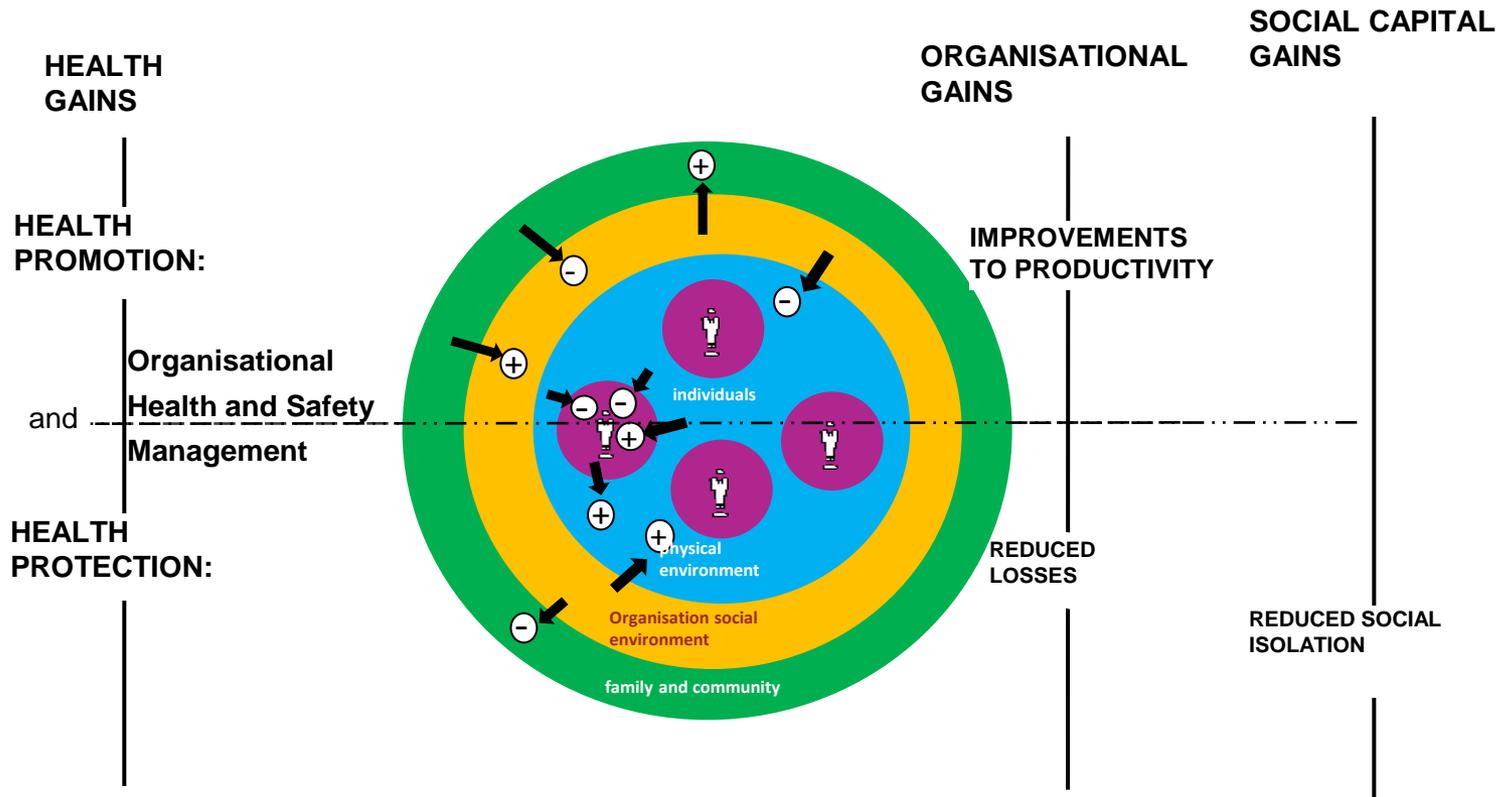
Implementation Science



Traditional OHS: injury prevention



Integrated Approach to Workplace Health and Safety



CONCLUSION

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- MSDs are a significant problem
- For the past 20 years we have been gathering evidence that psychosocial factors, along with physical are important determinants, yet interventions are still restricted to physical factors
- To shift mindsets we need to shift research from re-examining the problem and its cause to interventional research using modern implementation science