

Opportunities and challenges of evaluation research in the primary care sector (Hverdagsrehabilitering)



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Evaluation research

- May focus on evaluation of structure, process and/or outcomes
- *Outcome evaluation* is the measurement of a patient's progress or lack of progress toward achievement of specified goals
- Effect of rehabilitation / reablement

Two cases

- The Multi-center Reablement study (Hverdagsrehabilitering) with 46 participating municipalities
- The Voss study - a randomized controlled trial with 60 participants
 - *Data is collected at baseline, and at three and nine months follow-ups by an OT and a PT*
 - *Develop the rehabilitation plan and intervention*
 - *Supervise the home care personnel in how to perform the intervention*

Why is research important?

- According to the coordination reform an increasing part of health care services (including rehabilitation) will be provided in primary health care
- There is currently little evidence for the effect of rehabilitation
- Evaluation research in primary care is needed



What is research?

- Medical research are activities undertaken with scientific methods to generate new and valid knowledge which is relevant to clinical practice and its organization, and that is disseminated through peer-reviewed publications

(Research strategy in Health South East)

Steps in research (Creswell 2008)

1. Identify research problem
2. Literature review
3. Determine specific research questions
4. Specify a conceptual framework and formulate research hypotheses
5. Design the study – choose a methodology for data collection
6. Data collection
7. Analyze and interpret the data
8. Report the results
9. Communicate the research findings

What does it take?

- People with research knowledge
- Time allocated to research – researchers and clinicians
- Infrastructure
 - *Access to library*
 - *System for safe storing of data*
 - *IT programs*
 - *Leader/coordinator*

Research in primary care

- Research is one of the four main tasks in specialist health care (hospitals and rehabilitation institutions)
- Act relating to municipal health and care services: “The municipality shall assist and facilitate research for the municipal health care services”
- Little resources devoted to research
 - *Building competence and systems*
 - *Time for participation in research projects*



Research in primary care

- Few formal positions for health professionals with a masters degree
- No strong research groups that are based in primary health care

Research in municipalities

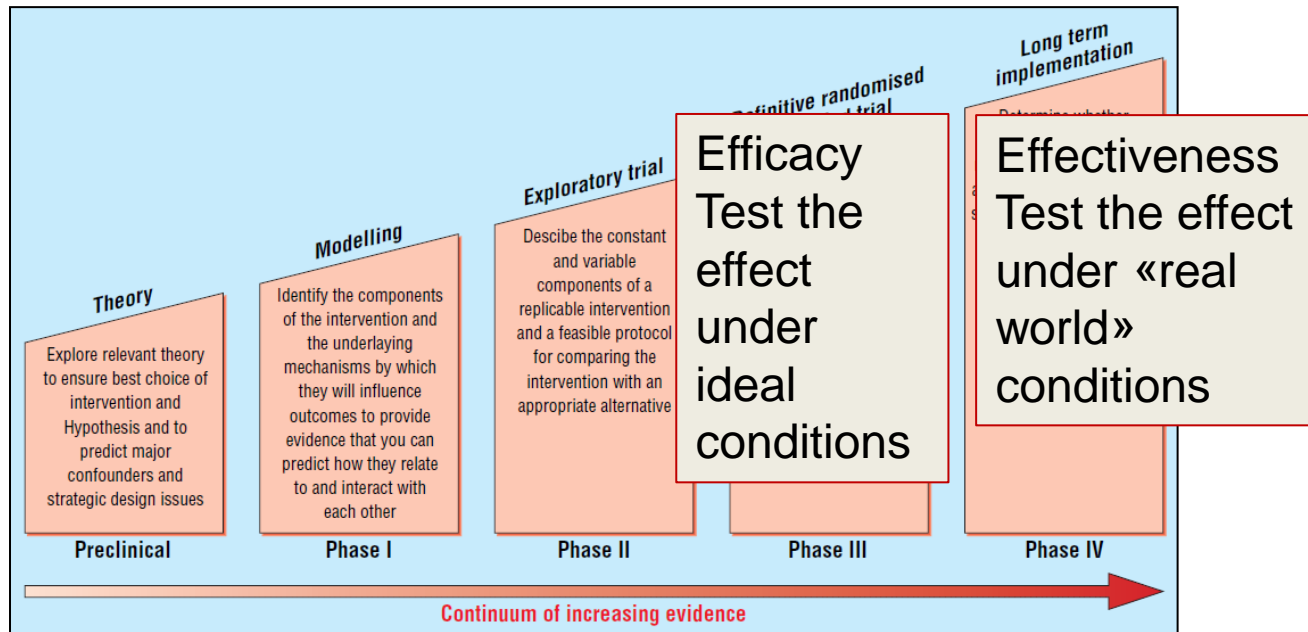
- Most studies are initiated and developed by researchers
 - *in specialist health care*
 - *at universities or university colleges*
 - *research institutes*
- Health professionals in the municipalities do the assessments and deliver the intervention

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The Voss project

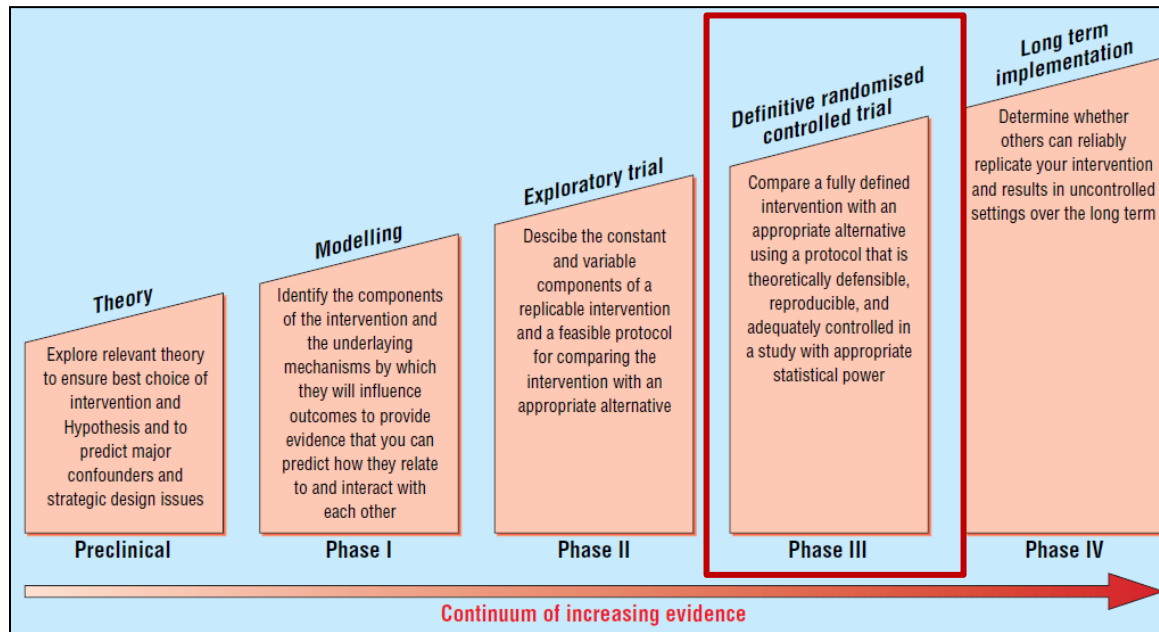
- It was difficult to find a municipality that was willing to cooperate
- Dependent on personal relations
- Important to identify persons who are enthusiastic and in positions where they have the power to influence decision makers
- In Voss – the first local project leader was head of home care services (pleie- og omsorgssjef)
- High turnover – three local project leaders since 2011

Efficacy vs effectiveness



- Campbell et al 2000: Framework for design and evaluation of complex interventions

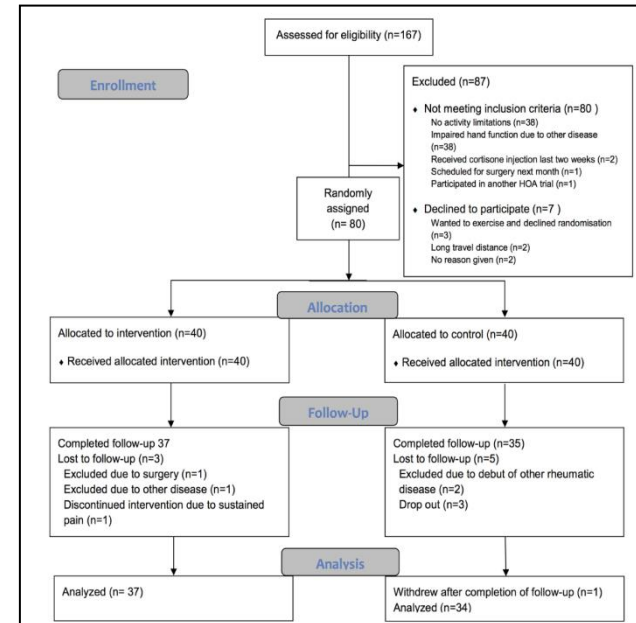
Randomised controlled trial



- Baseline and follow-up measures should be performed in the same way by all assessors
- Same level of quality in the interventions

Primary care sector

- Little tradition for systematic assessments
- Clinicians need education and training
- Understand the importance of thorough assessments
 - *Avoid missing data*



The Voss project

- Assessments performed by different health professionals
- Interventions delivered a variety of home care personnel
- High turnover
- Dependent of external funding – time limited positions
- Jeopardise a uniform assessment and delivery of interventions?

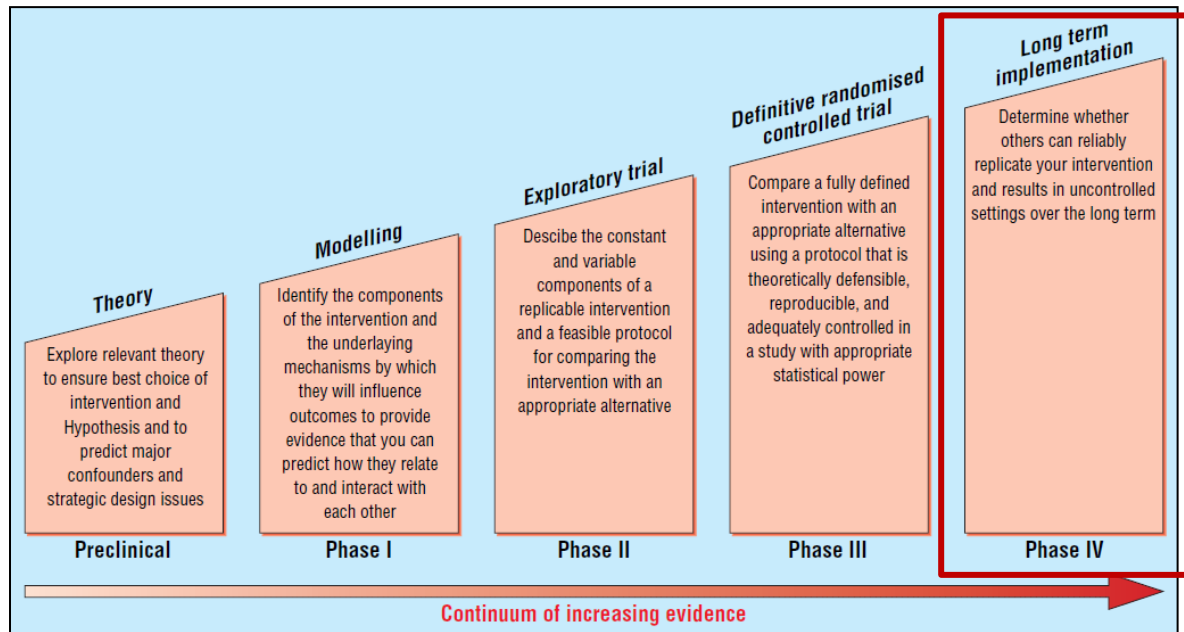


The Multi-center Reablement project



- 46 municipalities
- Even larger variability
- Lack of understanding of the importance of complete data
- Different organisation of rehabilitation services across the municipalities
- Far from a uniform assessment and delivery of the intervention

Possibilities and advantages



- This is where people live!
- Real world conditions
- Effectiveness – increase generalizability of results

Possibilities and advantages

- Assessments and intervention takes place in patients home
- More detailed knowledge
- Easier to set realistic goals and tailor the intervention
- Training in realistic situations and environment
- Easier to motivate patients?
- Easier for patients to train on their own?
- More effective rehabilitation?



Possibilities and advantages

- Data collection in patients home
- Saves time and energy for patients
- May increase inclusion rate?
- May reduce drop out?



Possibilities

- Clinicians with enthusiasm and motivation for education
- Improve clinical practice
 - *Systematic assessments*
 - *Reflections*
- Learning by doing – increase research knowledge and competence
- Stimulate more systematic development of research groups and strategies?

Continuity of care

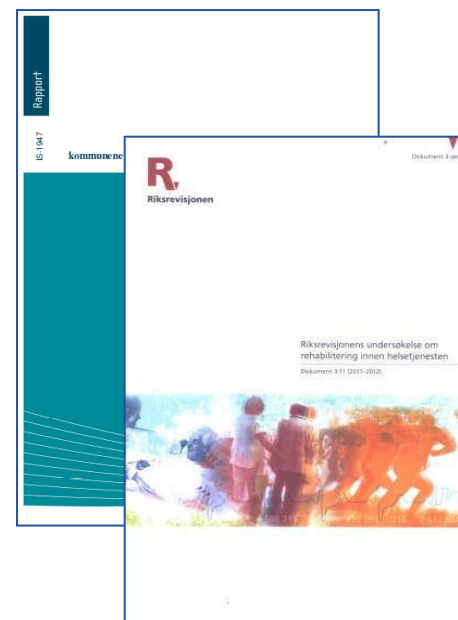


The report on rehabilitation from the Public Accounts Committee (Riksrevisjonen 2011/12)

Report 02/2012 from the Directory of Health: Clarification of responsibilities in specialist and primary health care

Challenges

- Lack of cooperation and continuity across levels of care
- Large variations in quality of rehabilitation
- No consensus regarding what constitutes “good quality”
- Lack of knowledge about the long term effects of rehabilitation



Continuity of care

- Rehabilitation studies assess outcomes at admission and discharge from rehabilitation stays in specialist health care
- Lack of studies with long term follow-up
- More research competence in primary care may make it easier to follow patients over longer time periods and across levels of care?

More relevant research

- Increased research competence
- People from primary health care may take part in the whole research process
- Ensure more relevant research
- When research is initiated in clinical practice the results may be easier to implement?

More relevant research

- It takes 10 years to build a strong research environment
- There are 428 municipalities in Norway
- Most are small
- To be able to build research groups cooperation across municipalities are needed
- Strong incitement and earmarked resources are needed
- What will happen when the Multicenter Reablement study and the Voss study is finished?