

EDITORIAL

From Mapping to Other Practices: A Special Issue on Diverse Intervention Development Practices

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Abstract

This editorial introduces the second part of the special issue dedicated to Intervention Mapping. While the first part featured invited contributions presenting each of the six steps of the Intervention Mapping framework, this second part brings together articles submitted in response to an open call. Together, these contributions illustrate how Intervention Mapping can support not only the structured planning of interventions but also their testing, refinement, and implementation in real-world contexts. The articles address several complementary aspects of intervention development, including community partnerships in intervention design, testing mechanisms of action through Proof-of-Principle trials, rapid approaches to usability testing, and strategies from implementation science to support practice change in healthcare settings. By highlighting these perspectives, the special issue expands the discussion beyond planning frameworks and emphasises the iterative processes required to translate theory and evidence into effective and sustainable interventions. We hope that this collection provides practical insights and inspiration for researchers and practitioners working to design, test, and implement health psychology interventions.

Key words: Editorial, Special issue, Intervention mapping, Intervention development

This editorial introduces the second part of the special issue dedicated to intervention development. While the first part featured invited contributions presenting each of the six steps of the Intervention Mapping framework alongside two complementary contributions, this second part brings together articles submitted in response to an open call. The articles address several complementary aspects of intervention development, including community partnerships in intervention design, testing mechanisms of action through Proof-of-Principle trials, rapid approaches to usability testing, and strategies from implementation science to support practice change in healthcare settings, thereby demonstrating how translating plans into effective interventions involves navigating different challenges.

By highlighting these perspectives, the special issue expands the discussion beyond Intervention Mapping and emphasises the iterative processes required to translate theory and evidence into effective and sustainable interventions. We hope that this collection provides practical insights and inspiration for researchers and practitioners working to design, test, and implement health psychology interventions.

The contributions in this second part highlight these complementary aspects of intervention development. **Greenwell and colleagues** explore how community partnerships can strengthen intervention development, describing how approaches such as the Person-Based Approach can be combined with Intervention Mapping to involve communities in the design and optimisation of interventions. Their examples illustrate how different forms of engagement, from citizen science initiatives to targeted community collaborations, can enrich intervention development while also raising practical considerations about feasibility and inclusivity.

Den Daas and Johnston address another important challenge: how to ensure that interventions effectively target the mechanisms of action they are designed to influence. They introduce the concept of Proof-of-Principle Randomised Controlled Trials (PoP-RCTs) as an intermediate step between theory-driven research and large-scale trials. By testing whether an intervention changes the psychological mechanisms it targets, PoP-RCTs can strengthen the theoretical foundations of intervention development before investing in full-scale evaluations.

Schnepf and Britel focus on the role of qualitative methods in intervention development. Using Intervention Mapping as an example, they outline a guide to selecting appropriate qualitative methods for various contexts, target populations, and phases of intervention planning, implementation, and evaluation. By highlighting the complementary strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods, their contribution emphasises the importance of aligning methodological choices with the research question and context, while also reflecting on how common challenges in applying qualitative methods can be addressed.

Moving to the practical realities of intervention refinement, **Gültzow and colleagues** present a concise guide to rapid usability analysis in the context of intervention development. Their approach demonstrates how usability testing can be analysed efficiently using structured summaries, enabling research teams to identify and address usability issues quickly while maintaining analytical rigour.

Finally, **Olson and Crawshaw** provide an accessible implementation science starter kit for health psychologists seeking to support behaviour change among healthcare providers. Drawing on frameworks commonly used in implementation science, they outline practical steps for identifying barriers to practice change and designing strategies that help integrate evidence-based interventions into real-world healthcare systems.

Together, these articles highlight the importance of combining theoretical clarity with practical adaptability, an ongoing challenge for health psychologists working to translate evidence into meaningful change.

We hope that this second part of the special issue complements the first by expanding the conversation around other aspects of intervention development. By bringing together contributions submitted through an open call, this issue reflects the growing and diverse community of experts in intervention development.



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