Brown University School of Public Health

Center for Long-Term Care Quality & Innovation

How can research help to improve care and outcomes for individuals receiving post-acute and long-term care? How can academic-industry collaboration evaluate practices, technology, and new ideas to demonstrate efficacy and translate successes into practice?

Brown’s “Q&I Center” links researchers with providers to identify, test, and spread innovations that improve lives and outcomes.

The Q&I Center is an independent research center formed by the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL), a national provider trade association, at Brown. It is a unique partnership.

Mission

To test and disseminate interventions to improve care for individuals receiving post-acute and long-term care.

Approach

At the Q&I Center, we partner with innovators (providers, researchers, or others) who have developed transformative strategies to improve quality of life and care. We work with these innovators to seek funding to prove their interventions effective and/or to spread successes widely.

We use “pragmatic methods” to ensure findings are applicable in real-world conditions. This reflects our team’s experience working with providers and on quality improvement—and, most importantly, our desire to ensure that we can translate successes into practice.

Expertise

AHCA/NCAL selected Brown as the site for the Q&I Center because of Brown’s wealth of expertise in gerontology, program evaluation, and data.

Researchers focusing on gerontology have received $83M in funding since 2000, attesting to their reputation and success.

These researchers, who are experts in post-acute and long-term care, are among our many collaborators.
Using Data to Find & Test Innovation

Brown’s national skilled nursing center database enables the Q&I Center to evaluate innovative strategies to improve care and outcomes.

For example, we found that “CALM,” a clinical and environmental program developed by Durgin Pines (Kittery, ME), was associated with a decrease in antipsychotics prevalence (25% to 2%) that outpaced change at similar sites. This led us to collaborate with CALM developers on a grant for further testing.

Ensuring Methods Are Practical

The Q&I Center uses pragmatic methods, such as cluster-randomized trials, to ensure that interventions are applicable in real-world conditions.

For example, we randomized nursing centers to participate in “Heroes In Prevention,” a Kimberly-Clark intervention that combines behavioral science with infection prevention practices and data feedback. An earlier pilot decreased infections in one facility. This trial assesses replicating that impact on a larger scale, by comparing intervention and control sites.

Translating Findings into Practice

Q&I Center studies include testing how to disseminate interventions, once proven successful. For example, we are testing dissemination strategies in a 200-nursing center study on video-assisted advance care planning.

Obtaining Diverse Funding

The Q&I Center seeks funding from a broad array of sources. Current funding comes from:

- AHCA/NCAL
- Civil Monetary Penalty Funds (*application pending*)
- Donations
- Kimberly-Clark Corporation
- National Institutes of Health Common Fund Collaboratory

Leadership

Rosa Baier, MPH has more than 13 years of experience in post-acute and long-term care quality improvement. This informs her approach to Q&I Center studies: combining rigorous methods with the flexibility necessary to implement interventions in real-world conditions.

Vincent Mor, PhD is an internationally-known researcher whose expertise centers on variation in older adults’ use of services and outcomes. He was one of the Minimum Data Set (MDS) authors and is the architect of the database that the Q&I Center uses for evaluation.

The Q&I Center’s seven-person Advisory Council includes academic and industry experts.

Opportunities for Providers

- Volunteer to serve as research sites in a study
- Implement interventions, once proven effective
- Share interventions or best practices to be considered for testing & dissemination
- Suggest priority topics or needs for future research
- Refer providers, researchers, and others to the Q&I Center for networking & collaboration

Opportunities for Giving

- Current-use funds to:
  - Identify, vet & seek grants for promising interventions
  - Hire graduate students to assist with priorities & develop applied skills
- Directed donations (when needed) to:
  - Accelerate specific, high-priority studies
  - In lieu of grant funding