

# DO NUTRITION PROFESSIONALS HAVE THE TOOLS TO IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE EFFECTIVE NUTRITION PROGRAMS?

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## INTRODUCTION

- Community-based programs are an effective strategy to promote healthy eating behaviors.
- On average, lifestyle change interventions are 75% less effective when scaled-up in communities (McCrabb et al., 2019)
- Nutrition professionals are at the front line in the development, implementation, and scaling of preventive interventions to encourage healthy behaviors.
- Therefore, it is important to assess whether nutrition professionals have the necessary tools to implement and evaluate effective interventions.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to assess the nutrition professionals' knowledge and application of concepts from prevention and implementation science.

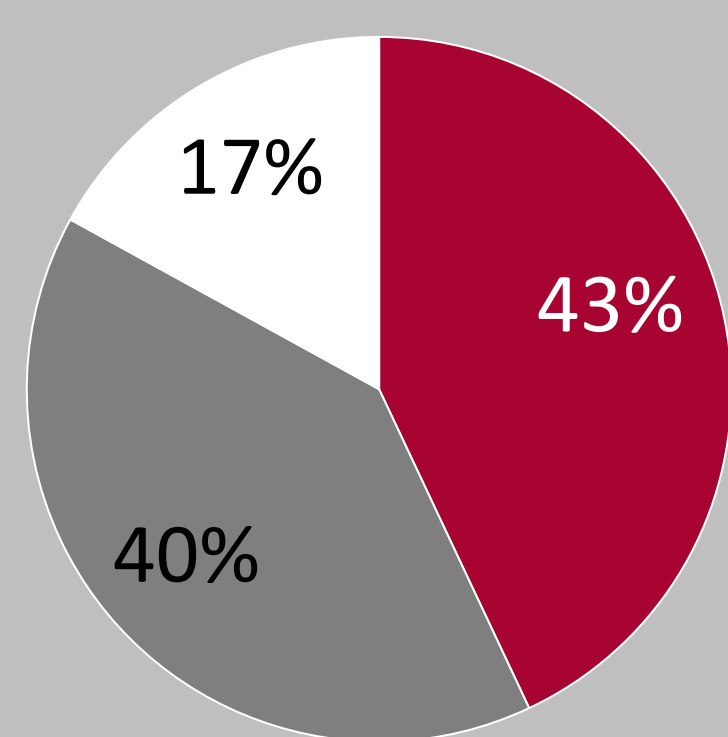
## METHODS

Approximately 110 nutrition professionals that attended a session about prevention science at a large national conference were asked anonymously about their knowledge and application of concepts from prevention and implementation science.

## RESULTS

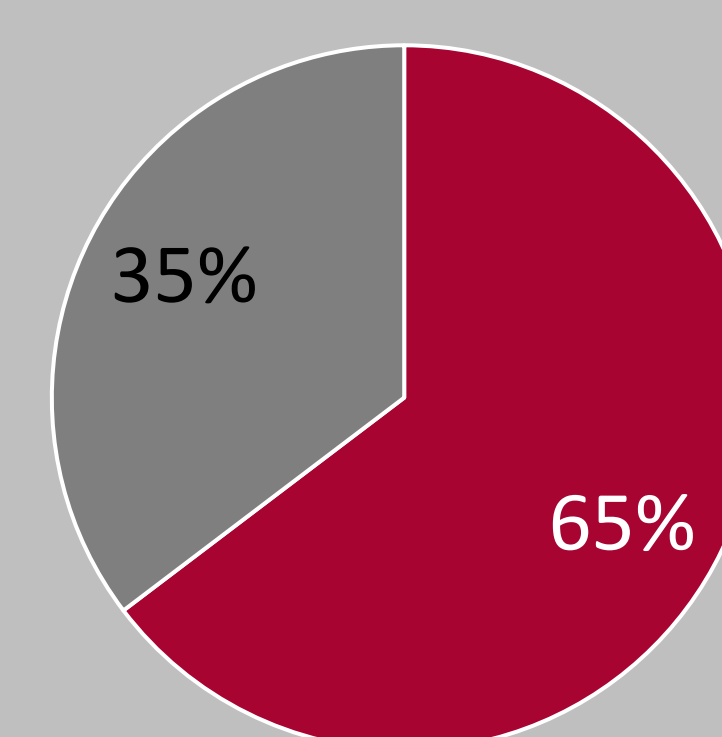
Of the respondents, 65% of participants have implemented evidence-based or evidence informed programs, yet 22% of participants do not evaluate programs, and 83% of participants had not heard of prevention science, implementation science, logic models or seen these concepts in practice.

Have you heard of Prevention Science, Logic Models, or Implementation Science?



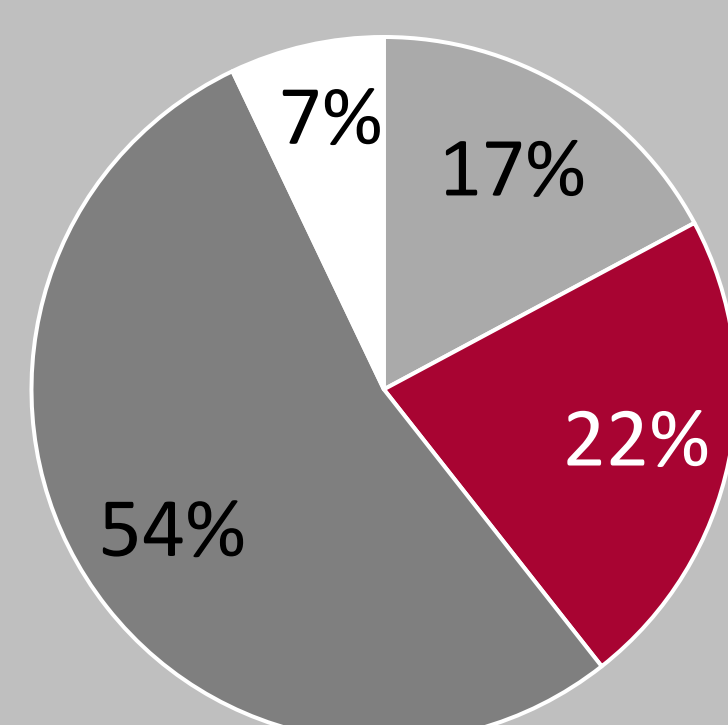
- I'm not sure, or these concepts are completely new to me
- I've heard of these concepts, but have not seen them in practice.
- Yes! These concepts are part of my area of practice.

Have you implemented Evidence Based or Evidence-informed programs?



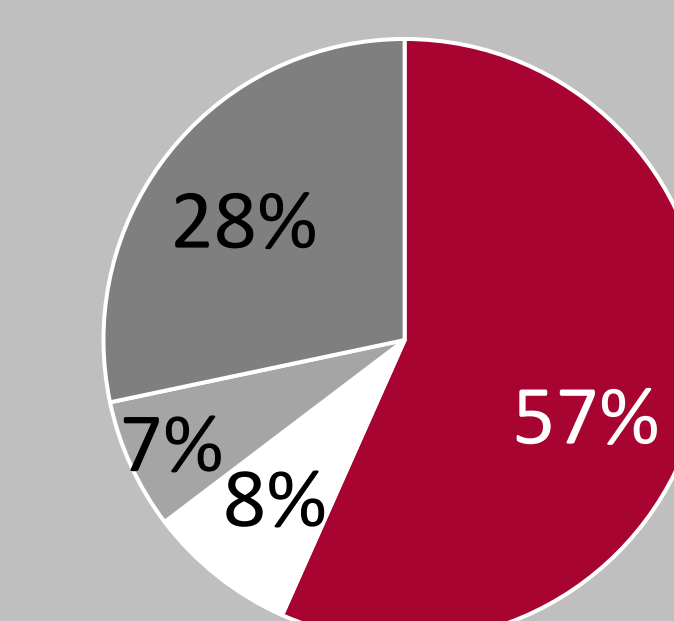
- I've implemented evidence-based programming
- I'm not sure or I provide individual nutrition care

Which of these evaluation techniques do you use most often in your practice?



- Formative or Process Evaluation
- I don't evaluate programs
- Summative or Outcome Evaluation
- Cost Evaluation

For those of you that have implemented programs, what is the most common challenge that you've faced?



- Recruitment and retention of participants
- Implementing the curriculum as planned
- Staff turnover
- Participant engagement in program

## CONCLUSIONS

- Based on these findings, the following are three potential opportunities to encourage the effective implementation and evaluation of evidence-based programs:
- 1) Supporting additional training and education for nutrition professionals including: an expansion of core competencies in education requirements, and additional continuing education opportunities for community-based nutrition professionals to specialize in implementation and evaluation
  - 2) Including technical assistance as part of program development to support the implementation of evidence-based programs
  - 3) Encouraging interdisciplinary teams to increase effective program implementation and evaluation strategies

## REFERENCES

McCrabb, S., Lane, C., Hall, A., Milat, A., Bauman, A., Sutherland, R., ... Wolfenden, L. (2019). Scaling-up evidence-based obesity interventions: A systematic review assessing intervention adaptations and effectiveness and quantifying the scale-up penalty. *Obesity Reviews*, (December 2018), 964–982. <https://doi.org/10.1111/obr.12845>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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