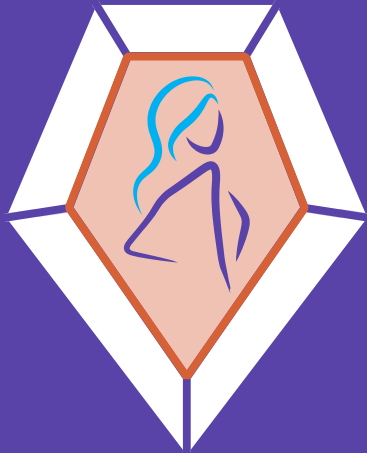




AMETHIST

AMETHIST@Penn:
Achieving Maternal
Empowerment
and Transforming
Health through
Implementation
Science and
Training

AMETHIST@Penn IMPROVE Centers of Excellence Year 3 Follow-up Survey Results

Dates of Survey Completion: 11/13/2025–3/22/2026

12 Centers of Excellence (CoEs) completed the *AMETHIST-NIH Centers of Excellence Year 3 Follow-Up Survey*.

Twelve IMPROVE Centers of Excellence (CoEs) continued to advance their research into Year 3. Research consultants with vast topic expertise guided CoEs through project design during individual and group consultations. CoEs participated in another round of annual site visits to address questions, concerns, or gaps in study design and implementation science methodology.



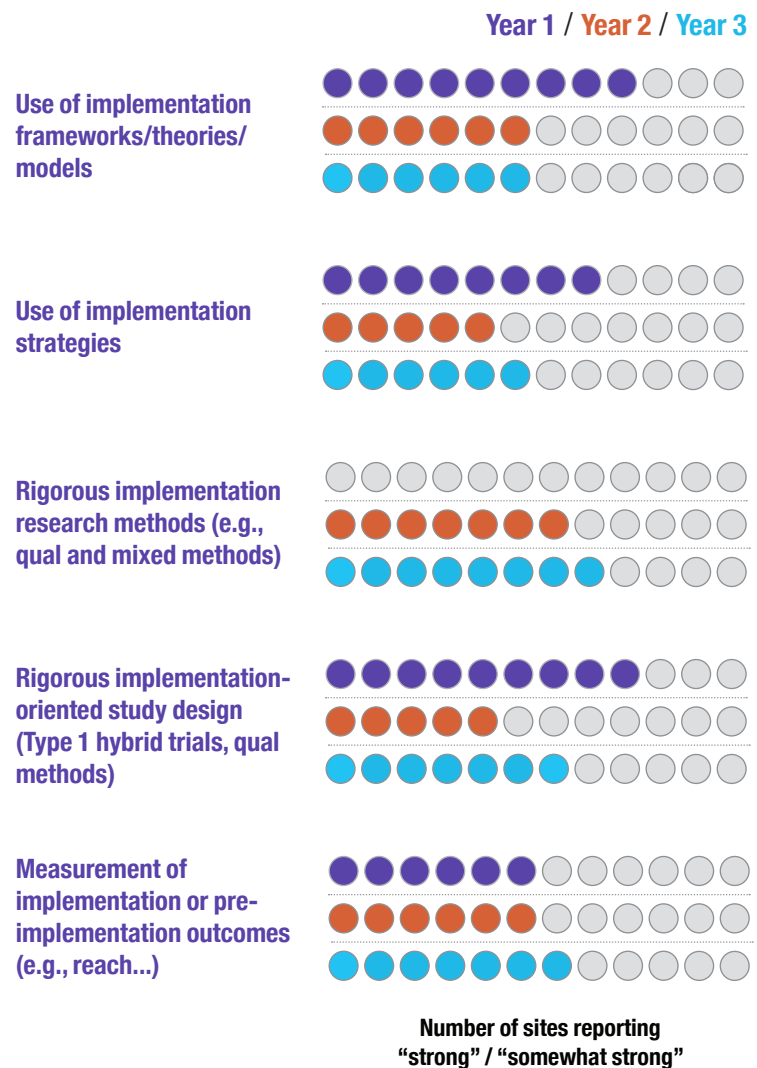
DESIGN, METHODS, AND ANALYSIS

Twelve IMPROVE Centers of Excellence (CoEs) continued to advance their research into Year 3. Research consultants with vast topic expertise guided CoEs through project design during individual and group consultations.

Surveyed CoEs expressed growth over the past year in the following design-focused areas:

- **Use of implementation frameworks, theories, and models**
50% (6/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong
- **Use of implementation strategies**
50% (6/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong
- **Rigorous implementation-oriented study design (including Type 1 hybrid trials)**
58% (7/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong
- **Rigorous implementation research methods (e.g. qualitative and mixed methods)**
75% (9/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong
- **Measurement of implementation or pre-implementation outcomes (e.g., reach, acceptability)**
67% (8/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong

FIGURE 1. CAPACITY TO UTILIZE IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE METHODOLOGIES



At baseline (Year 1) a little over half of CoEs reported feeling somewhat or very strong in their implementation science design expertise. From Years 2 to 3, CoEs had increased perceived strength in use of implementation strategies, rigorous implementation-oriented study design and research methods, and measurement of implementation and pre-implementation outcomes.



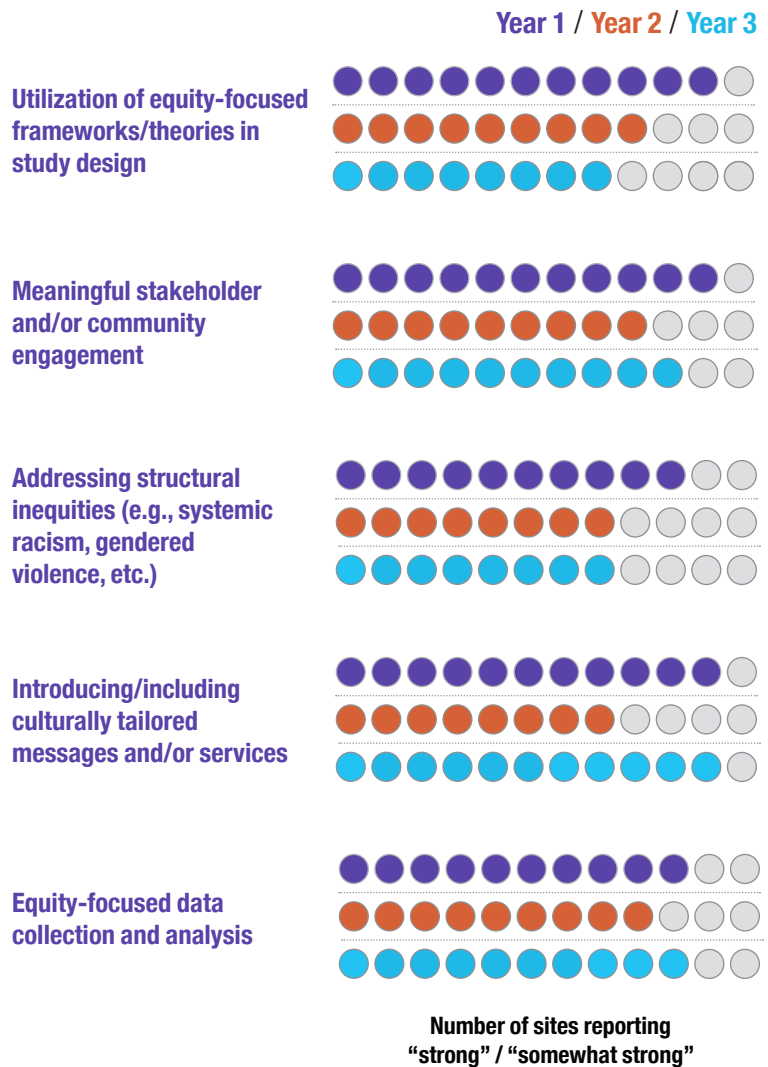
COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

CoEs actively engaged in Engagement Enhancement Collaborative (EEC) forums throughout Year 2 into Year 3. With an emphasis on bidirectional learning, these forums introduced pressing topics in maternal health (e.g., maternal health legislation, affirming gender in pregnancy and parenthood, rural maternal health, and Medicaid postpartum extensions).

The forum structure encouraged attendees to engage more deeply with other IMPROVE members on these issues through randomized or self-assigned discussion-based breakout sessions. In Year 3, CoEs also express strength in the following engagement-focused areas:

- **Utilization of equity-focused frameworks/theories in study design**
67% (8/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong
- **Meaningful stakeholder and/or community engagement**
83% (10/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong
- **Addressing structural inequities (such as systematic racism, gendered violence, etc.)**
67% (8/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong
- **Introducing/including culturally tailored messages and/or services**
92% (11/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong
- **Equity-focused data collection and analysis**
83% (10/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong

FIGURE 2. CAPACITY TO INCORPORATE ENGAGEMENT-FOCUSED RESEARCH PRACTICES



Throughout Years 1-3, CoEs reported generally feeling strong in their community engagement, with at least 8/12 CoEs reporting feeling somewhat or very strong in different topics surrounding equity and community engagement. From Year 2 to 3, more CoEs reported strength in the areas of meaningful community and stakeholder engagement, introducing or including culturally tailored messages and/or services, and utilizing equity-focused data collection and analysis.



POLICY, DISSEMINATION, AND COMMUNICATION

Entering Year 3, CoEs express strength in the areas related to policy, dissemination, and communication.

- **Experience and support for op-eds/media training**

33% (4/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong

- **Plans to communicate and message findings to stakeholders**

67% (8/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong

- **Plans for storytelling within planned research**

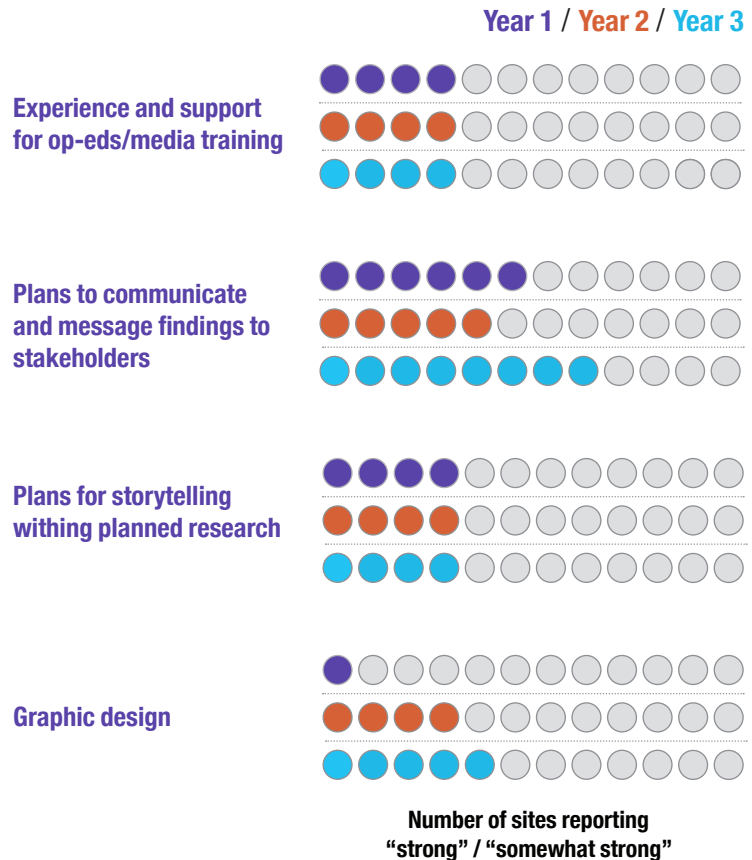
33% (4/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong

- **Graphic design**

42% (5/12) of CoEs indicate they feel somewhat or very strong

CoEs participated in AMETHIST's first annual Policy Day in May 2025, focused on opportunities for creating actionable strategies to advance postpartum care. AMETHIST also held a variety of workshops and trainings on storytelling and communicating research for CoEs to attend. From Years 2 to 3, CoEs reported greater use of communicating messages to stakeholders and graphic design in their research than in previous years.

FIGURE 3. CAPACITY FOR THE UTILIZATION OF POLICY-FOCUSED COMMUNICATION METHODS



TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

CoEs indicate varying levels of expertise around implementation science in Year 3.

CoEs actively participated in virtual seminars and workshops held throughout Year 2 into Year 3 by the AMETHIST@Penn Training Core. 50% (6/12) of CoEs expressed they feel AMETHIST implementation science training offerings support their existing CoE training

offerings in that they complement and/or fill a gap in what training their CoE currently offers. Additionally, 75% of CoEs (9/12) expressed that they would rate their overall implementation science (IS) expertise as "Intermediate".

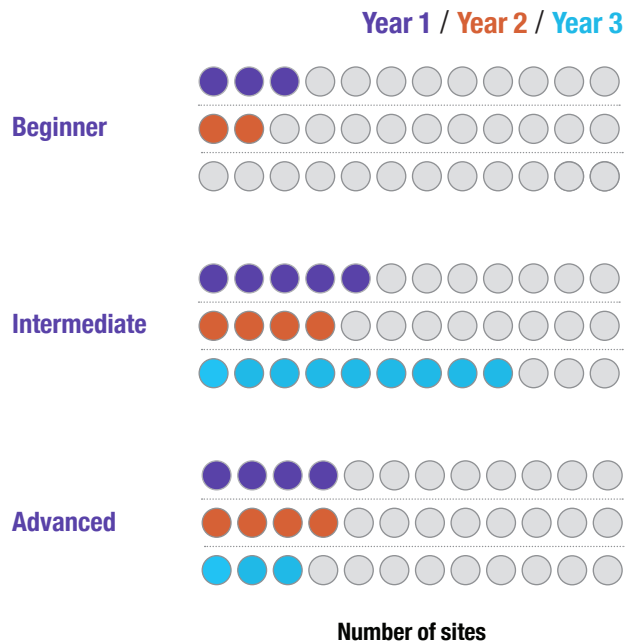


TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING (CONT.)

Overall, CoEs reported a significant increase in their perceived IS expertise over the past 3 years. At baseline (Year 1), over half (8/12) of reporting CoEs indicated they had either beginner or intermediate level IS expertise. For Years 2 and 3, more CoEs reported feeling stronger in their IS expertise, improving to at least an intermediate level.

Entering Year 3, 9 CoEs reported they felt their expertise was intermediate and 3 CoEs reported advanced expertise. No CoEs reported in Year 3 that they felt they were at beginner-level expertise, improved from 2-3 CoEs in Years 1 and 2.

FIGURE 4. EXPERTISE IN IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE CONCEPTS



CONCLUSION

Research in maternal health disparities is complex with many moving parts and challenges. The AMETHIST Implementation Science Hub continues to support IMPROVE CoEs towards their project goals. CoEs have improved in their confidence and perceived strength and capacity in carrying out their research projects. The AMETHIST IS Hub continues to engage CoEs in all Core areas of support including study design, equity and community engagement, training, policy, and communication.

Since Year 1, CoEs have demonstrated thorough engagement across AMETHIST Cores and throughout the IMPROVE network. Year 2 showed signs of progress as AMETHIST continued to build its relationship with the Centers, and Year 3 results showed significant improvement in IS expertise and community engaged research. As we move into Year 4 and beyond, we will continue to offer trainings and consultations catered to CoE needs. We will provide new tools, resources, and support as they continue to build and conduct their projects, grow their teams, and share their research findings.