Context analysis

A context analysis is diagnostic. The purpose is to understand issues within a local context that are important to practice change, and to identify factors likely to influence the proposed change. Inadequate understanding of the context in which evidence implementation occurs contributes to the gap between research and practice; therefore, it is an essential component of any evidence implementation project (Pfadenhauer et al. 2017).

While it is tempting to rush to get started, a good project is based on a clearly defined rationale, supported by data that measurably demonstrate the need for the project, and engages with key people, committees and organisational leaders to gather support for the topic as an organisational priority. Context analysis is therefore a strategic first step in the process of evidence-based practice change.