

Learning from doing: Reflecting on eight years of knowledge mobilisation

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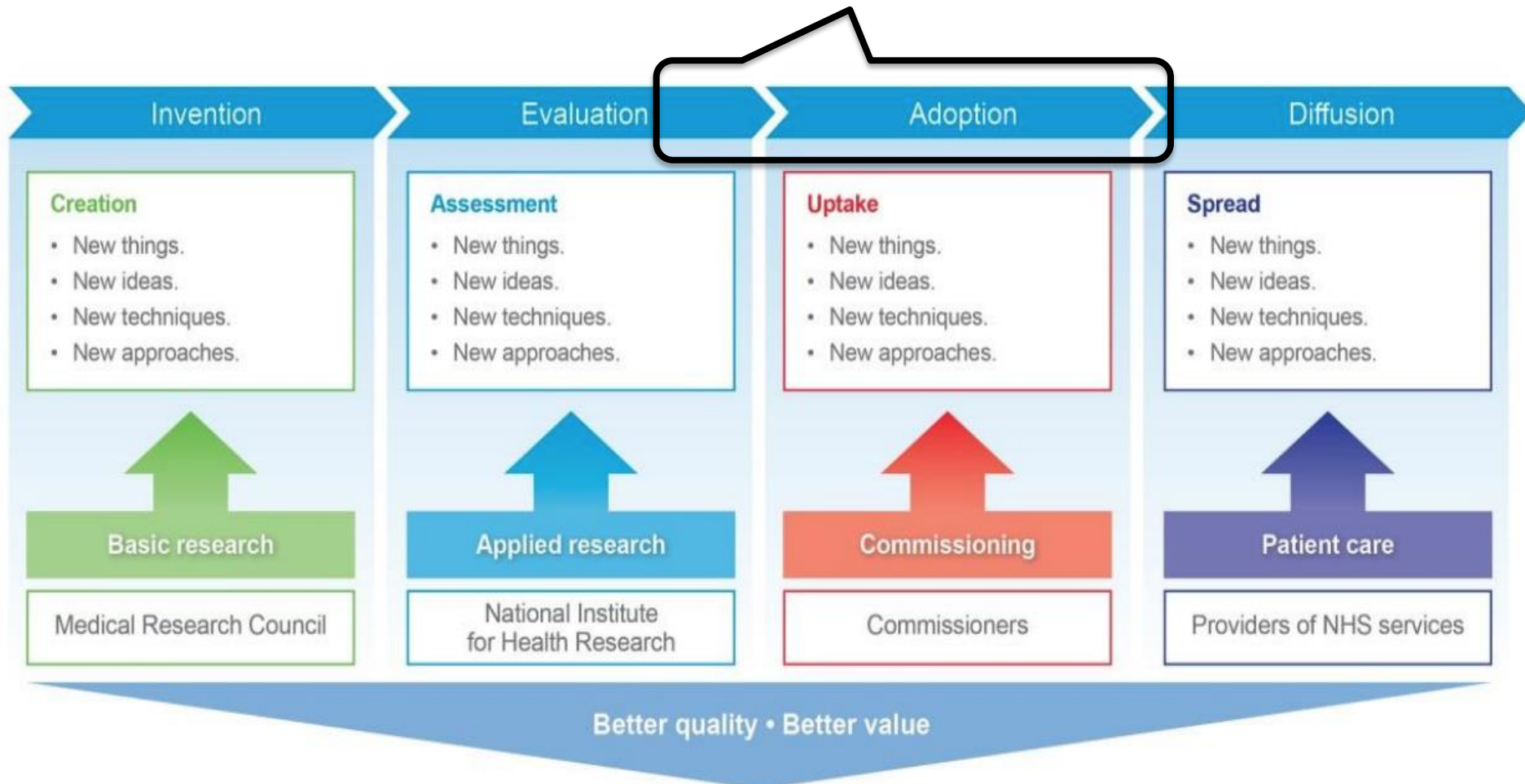
Not basic
science or
early stage
innovation

University, NHS, third sector,
industry, patients and the public

NIHR Collaboration for
Leadership in
Applied Health Research and
Care (CLAHRC)
Greater Manchester

~3m population, lots of health challenges,
health budget to be devolved from 2016

*“NIHR CLAHRCs address the **evaluation** and **identification** of those **new interventions** that are effective and appropriate for everyday use in the NHS and the **process of their implementation** into routine clinical practice”*



2014-2019

13 CLAHRCs



NIHR CLAHRC North West London *

NIHR CLAHRC East of England *

NIHR CLAHRC East Midlands (was 2)

NIHR CLAHRC Greater Manchester *

NIHR CLAHRC North Thames *

NIHR CLAHRC North West Coast

NIHR CLAHRC Oxford *

NIHR CLAHRC South London *

NIHR CLAHRC South West Peninsula

NIHR CLAHRC Wessex

NIHR CLAHRC West

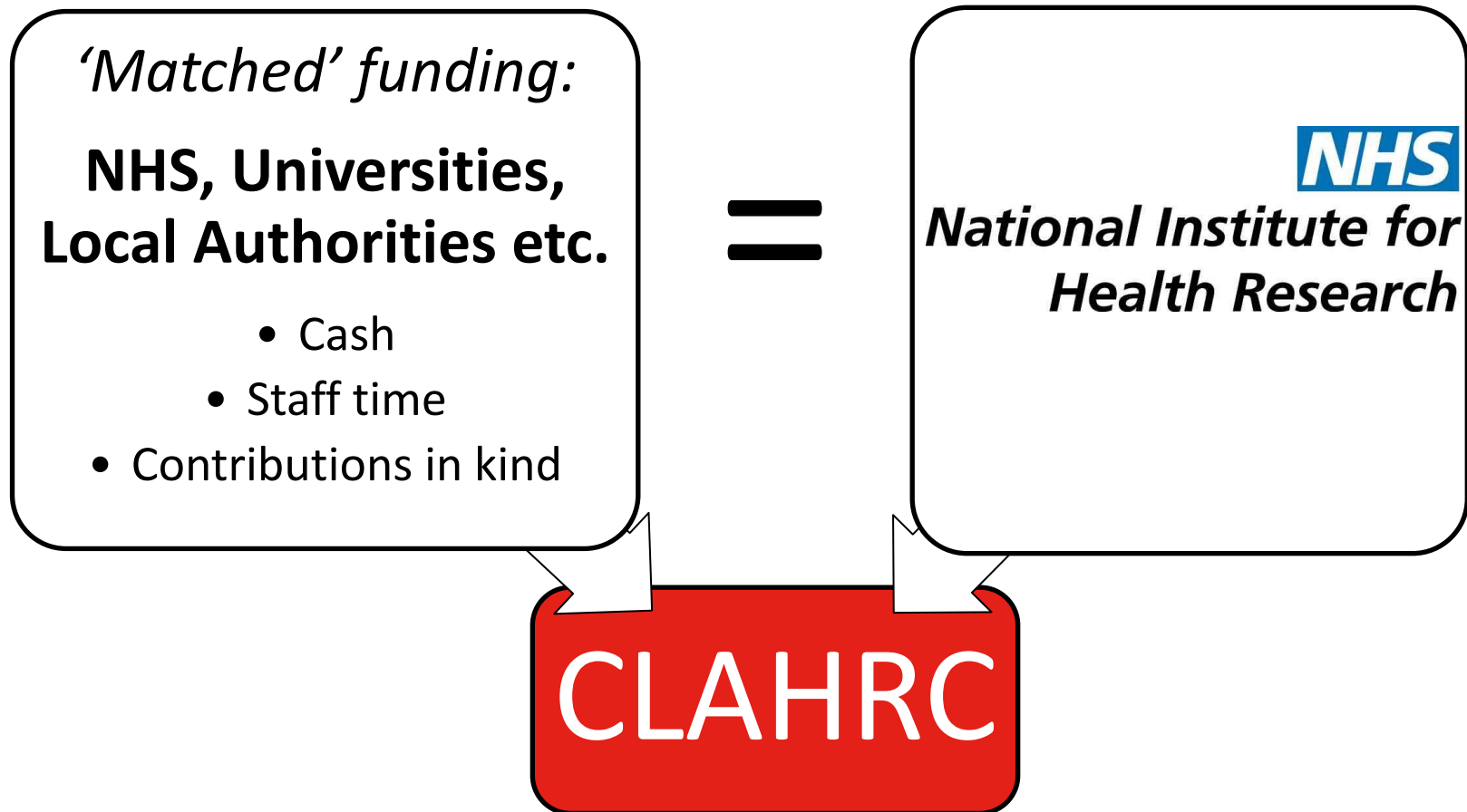
NIHR CLAHRC West Midlands

NIHR CLAHRC Yorkshire and Humber (was 2)

KEY: New CLAHRC (not in previous funding round)

* Also has an Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC)

The CLAHRC funding model



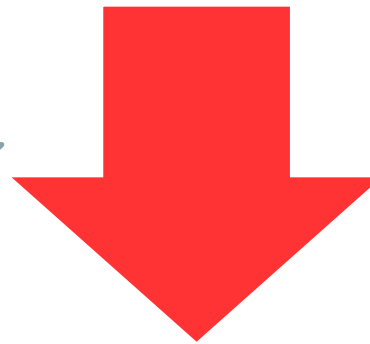
Initial theoretical framework



(Harvey et al. 2011)

Designing a CLAHRC

**Large-scale
knowledge
mobilisation
programme**



The funders' requirements

- the expectation to have separate 'research' and 'implementation' strands
- the need to secure matched funding

Getting research into practice

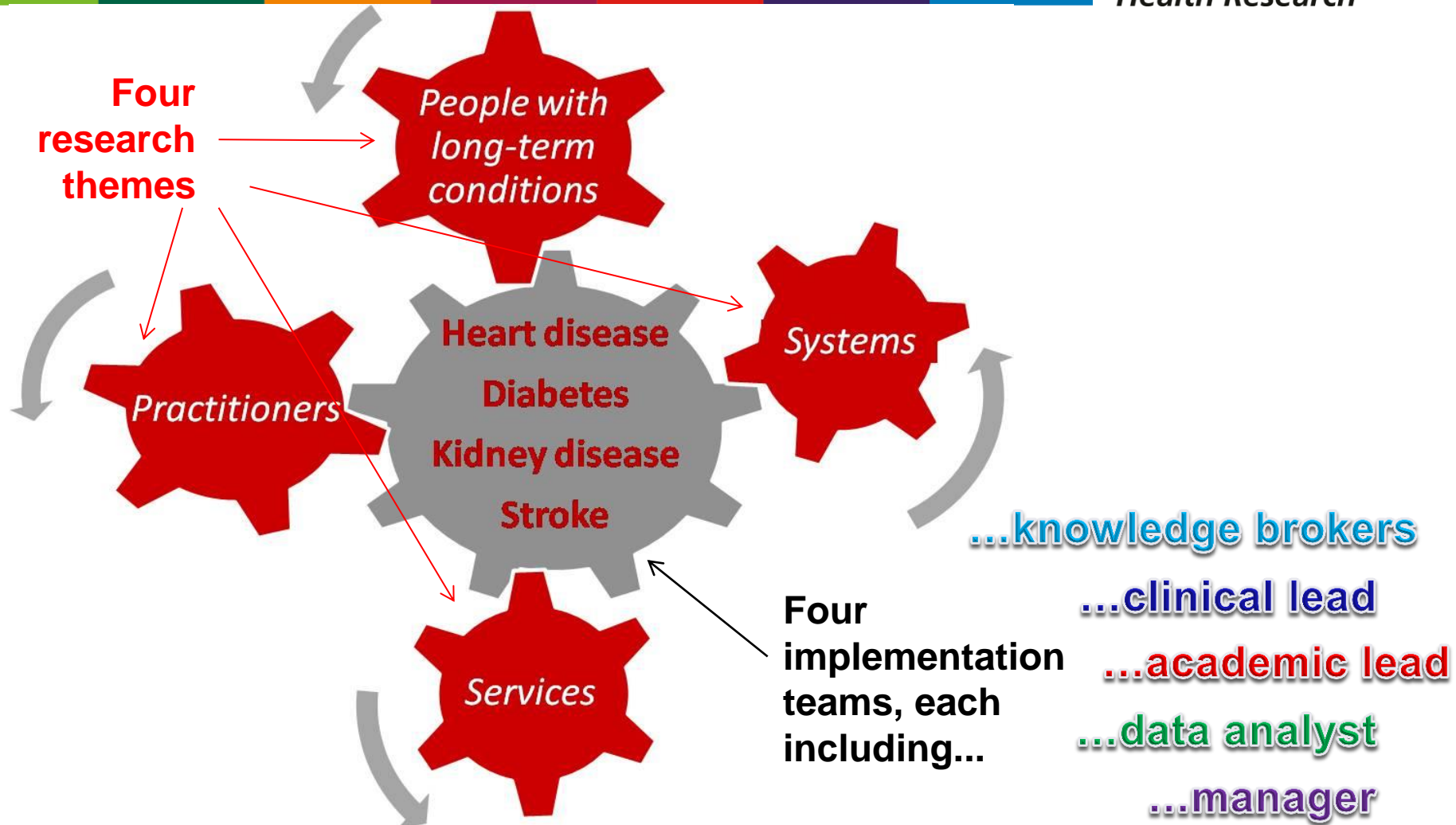
How to structure the CLAHRC?
How to ensure that the whole is more than the sum of its parts?
How to fill the 'designated' roles in multiprofessional teams?



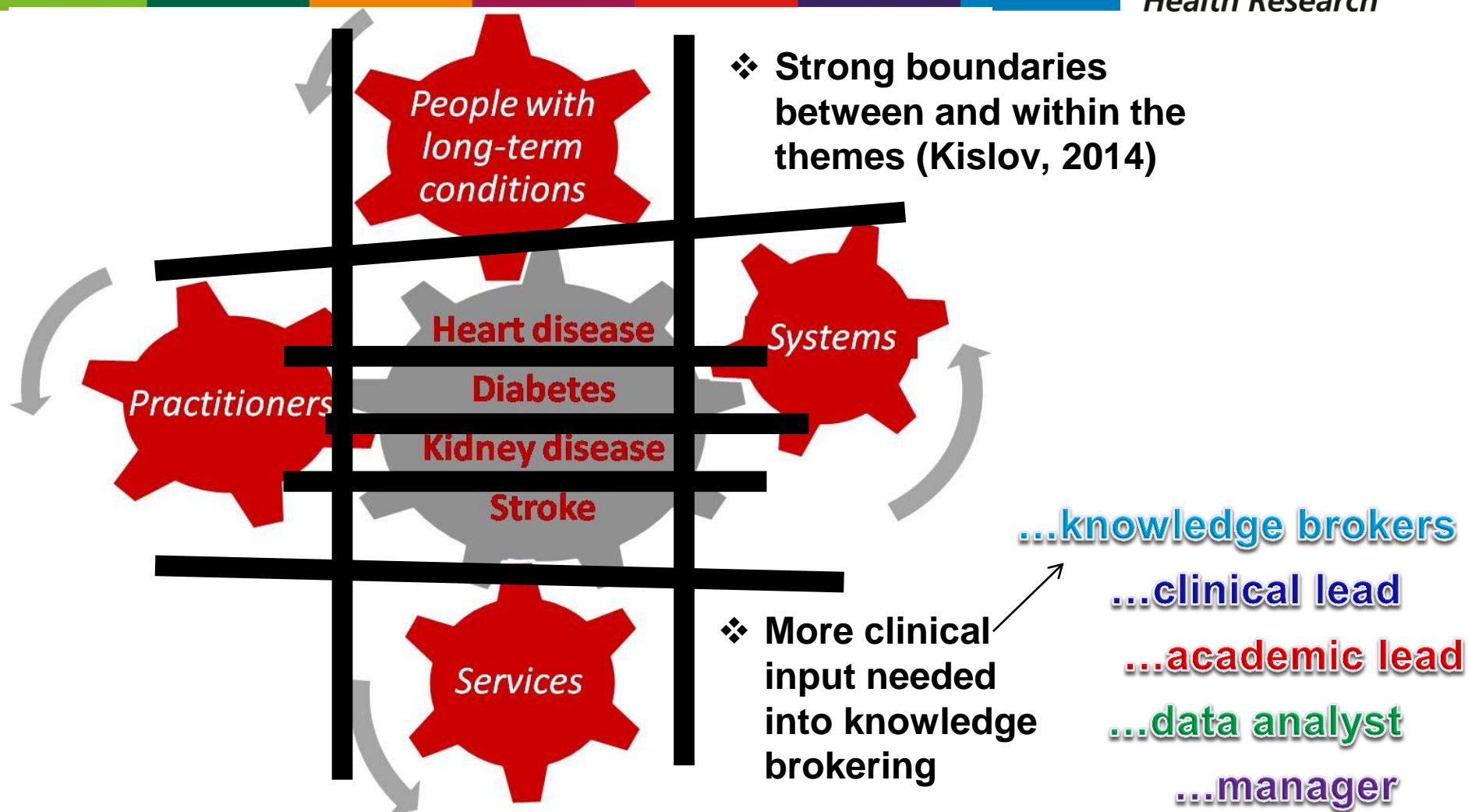
CLAHRC structure (2008-2011)



National Institute for
Health Research



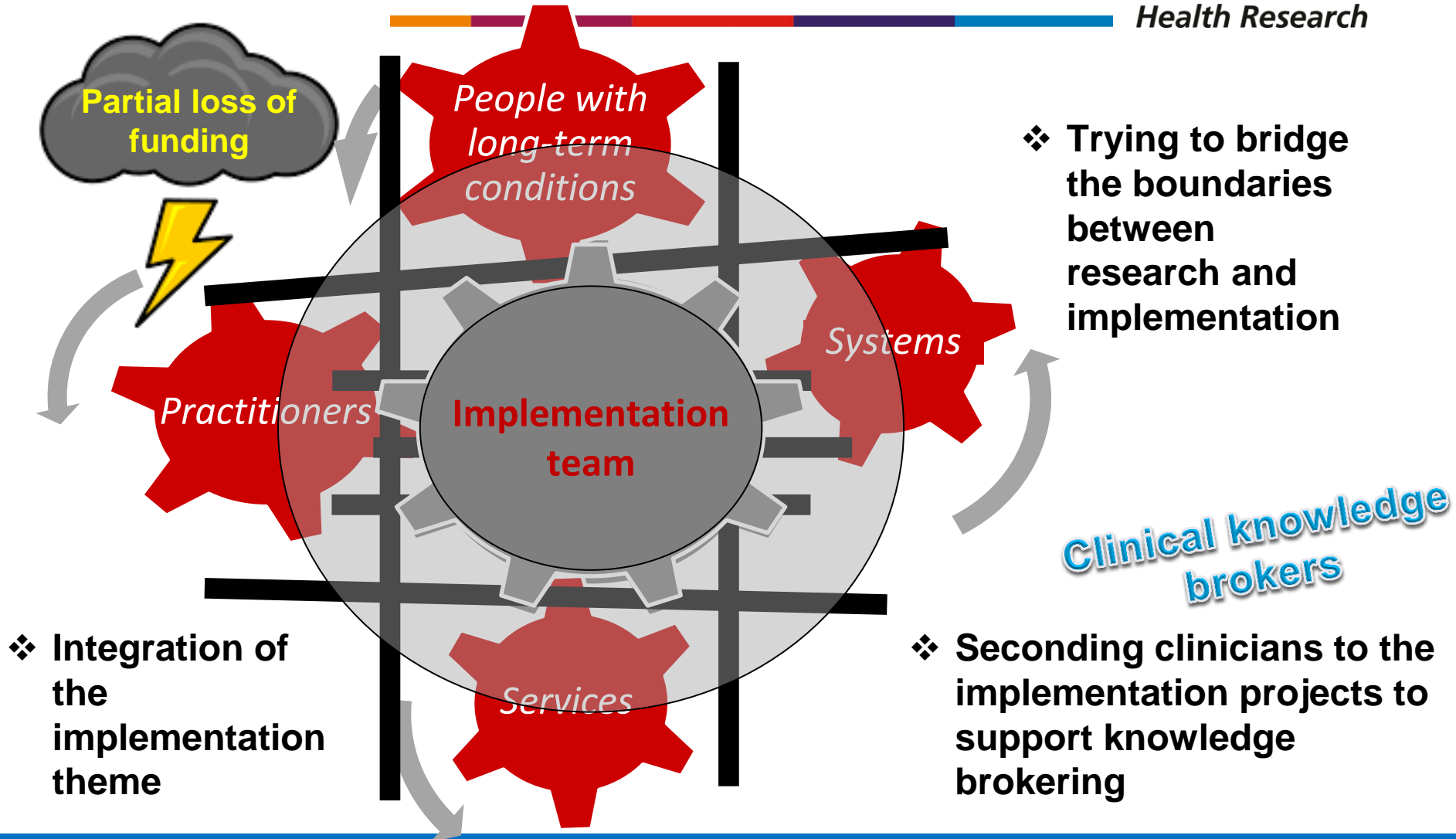
Reflections on initial structure



CLAHRC structure (2011-2013)



National Institute for
Health Research



CLAHRC structure (2014-2015)



National Institute for
Health Research

- ❖ Most projects combine research AND implementation

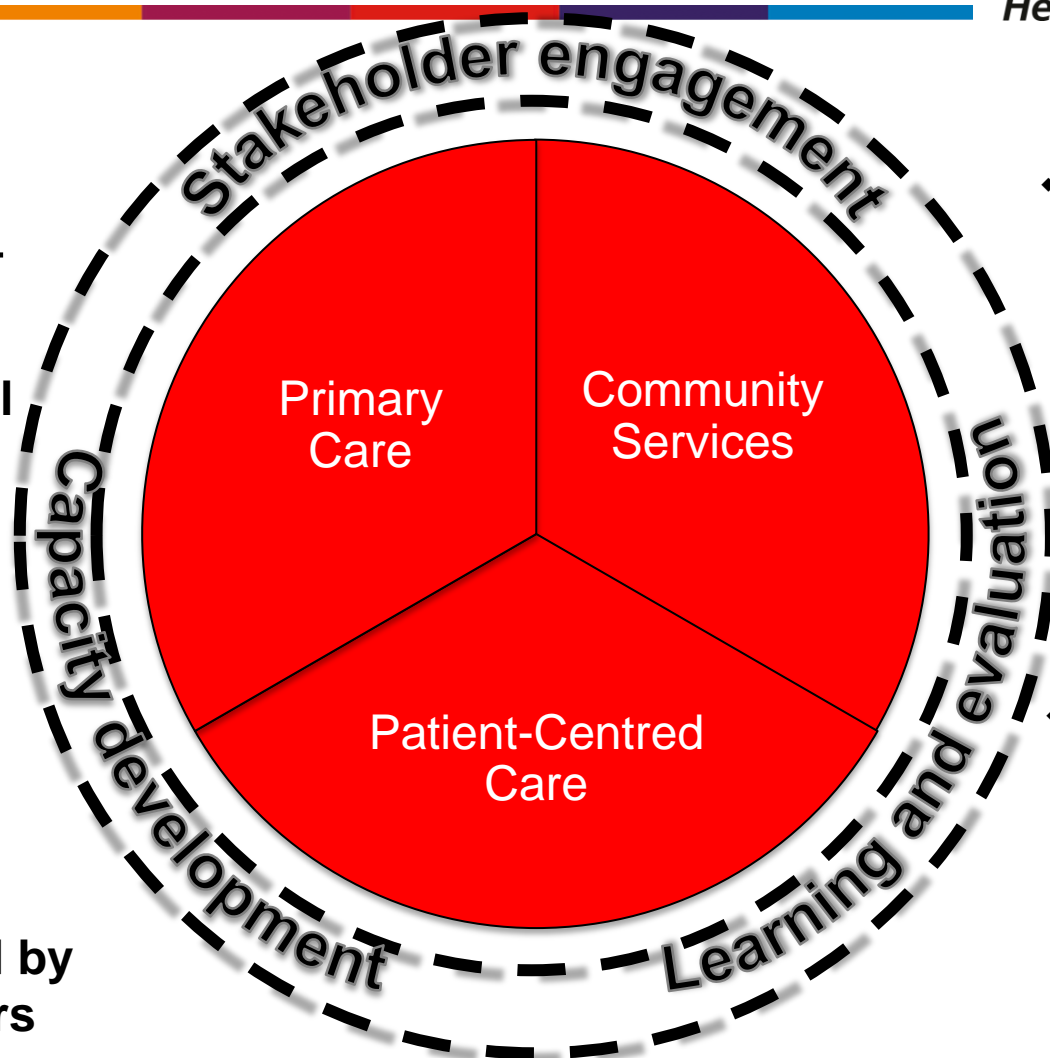
- ❖ Multiprofessional project teams including...

...research staff

...managers

...facilitators

- ❖ Knowledge brokering shared by the team members



- ❖ Most staff works across several projects and networks

- ❖ Hybrid roles ('research-savvy implementers and implementation-savvy researchers')

Advisory Panel Review

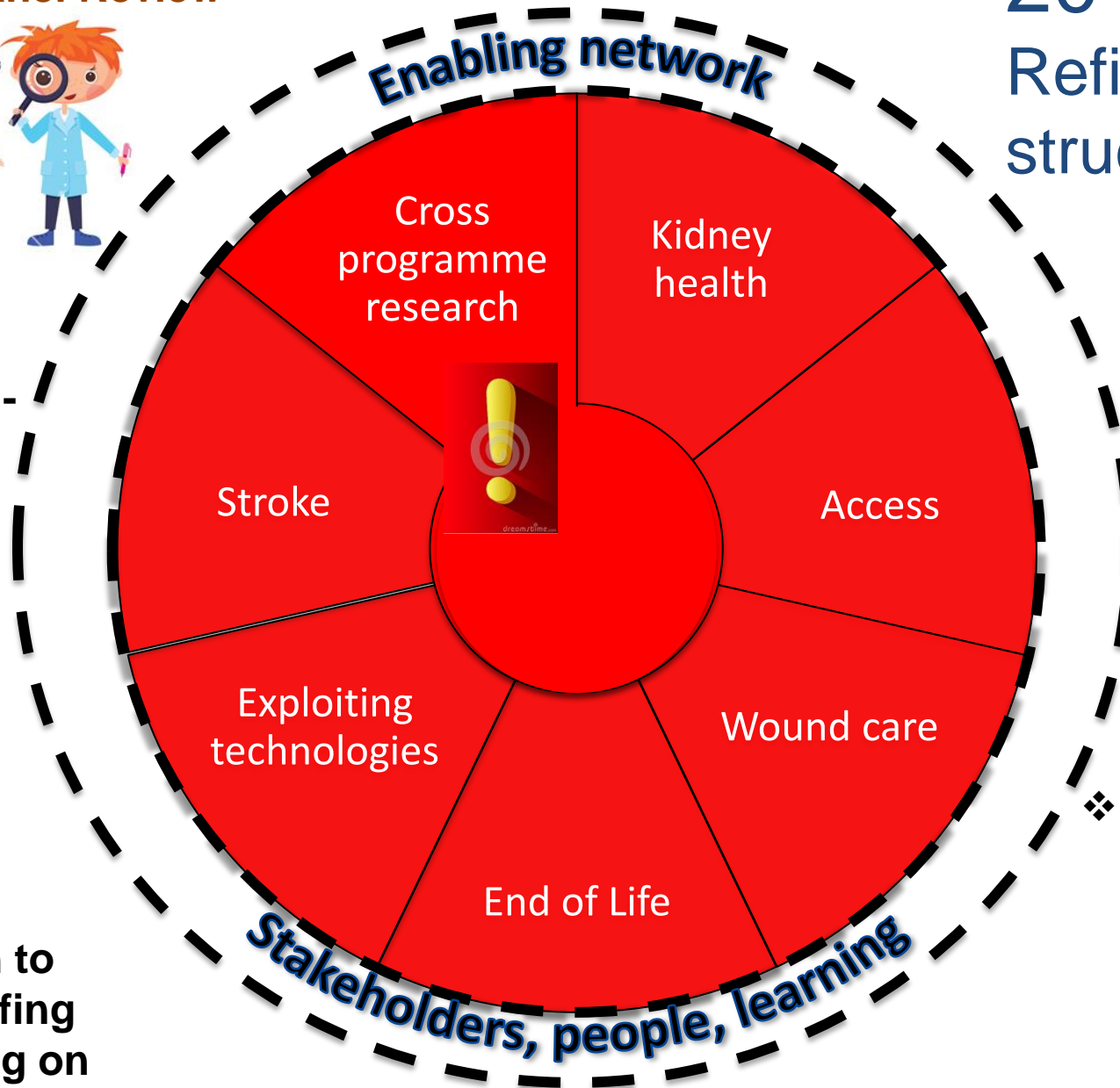


2016

Refining the structure

❖ Strengthening cross-project research

❖ Flexible approach to team staffing depending on project needs



❖ Recognition that there are different TYPES of knowledge mobilisation projects

Evolution of CLAHRC GM

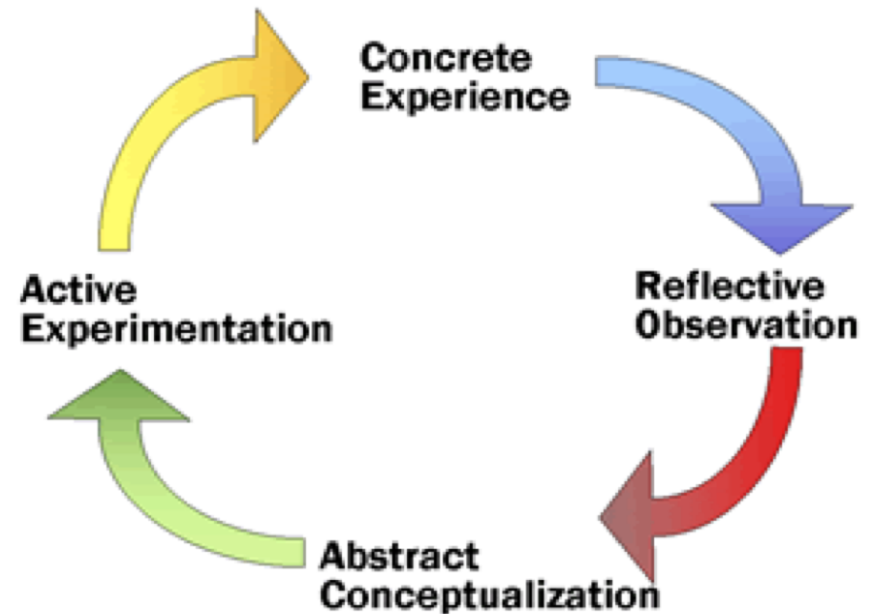


1. From the separation of 'research' and 'implementation' towards their **integration and co-production**
2. From a number of bounded silos towards enabling the **'cross-cutting' way of working**
3. From a relatively rigid structure towards a **flexible framework** that can be modified depending on the needs of specific projects
4. From individual knowledge brokering roles towards **collective brokering** performed by multiprofessional teams

What enabled these changes?



- **Reflexivity** is a dynamic interaction between reflection and action with an intention to learn and to change (Anthonacopoulou, 2004)



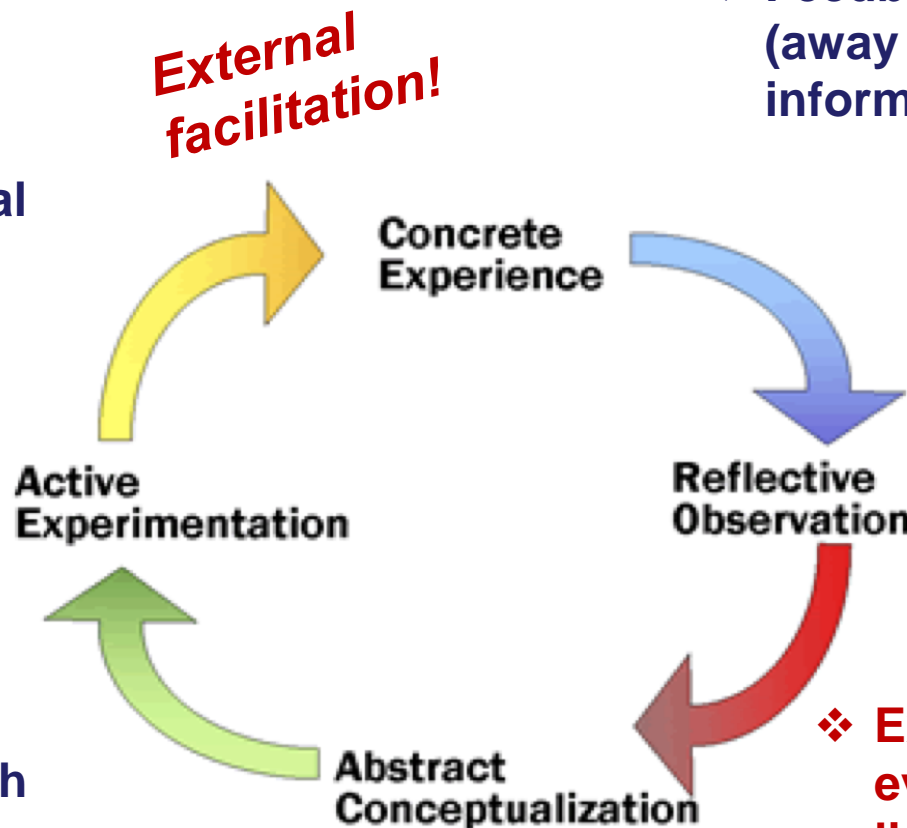
- **Actionable knowledge**—implementable by the users whom it is intended to engage (Antonacopoulou, 2009)

Sources of actionable knowledge

- ❖ Strategic meetings at different organisational levels



- ❖ Internal cross-project research into knowledge mobilisation



- ❖ Feedback from staff (away days, workshops, informal discussions)

- ❖ Systematic evaluation of CLAHRC projects

- ❖ Advisory Panel Review

- ❖ External CLAHRC evaluations (somewhat limited value in terms of 'actionable knowledge')

Organisational reflexivity

Enablers

- *Leadership and management:*
 - openness to critique, learning and change
 - investing time and resources into reflective activities
 - creating effective feedback mechanisms
 - giving staff an opportunity to shape things
- *Culture:*
 - 'critique culture'—rather than 'blame culture'
 - shared sense of belonging to the organisation



- *External stimuli* often help to trigger reflection and action

Lessons learnt

- Reflexivity can be painful:
 - Realising some of the previous decisions were wrong
 - Critique can be taken by some individuals too personally
 - Individual reflexive abilities differ!



- Taking into account multiple (and often competing) points of view
 - Professional and epistemic differences
 - Internal evaluation too 'rosy' while research too 'critical'
 - Finding the balance and making decisions!



Lessons learnt

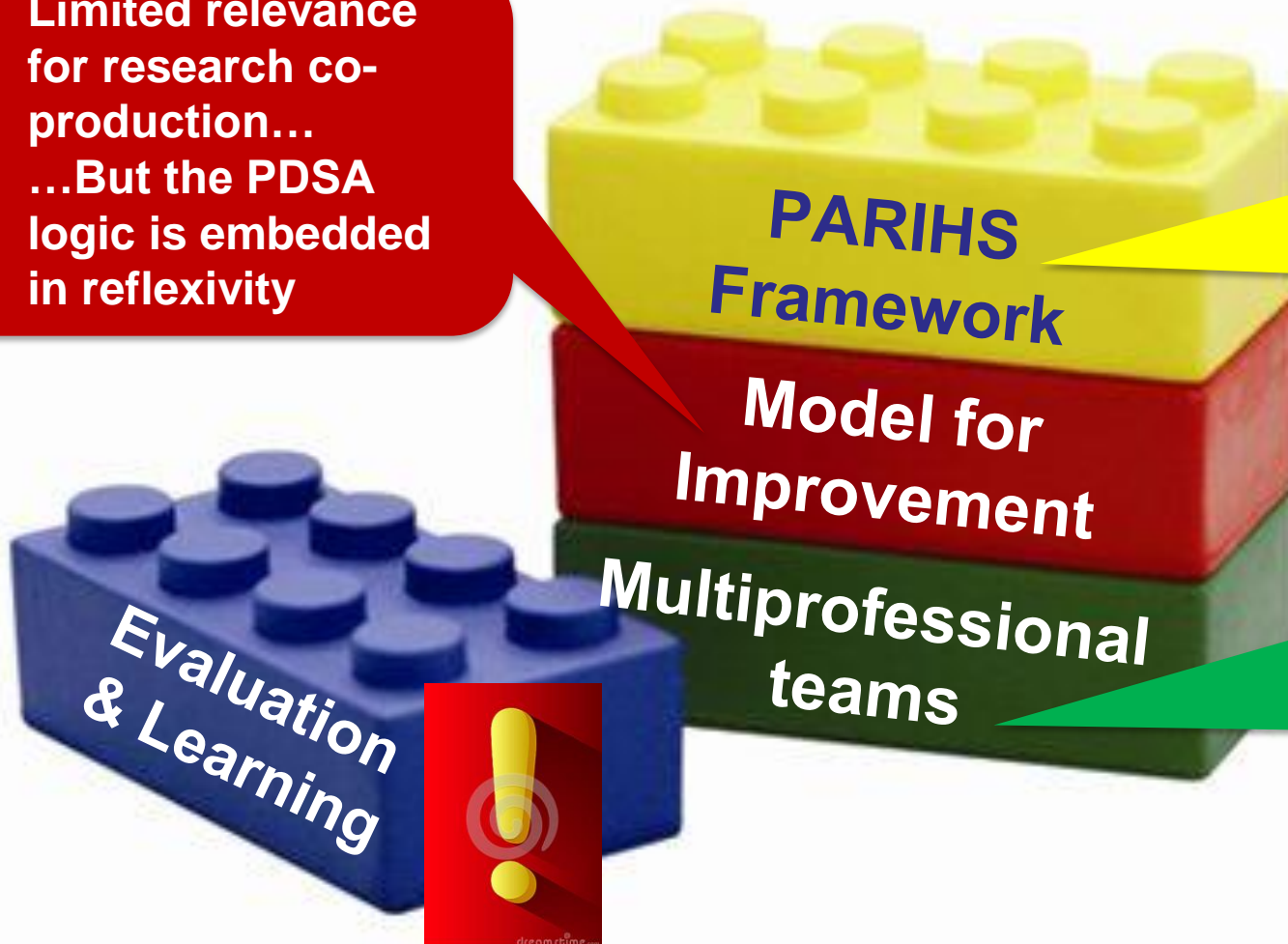
- Context can significantly constrain action
 - ...and it often changes quickly and unpredictably
- Cross-cutting structures do not always function as intended
- Structure should FOLLOW function
- Knowledge mobilisation approaches **evolve** in the process of their implementation:
 - Adaptation
 - Distortion



Eight years later...

- Limited relevance for research co-production...
- ...But the PDSA logic is embedded in reflexivity

- Explanatory framework
- Its main premises inform our thinking



- Fundamental to our design
- Became more inclusive
- Grown in importance

References

- Antonacopoulou, E. P. (2004). The dynamics of reflexive practice: The relationship between learning and changing. *In* M. Reynolds & R. Vince (Eds.) *Organizing Reflection* (pp. 47-64). Aldershot: Ashgate.
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