

A Lexicon for Measuring Maintenance of Behavior Change

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Objectives: To establish a workgroup within the NIH-funded Health Maintenance Consortium (HMC) to examine how “maintenance” of behavior change was conceptualized and measured across and within behaviors. **Methods:** Multiple meetings were held by the workgroup to reach consensus definitions of maintenance and maintenance-related constructs across diet/nutrition, tobacco, substance abuse, and physical activity. Once consensus was reached, a survey assessed how maintenance was operationalized across 16 HMC intervention studies. **Results:** Seventy-five percent of 16 studies assessed are using a criterion to assess maintenance and are tracking

maintenance as a continuous measure. Eighty-one percent are assessing facilitators and barriers, and conceptualizing maintenance as both an intermediate and primary outcome measure. All 16 studies are assessing maintenance at the individual level with fewer at the organizational (N=3), environmental (N=3), and policy levels (N=1). **Conclusions:** This survey found similarities and differences in measurement across behaviors that have important implications for advancing the quality of transbehavioral research.

Key words: multiple behavior change, long-term maintenance, measurement

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