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Wicked problems, wicked solutions: evaluating system change

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Income

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Wicked, adj

1. Evil or morally wrong
2. Difficult; impenetrable
3. Playfully mischievous
4. Excellent; wonderful



Wicked problems...

■ Measurement

- What's meant to change
- How many systems do you have

■ Attribution

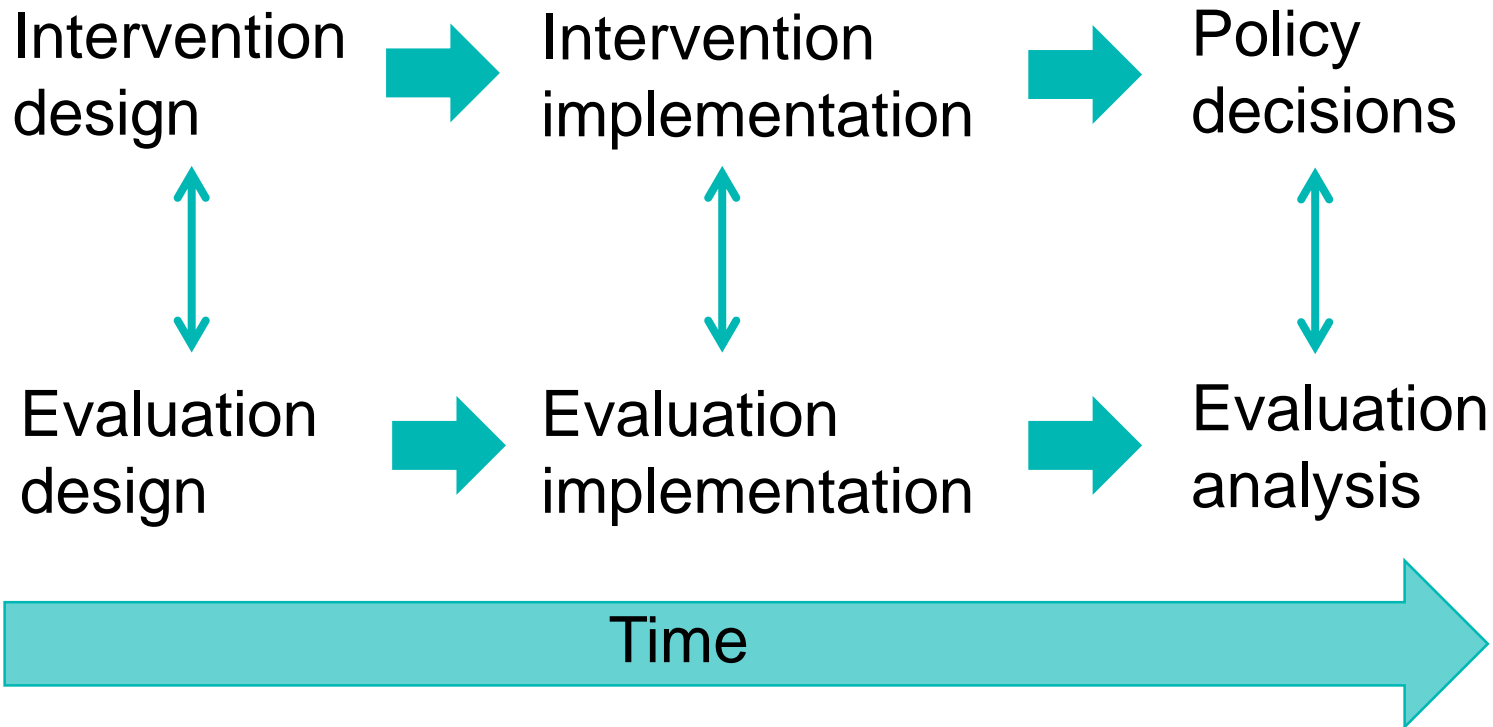
- How do you know what would have happened

■ Interpretation

- What were you intending to do
- What did you actually do
- Why did or didn't it lead to change



Wicked solutions...

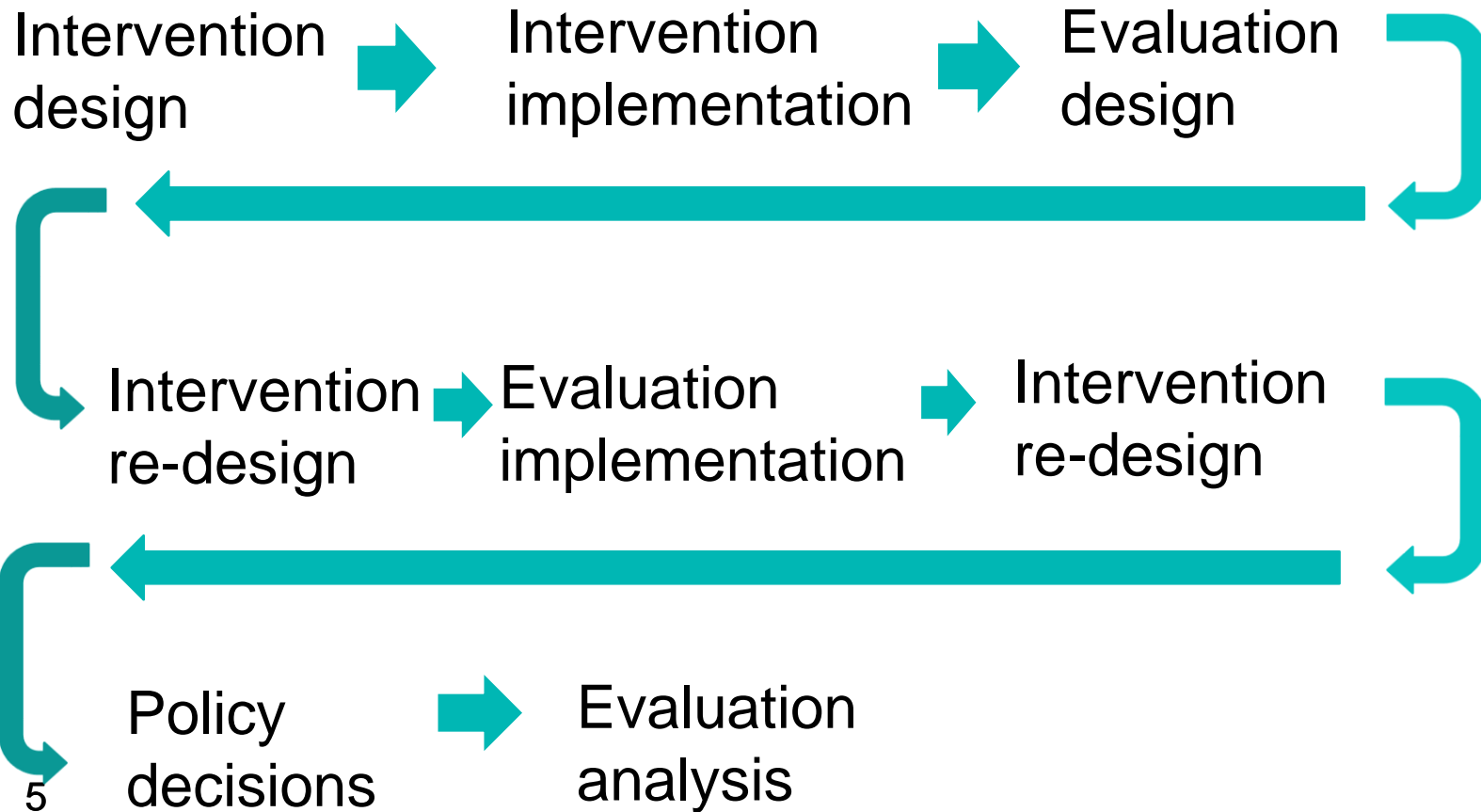


...even wicked-er problems...

- It's someone's baby
- What they're trying to do, why they're trying to do it and how they're trying to do it, can all change
- The king is dead, long live the king



...even wicked-er solutions



Drug Systems Change Pilots

- Aim to test potential to improve drug treatment through system being more:
 - User-led
 - Outcomes-focussed
- Systems change
 - Funding Flexibilities
 - Innovative thinking
- Implementation: 2009 – 2011
 - Seven pilot areas
 - Areas chosen through bidding process



Methodology

- Qualitative case studies
 - Staff & service users
 - Data collected mid-point & end-point
- Quantitative quasi-experimental analysis
 - Administrative data
 - Continuity of care, proportions effective treatment, successful treatment completion



Findings

- Seven pilot areas, seven approaches to change
 - Focus on different parts of system
 - Different structures & partners
- Funding flexibilities not sufficient
 - Often not even necessary
- Positive & negative impacts
 - Small positive impact on some measures in some areas
 - Small negative impact on other measure in other areas
- Policy impact – New strategy published 2010
 - Commitment to localism and autonomy for all drug treatment systems



Conclusions

- Context more complex than the system
- You have to be curious
- Implementation isn't a sacred cow
- Evidence-based policy needs to be a policy



Contact

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