Abstracts, Symposium

Listed alphabetically by Author's last name

Chair:

Ruth Martin-Misener

Development of an Ecological Framework for Building Successful Collaboration between Primary Care and Public Health with a Large Multi-jurisdictional Team

Ruth Martin-Misener
        Dalhousie University
Ruta Valaitis
        McMaster University
Marjorie Macdonald
        University of Victoria
Linda O'Mara
        McMaster University
Sabrina Wong
        University of British Columbia
Donna Meagher-Stewart
        Dalhousie University

Health systems worldwide are interested in determining the best ways for primary care (PC) and public health (PH) to collaborate in order to improve population and system outcomes. Examples of successful collaborations between PC and PH exist; research is needed to document what has worked and lessons learned. The purpose of this symposium is to describe the methods that were used to develop an Ecological Framework for Building Successful Collaboration between Primary Care and Public Health and strategies for working with a large multi-jurisdictional research team. The Framework is the culmination of a four and a half year program of research that aimed to: explore structures and processes required to build successful PC PH collaborations; understand the nature of existing collaborations in Canada; and, examine roles providers played in collaborations. The Framework represents the nature of collaboration between PC and PH and factors that can influence the development and maintenance of successful collaborations.

Session one:

Overview of the Qualitative Studies and Methods Used to Develop the Ecological Framework for Building Successful Collaboration between Primary Care and Public Health

Ruth Martin-Misener
        Dalhousie University
Ruta Valaitis
        McMaster University
Marjorie Macdonald
        University of Victoria
Linda O'Mara
        McMaster University
Sabrina Wong

University of British Columbia
Donna Meagher-Stewart
    Dalhousie University

The purpose of this presentation is to describe the qualitative studies and methods that were used to develop the Ecological Framework for Building Successful Collaboration Between Primary Care and Public Health. Drawing on ecological theory, five distinct consecutive research projects conducted in three provinces informed the Framework's development: 1) a scoping literature review; 2) environmental scans in three provinces; 3) a descriptive interpretive study with key informants; 4) Q-sort methodology to identify common viewpoints of stakeholders and; 5) a multiple case study involving 10 cases. Direct service providers, policymakers, administrators and managers from PC and PH sectors participated. Each method will be briefly described along with a discussion of how the research team used the findings from each study to build the framework. Version 1 of the Framework was presented at each of three think tanks attended by over 200 stakeholders held in BC, ON, and NS. Feedback informed refinements to the Framework. The strengths and limitations of the methodological approaches used in this program of research will be considered..

Session Two:

A Theoretical Perspective of the Nature of Collaboration between Public Health and Primary Care

Marjorie Macdonald
    University of Victoria
Ruta Valaitis
    McMaster University
Ruth Martin-Misener
    Dalhousie University
Sabrina Wong
    University of British Columbia
Donna Meagher-Stewart
    Dalhousie University
Linda O'Mara
    McMaster University

The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of the Ecological Framework for Building Successful Collaboration between Primary Care and Public Health and to focus specifically upon the nature of collaboration, which is found at the core of the framework. The nature of the collaboration includes the structure and context around which the collaboration between primary care (PC) and public health (PH) is formed and the processes by which practitioners and organizations work together. The precipitators and goals of collaboration between PH and PC are considered along with the key influences that affect the nature of collaboration. Drawing on the work of scholars who have explored inter-organizational collaboration, in this presentation we offer a theoretical perspective on the nature of collaboration between PH and PC, differentiating collaboration from related ways of working together such as networking, cooperation, and coordination. We use examples from our qualitative key informant interviews and case studies to illustrate differences between types of collaborations including the goals and activities of the collaboration. Finally, we discuss the implications of these findings for practice.

Session Three:

Methodological Challenges and Lessons Learned in Conducting a Series of Qualitative Studies in a Complex Program of Research

Ruta Valaitis
        McMaster University
Marjorie Macdonald
        University of Victoria
Ruth Martin-Misener
        Dalhousie University
Donna Meagher-Stewart
        Dalhousie University
Linda O'Mara
        McMaster University
Sabrina Wong
        University of British Columbia

In this presentation we discuss the challenges we faced, solutions we applied, and lessons learned in working with a large interdisciplinary multi-jurisdictional team to conduct a series of qualitative studies in this complex program of research. Challenges included: the management of research documents, complex datasets and resources; communication with knowledge users and decision makers on the team related to the research questions, methods and results; consistent approaches to coding by large teams of complex data sets (focus group and interview transcripts, photovoice data, literature review extractions, and descriptive quantitative data); decision-making around authorship and dissemination of research results. Solutions and lessons learned will be discussed. There will also be an opportunity for the audience to add to lessons learned from their own experiences of working on large teams involving qualitative research.

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