

The experiences and shared meaning of teamwork and interprofessional collaboration to health care professionals in primary health care settings: a systematic review protocol

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REVIEW QUESTION/OBJECTIVE

What are the experiences and the meaning of teamwork in primary health care settings for health care professionals?

BACKGROUND

Teamwork in primary health care settings is formed by workers from different professional groups, capable of answering to a greater array of health needs. The literature also indicates that teamwork is a possibility in the face of the increasing number of healthcare disciplines and shortage of human resources, mainly medical doctors, that may lead to health care fragmentation.^{1,2}

During the last decade, teamwork has been addressed under the rationale of interprofessional practice or collaboration, highlighted by the attributes of this practice such as: Interdependence of professional actions, focus on the user needs, negotiation between professionals, shared decision making, mutual respect and trust among professionals, and acknowledgment of the role and work of the different professional groups.^{3,4,5,6} Although teamwork and interprofessional collaboration have been pointed out as an adequate strategy for the organization of health care services, the literature shows that there has not been a consensus on these concepts among health care professionals.^{7,8,9,10}

Recently a quantitative systematic review was developed to verify the effects of interprofessional collaboration on healthcare outcomes, selected in a period of five decades of searching, just five randomized controlled trials.¹¹ The conclusion of the review stated the following:

"The review suggests that practice-based interprofessional care interventions can improve healthcare processes and outcomes, but due to the limitations in terms of the small number of studies, sample sizes, problems with conceptualising and measuring collaboration, and heterogeneity of interventions and settings, it is difficult to draw generalisable inferences about the key elements of IPC and its effectiveness."^{11,8}

The authors also point out the terminology imprecision and problems with conceptualization of interprofessional collaboration as limitations to the study which compromises generalization and production of evidence of the usefulness of the collaborative practice in teams. The authors of the above mentioned study have concluded that it is necessary for a greater conceptual accuracy in the research and the development of qualitative studies focusing on teamwork and collaborative interprofessional practice. This review aims to fill that gap.

Other studies also highlight the lack of clarity or even a common understanding of the teamwork concept, hinders the assessment of the results linked to this form of work, and even impairs the validity of the research studies related to the theme.^{12,13,14}

However, there are few studies that report a definition of health care teamwork.

Xyriac¹⁵ developed a concept analysis of health care teamwork and arrived at the following definition:

"A dynamic process involving two or more health professionals with complementary backgrounds and skills, sharing common health goals and exercising concerted physical and mental effort in assessing, planning, or evaluating patient care. This is accomplished through interdependent collaboration, open communication and shared decision-making. This in turn generates value-added patient, organizational and staff outcomes."^{15,p.238}

Pollard¹⁶ defines teamwork as a small group of professionals with a shared aim and common objectives, complementary skills, the same approach to health care and shared accountability in relation to results.

McCallin¹⁷ developed a review about interdisciplinary practice and adopted a definition of teamwork - coined earlier by Manion, Lorimer & Leander (1996) "A team is a small number of consistent people committed to a relevant shared purpose, with common performance goals, complementary and overlapping skills, and a common approach to their work. Team members hold themselves mutually accountable for the team's results or outcomes."^{17:421}

In a later study McCallin¹⁸ based on findings of empirical research, defines teamwork as: collective contribution of professionals that share decision making, solve problems to achieve the best performance, share objectives and are held collectively accountable for the results.

According to D'Amour et al.⁵ and Martin-Rodrigues et al.⁴ the concepts of teamwork depends on the understanding of its determinants. These determinants include the interaction factors, which are related to the interpersonal relationship between the team members; the organizational factors referring to work conditions within the institutions, and the systemic factors that are the elements outside the work institutions such as the cultural, educational and professional systems. According to such determinants, the predisposition for interprofessional work may configure the teams with different integration levels on daily health care settings.^{5,12,19,20}

Based on the above, the question of this review is: 'What is the experience and shared meaning of interprofessional collaboration and teamwork in primary health care to healthcare professionals?' The objective of this systematic review is to explore the experience and shared meaning of interprofessional collaboration and teamwork in primary health care to healthcare professionals. In searches done on Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI), Cochrane Library, The Campbell Collaboration Library, Ovid SP and Bandolier, no previous or ongoing systematic reviews were identified on the subject of interest of this review.

This review aims to determine the experience and meaning of teamwork and interdisciplinary collaboration, and to propose a teamwork definition for primary healthcare professionals; to contribute with the extension of strict accuracy on research of the theme; to advance the development of research, and to consolidate such modality of work in the primary healthcare services.

KEYWORDS

Teamwork; Health Care Professionals; Primary Health Care

INCLUSION CRITERIA

Types of participants

The populations to be included are all officially regulated health professionals that work in primary health settings: Dentistry, medicine, midwives, nursing, nutrition, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physical education, physiotherapy, psychology, social workers, speech therapy. It will also include a community health worker, nursing assistants, licensed practical nursing and other allied health workers.

Phenomena of interest

The phenomena of interest is to investigate experiences and the meaning of teamwork in the primary healthcare settings.

Context

The context is Primary Health Care settings, that include health care centers, health maintenance organizations, national health surgery, integrative medicine practices, integrative health care, family practices, primary care organizations and family medical clinics.

Types of studies

This review will consider studies that focus on qualitative data including, but not limited to, designs such as phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, action research and feminist research.

SEARCH STRATEGY

The search strategy aims to find both published and unpublished studies. A three-step search strategy will be utilized in this review. An initial limited search of MEDLINE and CINAHL will be undertaken followed by the text words contained in the title and abstract, and of the index terms used to describe article. A second search using all identified keywords and index terms will then be undertaken across all included databases. Thirdly, the reference list of all identified reports and articles will be searched for additional studies. Studies published in English, Portuguese, Spanish and French will be considered for inclusion in this review. Studies published between 1980 and 2014 will be considered for inclusion in this review. This period is justified by previous research made by our research group, in this scoping study the first study was published in 1980.

The databases to be searched include:

- Web of Science
- Scopus
- CINAHL
- PsycInfo
- Embase
- Eric
- Pubmed (included Medline)
- Lilacs
- ScienceDirect
- Google Scholar

Initial keywords to be used will be:

Primary Health care Professionals

Patient Care Team

Health Personnel

Multidisciplinary Care Team

Interprofessional team

Experience

Perception

Meaning

Conceptions

Understandings

Teamwork

Collaboration

Interprofessional Collaboration

Primary Health Care

Community Health Center

Primary Health Care Settings

Health Centers

ASSESSMENT OF METHODOLOGICAL QUALITY

Papers selected for retrieval will be assessed by two independent reviewers for methodological validity prior to inclusion in the review using standardized critical appraisal instruments from the Joanna Briggs Institute Qualitative Assessment and Review Instrument (JBI-QARI) (Appendix I). Any disagreements that arise between the reviewers will be resolved through discussion, or with a third reviewer.

DATA COLLECTION

Data will be extracted from papers included in the review using the standardized data extraction tool from JBI-QARI (Appendix II). The data extracted will include specific details about the phenomena of interest, populations, study methods and outcomes of significance to the review question and specific objectives.

DATA SYNTHESIS

Qualitative research findings will, where possible be pooled using JBI-QARI. This will involve the aggregation or synthesis of findings to generate a set of statements that represent that aggregation, through assembling the findings rated according to their quality, and categorizing these findings on the basis of similarity in meaning. These categories are then subjected to a meta-synthesis in order to produce a single comprehensive set of synthesized findings that can be used as a basis for evidence-based practice. Where textual pooling is not possible the findings will be presented in narrative form.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None identified

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APPENDIX I: APPRAISAL INSTRUMENTS

QARI appraisal instrument

JBI QARI Critical Appraisal Checklist for Interpretive & Critical Research

Reviewer Date

Author Year Record Number

	Yes	No	Unclear	Not Applicable
1. Is there congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the research question or objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the methods used to collect data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the representation and analysis of data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is there congruity between the research methodology and the interpretation of results?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is there a statement locating the researcher culturally or theoretically?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is the influence of the researcher on the research, and vice-versa, addressed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Are participants, and their voices, adequately represented?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Is the research ethical according to current criteria or, for recent studies, and is there evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Do the conclusions drawn in the research report flow from the analysis, or interpretation, of the data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall appraisal: <input type="checkbox"/> Include <input type="checkbox"/> Exclude <input type="checkbox"/> Seek further info. <input type="checkbox"/>				
Comments (including reason for exclusion)				
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.....				

APPENDIX II: DATA EXTRACTION INSTRUMENTS

QARI data extraction instrument

JBI QARI Data Extraction Form for Interpretive & Critical Research

Reviewer Date

Author Year

Journal Record Number

Study Description

Methodology

Method

Phenomena of interest

Setting

Geographical

Cultural

Participants

Data analysis

Authors Conclusions

Comments

Complete Yes No

Findings	Illustration from Publication (page number)	Evidence		
		Unequivocal	Credible	Unsupported

Extraction of findings complete Yes No