

Embracing Complexity: A Framework to Advance Collaborative Health Care Culture



CHSRF/CIHR Chair Program in
Advanced Practice Nursing

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THE ISSUE

Collaboration among team members within the context of healthcare is not well understood. Healthcare leaders have identified inter-professional collaboration (IPC) as a key strategy to address complexity of care issues and health services improvement. Yet, despite the importance of IPC, the advancement of collaborative practice continues to face many barriers and challenges.

THE PURPOSE

To report on the development of a new framework that theorizes the nature of collaboration among healthcare team members, the “Collaborative Health Care Culture Framework”.

What did we do?

Participatory action research (PAR) in addition to an extensive literature review was used to examine the effects of collaboration on role integration involving 17 NPs from two different health authorities in British Columbia. NPs were invited to engage in 5-6 research meetings over a 6 month period. Research meetings took the form of face-to face NP group encounters and the meetings were audio-taped and transcribed for data analysis. The information gathered contributed to the development of the collaborative culture framework.

What did we find?

The attainment and sustainability of collaboration and its desired outcomes in healthcare is multidimensional. In this study collaboration is understood from an ecological perspective, in that collaboration is both influenced by and influences a wide range of factors operating within a multi-level system. In this way, collaboration is viewed as both a philosophy and practice. As a philosophy, collaboration refers to egalitarian leadership with vision and resources to shape organization culture to enable teams to provide quality care. As a practice, collaboration signifies the dynamic efforts of teams to engage in mutual knowledge sharing, decision-making, and accountability for the delivery of client-centred care, and thus actualize the organizations vision.

How will this research help?

The ecological framework maps parameters for policy and decision makers, healthcare leaders and researchers, and teams and practitioners to begin to assess the current status of collaborative culture.

What's next?

Researchers are currently involved in developing a team improvement scale based on the framework and testing its psychometric properties. Further research is needed to validate the frameworks utility as a guide to both research and practice.

BOTTOM LINE

Collaboration in health care is a complex matter. The Collaborative Health Care Culture framework is a tool that can be used to better understand the multifaceted nature of collaboration and to help guide strategies to improve collaboration and thereby advance collaborative culture

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

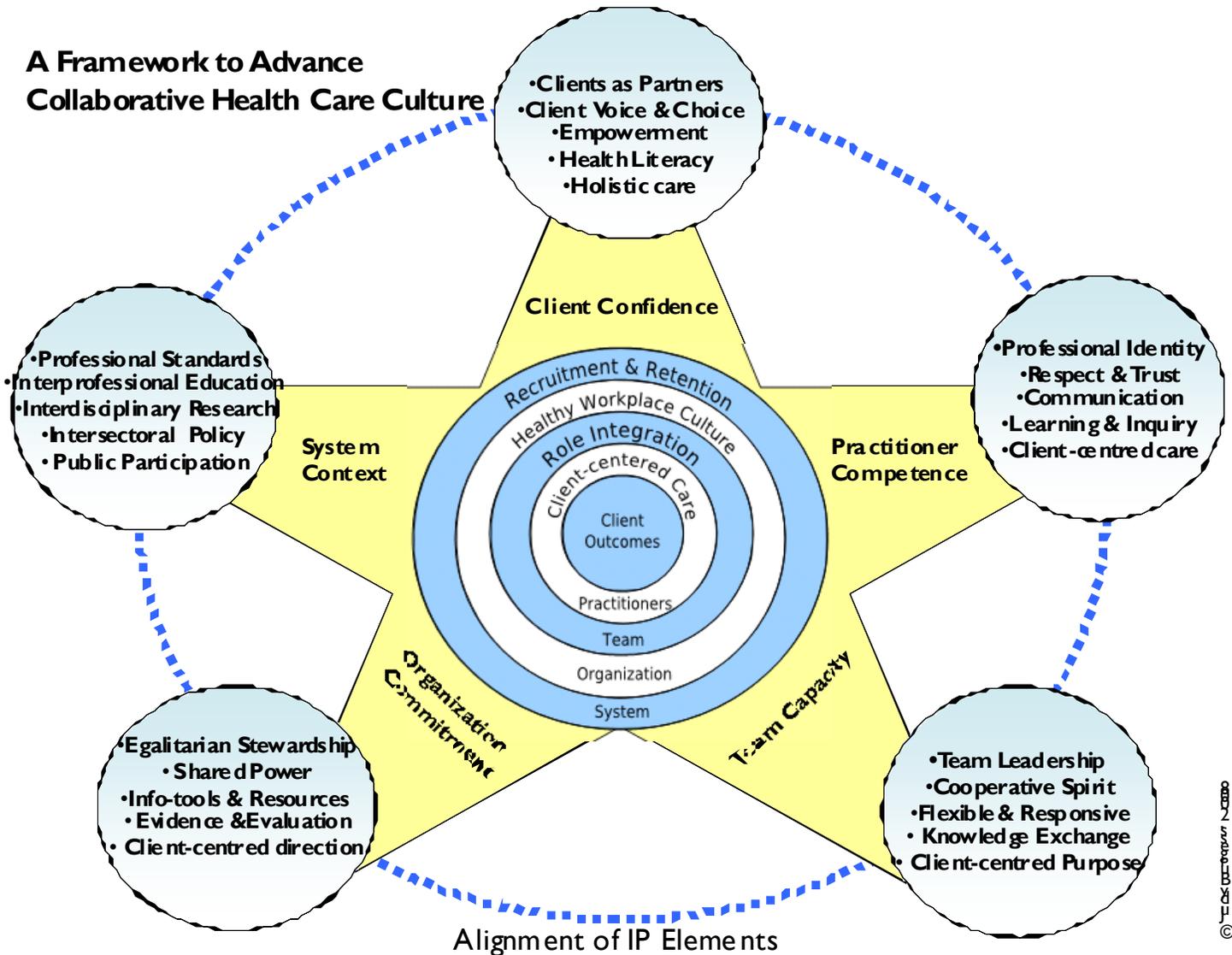
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