

# “Who is on my team?”

Insiders' perspective from primary healthcare

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# Acknowledgement

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This study is part of a larger research project that:

1. Looks at primary care team members' cognitive requirements in patient care
2. Designs an EHR interface to support these requirements

# Overview

- **Objective:** to understand how professionals working in primary care clinics define their 'teams'
- **Methods:** qualitative content analysis with interview data from 5 clinics
- **Findings:** 6 major categories in team definition; variation in frequency of each category being mentioned

# Why important?

- Lack of clear definition of primary care teams

creates **barriers** for...

- Clinicians and teams
- Health IT designers
- Clinic managers
- Human Factors Engineers
- Consultants
- Researchers

# Background

- Primary care is highly complex yet crucial in the US healthcare system
- Teamwork is vital in primary care
  - Members brought on the team for various reasons
  - Complication & variation in team membership
- Uncertainty in insiders' definition of a 'primary care team'



# Research Question

'How do primary care professionals define their teams?'



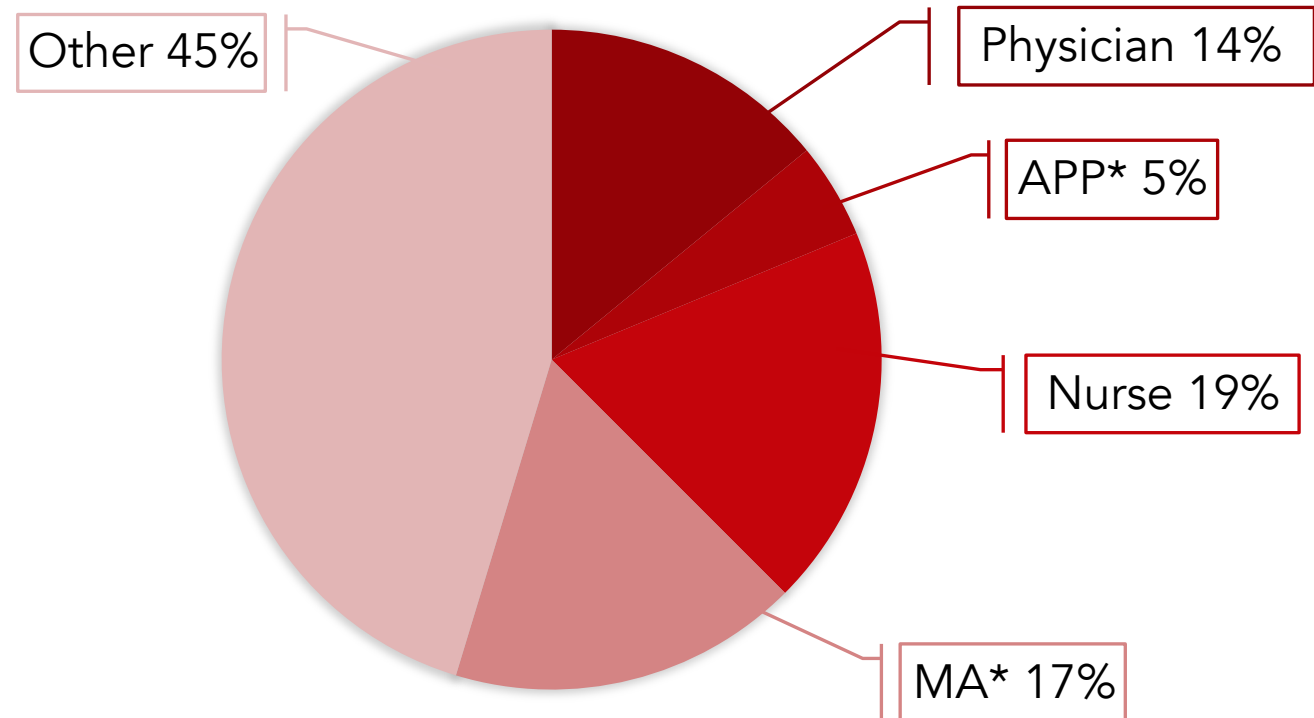
# Sampling

## 5 Midwestern Clinics

Various in size, location, team structure, etc.



## Participants N = 64



\* APP = Advanced Practice Providers; MA = Medical Assistants

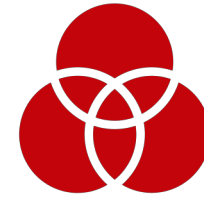
# Methods



Observations



Interviews



Qualitative content  
analysis



# Methods



## Observations

### Core team\*

- 3 hrs
- Tandem observation

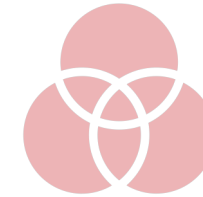
### Others

- 1.5 hrs
- Individual observation

\* Core team: including Physicians, APPs, Nurses and MAs



## Interviews



## Qualitative content analysis

# Methods

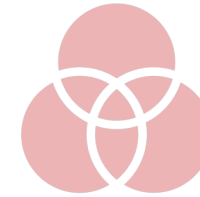


Observations



Interviews

- Background
- "Who is your care team that provides care to patient?"
- Goals
- Cognitive requirements



Qualitative content  
analysis

# Methods

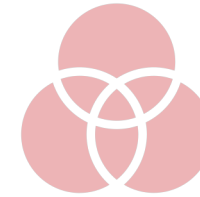


Observations



Interviews

- Background
- "Who is your care team that provides care to patient?"
- Goals
- Information requirements



Qualitative content  
analysis

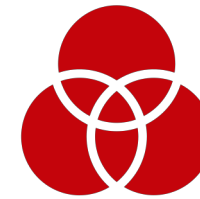
# Methods



Observations



Interviews



## Qualitative content analysis

- Directed analysis
- List of original categories from the literature
- Updated categories from data
- 2 independent coders

# Findings

6 main categories in team definition

- Assignment
- Collaboration
- Co-location
- Size
- Schedule
- Relationship

# Findings

6 main categories in team definition

- **Assignment**

Teams assigned by the clinic,  
e.g. Clinician with rooming MA

- Collaboration

- Co-location

- Size

- Schedule

- Relationship

# Findings

6 main categories in team definition

- Assignment
- **Collaboration**  
Voluntarily working with others as a team,  
e.g. Physician working with Health Educator
- Co-location
- Size
- Schedule
- Relationship

# Findings

6 main categories in team definition

- Assignment
- Collaboration
- **Co-location**  
Viewing someone as a team member because they share a physical space,  
e.g. All people working in the same clinic
- Size
- Schedule
- Relationship



# Findings

6 main categories in team definition

- Assignment
- Collaboration
- Co-location
- **Size**  
Limiting the number of people on the team,  
e.g. 'Close team' vs. 'Distant team'
- Schedule
- Relationship

# Findings

6 main categories in team definition

- Assignment
- Collaboration
- Co-location
- Size
- **Schedule**  
Team members depending on work schedule  
e.g. "Whoever working that day is my team"
- Relationship

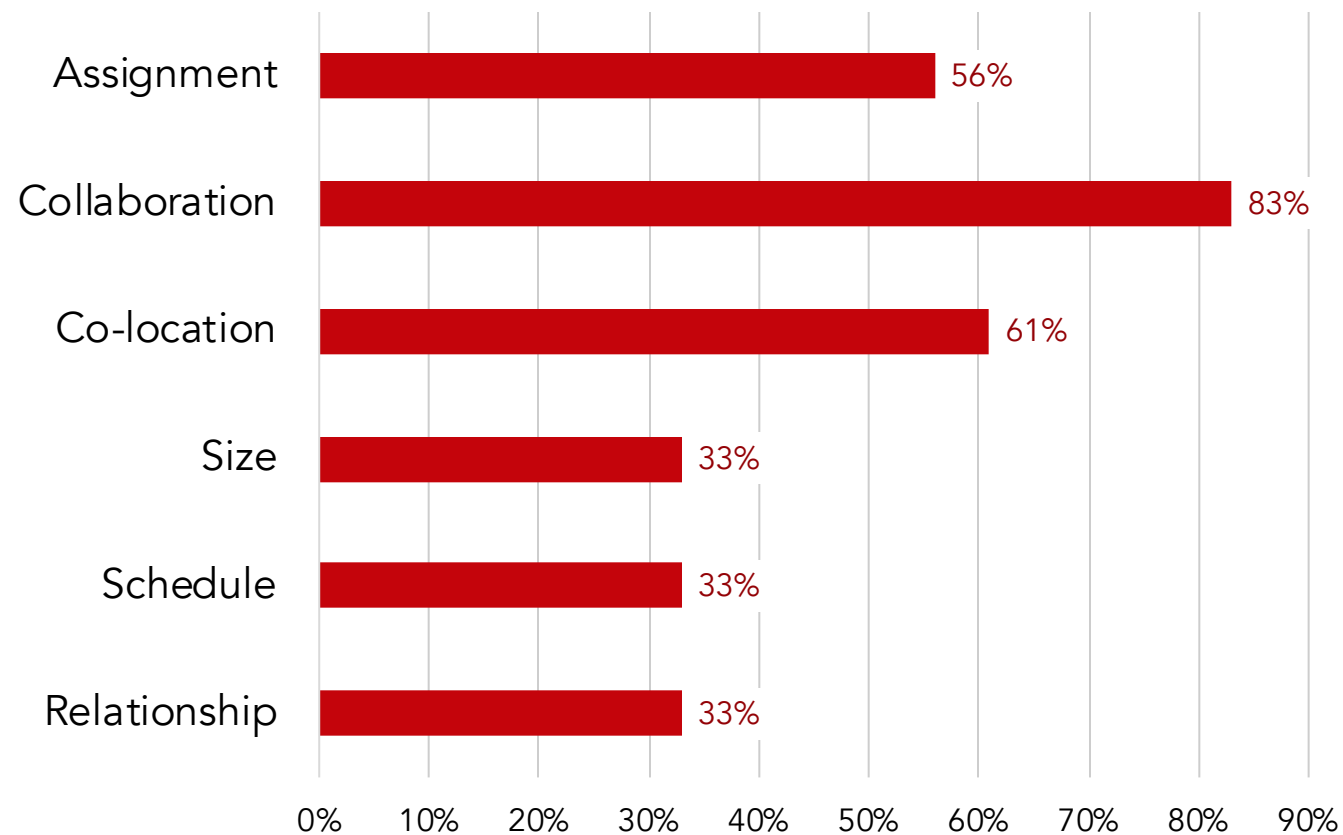
# Findings

6 main categories in team definition

- Assignment
- Collaboration
- Co-location
- Size
- Schedule
- **Relationship**  
Personal relationship makes it feel like a team,  
e.g. Appreciation of other team members

# Findings

How many participants mentioned  
each category



# Discussion

Implied in the literature...

- Team members share the **same** team definition

Findings from our study...

- Team members hold **different** team definitions

# Discussion

## Implied in the literature...

- Team members share the same team definition
- Team membership can be easily **assigned**

## Findings from our study...

- Team members hold different team definitions
- Only **half** of participants **have & agree** with their team assignments

# Discussion

## Implied in the literature...

- Team members share the same team definition
- Team membership can be easily assigned
- Patient/family are **part of** their own care team

## Findings from our study...

- Team members hold different team definitions
- Only half of participants have & agree with their team assignments
- **No participant mentioned** patient/family as part of team

- A 'primary care team' should be carefully defined & understood
  - Clinic function, e.g. scheduling
  - Clinic management
  - Designing
  - Research
  - Consulting

# Implications



- A 'primary care team' should be carefully defined
- More help is needed by the primary care professionals to involve patients/family
  - Promote shared decision-making
  - Mitigate burn-out
  - Patient satisfaction

# Implications

- A 'primary care team' should be carefully defined
- More help is needed by the primary care professionals to involve patients/family
- In-person communication is still preferred than via health IT
  - Time consuming
  - Difficulty in use
  - Gaps between different health IT products

# Implications

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Extra slides

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# Initial categories

- Shared goals<sup>[6]</sup>
- Shared task/equipment<sup>[7]</sup>
- Frequency of interaction/communication<sup>[8]</sup>
- Structure<sup>[8]</sup>
- Assigned roles<sup>[8]</sup>
- Interpersonal relationship<sup>[9]</sup>
- Co-location: "Pod"<sup>[10]</sup>