“Who is on my team?”

Insiders’ perspective from primary healthcare

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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
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
- Unclarity 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

- Other 45%
- Physician 14%
- APP* 5%
- Nurse 19%
- MA* 17%

* 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

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

Interviews

Qualitative content analysis
Methods

Interviews

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

- Assignment: 56%
- Collaboration: 83%
- Co-location: 61%
- Size: 33%
- Schedule: 33%
- Relationship: 33%
Implied in the literature…

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

Findings from our study…

- Team members hold **different** team definitions
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
• 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
- 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
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Extra slides
References


Initial categories

- Shared goals
- Shared task/equipment
- Frequency of interaction/communication
- Structure
- Assigned roles
- Interpersonal relationship
- Co-location: “Pod”