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Conference Abstract

The impact of organisational culture on integrated care

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Abstract

Introduction and Theory: Collaborative arrangements across healthcare providers aiming to improve integration of care are receiving increasing attention by scholars and policymakers alike. Organisational culture is believed to bear an important influence on inter-provider collaboration and thus on the possibility to improve integration of care. However, limited understanding still exists with regard to whether culture affects the level of integrated care as perceived by the patients and if so, which type of organisational culture is most beneficial. Existing studies adopt a predefined expectation of how culture should impact on integrated care. However, empirical insights into which type of organisational culture actually corresponds with which degree of integrated care provided are still missing.

Method: A case-study was performed within a primary care centre in the region of South-Limburg, The Netherlands. In a mixed method approach qualitative data was acquired by means of 15 semi-structured interviews with healthcare professionals (16 hours of recorded material). To measure organisational culture on provider level we used the Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), which was administered to 40 healthcare professionals. To assess the level of integrated care provided on patient-level the Patient Perception of Integrated Care Survey (PPIC) was sent to 550 patients.

Results: Preliminary results reveal that the organisation agrees on a set of values that guide members' actions and that emphasise collaboration and innovation. All providers that were interviewed stated that the core value of their organisation is to provide high quality of care through collaborative efforts between different healthcare professionals. While these values are carried at collective level, individual freedom is emphasised in the way members conduct their work to facilitate innovative behaviour. Organisational members are free to experiment with new practices and innovative approaches. Once, however, an approach proves to be successful it spreads to other members of the organisation.

Discussion and Conclusion: Against prior ideas, that a high degree of integrated care requires a homogenous culture, our results show that some degree of heterogeneity is required to preserve the multidisciplinary input necessary in delivering integrated care. While some degree of homogeneity provides the framework in which collaboration can take place, stimulating heterogeneity enriches the organisational culture and facilitates innovative behaviour.

Keywords

organisational culture, integrated care, primary care

Powerpoint presentation:

<http://www.integratedcarefoundation.org/content/thinking-differently-relationships-social-capital-and-integrated-care>
