

How do Public Health Nurses Experience Interprofessional Collaboration with Primary Care Providers in Northern B.C.?

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Public Health Nurse

A Registered Nurse that:

- Focuses on promoting, protecting, and preserving the health of populations.
- Links individual/family health to the health of populations.
- Practices in diverse settings, such as community health centres, schools, street clinics, youth centres, and nursing outposts.



(Canadian Public Health Association, 2010).

Primary Care Provider

- A health care provider that:
- Is a patient's first point of contact with the health care system.
 - Screens, diagnoses, treats, and manages illnesses.
 - Makes referrals to specialists.
 - Promotes health through regular check-ups.

(Kingston-Reichers et al., 2010)

In this study: Family physicians and nurse practitioners.



Study Context: The Northern Health Region of B.C.



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Practice Perspective: Collaborating

How can we support this mom and baby?



Another STI successfully treated!



Practice Perspective: Struggling to Collaborate

How I can work with the Primary Care Provider on this?



Interprofessional Collaboration

"An inter-professional process for communication and decision making that enables the separate and shared knowledge and skills of care providers to synergistically influence the client/patient care provided."

(Way, Jones, & Busing, 2000, p. 3).



Literature Review Findings

Public health nurse practice is thought to be:

- Continually shifting (Falk-Rapahel & Betker, 2012).
- Influenced by the practice context and other forces in health care and society (Ulrich, 2001).
- Actively shaped by public health nurses (Falk-Rapahel & Betker, 2012; Ulrich, 2001).
- In northern B.C. practice may be characterized by a generalist scope, roles and responsibilities that require flexibility and adaptability, and personal and professional community involvement (Bosnie et al., 2010; Lepert, 1999; Moulton et al., 2010).
- Community size may be an important factor influencing public health nurses' experience of collaboration (Clancy et al., 2013).
- Public health nurses may have less positive relationships with physicians than other community health nurses (Underwood et al., 2009).
- Nurse-physician collaborations may be characterized by power, control, and gender issues (Falk-Rapahel & Betker, 2012; Lepert, 1999; Nugus et al., 2010; Schadeewald et al., 2013).

Methods

- Qualitative approach.
- Interpretive description (Thorne, 2008).
- In depth interviews with 10-12 public health nurses.
- Responses analyzed to discover themes that characterize public health nurses' experience of collaboration with primary care providers.
- Meaning of experience will be interpreted and conveyed.



Conclusion: Significance

Understanding how public health nurses collaborate with primary care providers will inform:

- Provider practice.
- Future efforts to increase the effectiveness of collaborative practice.
- Health policy, administration, and the delivery of integrated services.



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