

Does effective team work lead to better health outcomes?

Nurses in General Practice **Joint APNA/GPDV Workshop**

27 August 2004

Robina Bradley
National Institute of Clinical Studies



TURNING EVIDENCE INTO ACTION



Issues addressed in this session

- Roles and functions of teams
- The evidence for effective team working and links to health outcomes
- What is your role in supporting evidence uptake in a practice setting as part of the team?



National Institute of Clinical Studies

- About NICS
- Our work program – **bridging the knowing doing gap**
- How could we most be of help to practice nurses



What is a team?

A team is a group of individuals who work together to produce products or deliver services for which they are mutually accountable. Team members:

- share goals
- are mutually accountable for meeting them
- are interdependent in their accomplishment, and
- they affect results through their interactions with each other.

Because the team is collectively accountable, the work of integrating with one another is included among the responsibilities of the team members.

Mohrman, Cohen & Mohrman (1995) Designing team based organisations. London Jossey Bass



Models of teamwork

- Varying definitions and terms
 - Multidisciplinary?
 - Interdisciplinary?
- Varying roles and complexity
 - Ambiguous compared to acute sector
- Example of successful teams
 - Emergency department triage teams



The evidence

- Teamwork is beneficial
 - e.g. chronic/complex illness
- Overseas research has identified a number of organisational factors which result in both sustained improvement in QOC and health outcomes for people with chronic illness

Wagner E H. Chronic Disease Management: what will it take to improve care for chronic illness? Effective Clinical Practice 1998 (1) :2-4



However

- There is also evidence to suggest that team leaders make a difference to team performance.

and

- Team leader decisions and behaviours influence almost every variable associated with team effectiveness.

Tannenbaum, Salas & Canon-Bowers (1996)



So

- Who should the team leader be?
- What is it that we are after?
 - Is it upgrading skills?
 - Substitution of roles within the team or
 - Is it delegation of care?
 - More efficient use of resources
 - Adding value to patient care



Role for practice nurses in evidence uptake

- Burden of chronic/complex illness is rising
- Workforce shortages in health, particularly primary care
- Greater consumer demands on evidence based practice
- Practice nurses can drive quality improvement



How would you do this

- Create a body of evidence regarding your area of clinical practice – e.g. clinical guidelines, Cochrane Library
- Identify the issues/barriers for your practice
- Identify available, effective methods for changing practice locally
- Stimulate change – assume a lead role and use examples of best practice
- Evaluate effectiveness of interventions – (continuous) evaluation and (where necessary) adapt roles



“The definition of insanity is continuing to do the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.”

Albert Einstein