



Preferences of future health professionals regarding interprofessional collaboration in outpatient healthcare – a protocol of an innovative, experimental and prospective approach

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Format & Type

Oral, Scientific

Background

Interprofessional collaboration between health service providers contribute to better patient care and efficiency gains. In Switzerland, despite the political strategy to improve coordination and integrated healthcare, the lack of interprofessional collaboration in outpatient healthcare practice persists. Scientific evidence suggests that the health professionals' willingness to take responsibility is a precondition for interprofessional collaboration. However, in Switzerland it is not articulated how responsibility should be shared and how power differentials, historically entrenched in the medical profession, should be managed. While physicians already assume the majority of responsibility with regard to decision-making, the other health professionals bear less responsibility. There is lacking evidence on the association between the willingness of health professionals to take responsibility for decision-making in healthcare and their willingness to collaborate interprofessionally. In addition, there is no evidence on how these two factors may vary between occupational groups.

Research Question / Aim

This study aims to analyse the association between the willingness of health professionals to take responsibility for decision-making in healthcare and their willingness to collaborate interprofessionally. In addition, it will be analysed how this association varies between occupational groups. Recommendations will be given to policy makers on the development of future outpatient healthcare models and for the relevant curricula and educational framework in the health sector.

Method / Procedure

For this cross-sectional study around 2'800, general practitioners, pharmacists, nurses, physiotherapists, and medical practice assistants working in primary outpatient healthcare in Switzerland will be surveyed online. A conjoint experiment based on short descriptions of patient case studies and respective questions regarding the acceptance/sharing of responsibility for decision-making as first contact person, as examining and treating person and as case management/coordination person will be used to assess the health professionals' willingness to take responsibility for decision-making in healthcare. Moreover, the survey will include questions concerning the status quo and self-perceived attitudes towards interprofessional collaboration. In addition, sociodemographic, educational, and occupational characteristics will be measured. Data analysis will include bivariate descriptive analysis and multiple regression analyses.

Results

Not yet available.

Discussion

Not yet available.



Conclusion

By highlighting the health professionals' willingness to take responsibility for decision-making in primary care and their willingness to collaborate interprofessionally, this study will provide a solid framework for the further development of outpatient healthcare models with regard to improved coordination and integration in Switzerland. This study will show to what extent a changed distribution of responsibility could contribute to the implementation of interprofessional collaboration in outpatient primary care settings.