

Partnering for Change: Engaging Municipal Leaders in Primary Health Care Transformation

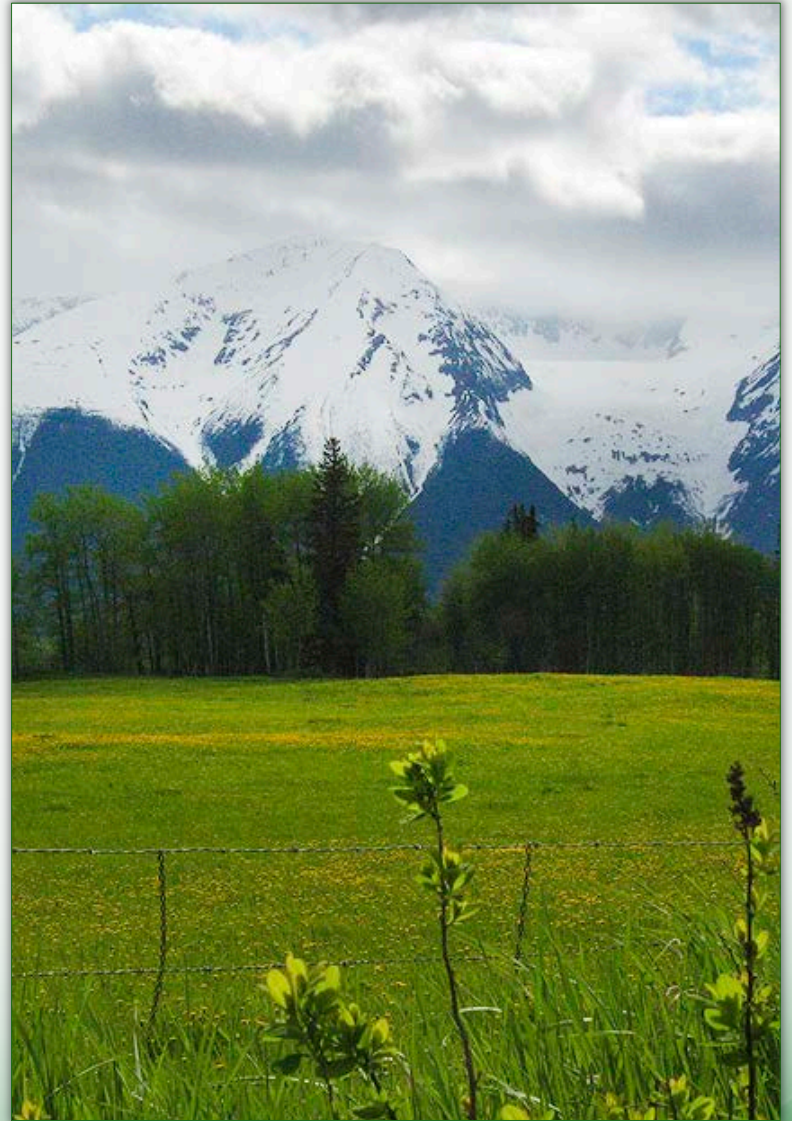
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Funded by: Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Operating Grant: 2011-2015

Engaging in Partnerships: Doing Partnered Research



Implementing NH Vision

Innovation:

- A system of integrated health services built on a foundation of primary care in a large northern geographical health authority region.

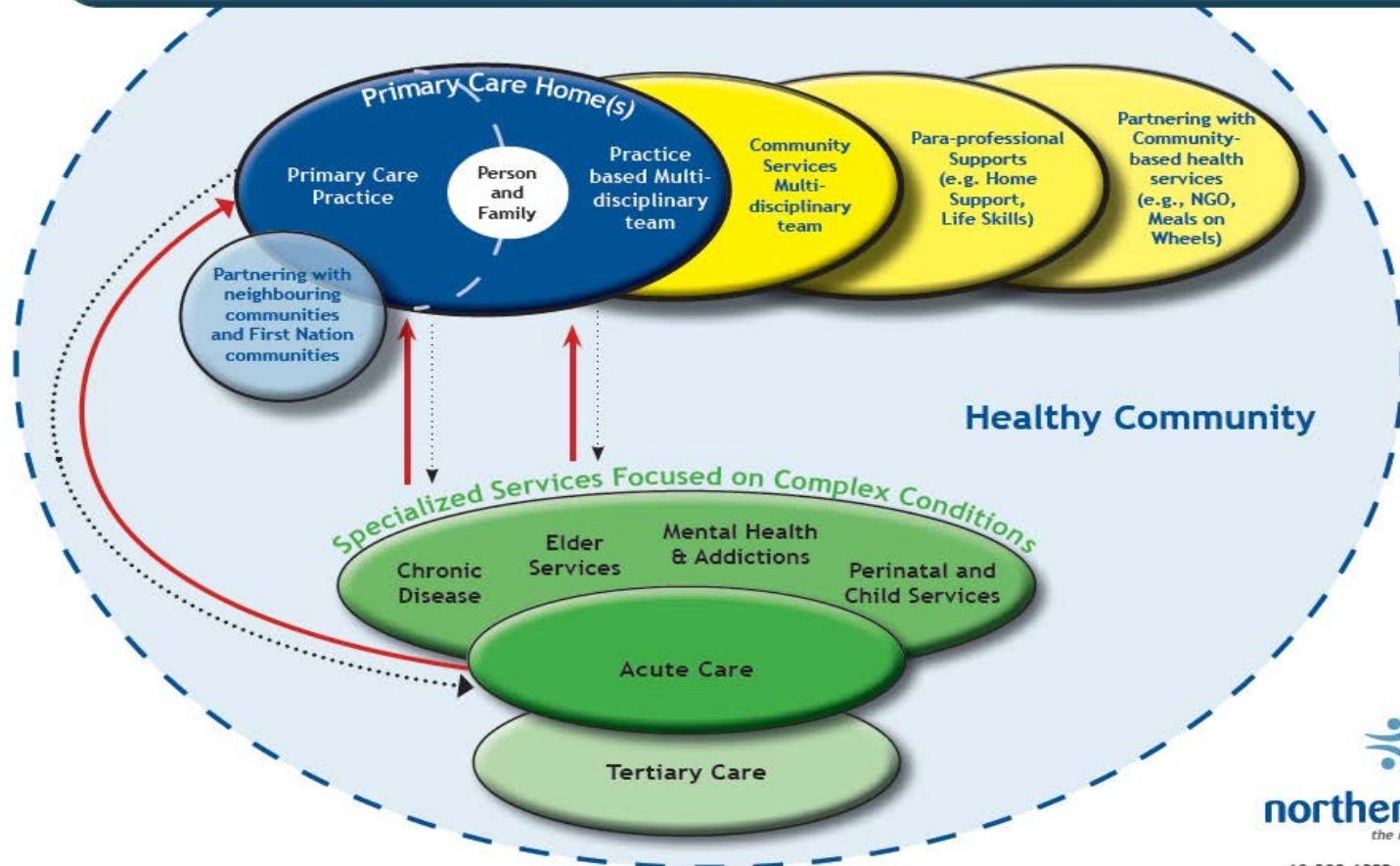
Features of the Innovation:

- A whole systems approach – with physicians, Health Authority and communities
- Influencing change in partners that are external but linked to the work of the Health Authority

Idealized Northern Health System of Services Working Framework for Larger Community

Partnering to Build a Healthy Community

- Municipalities, Regional Districts, First Nations, School Districts
- Healthy communities, Healthy families, Healthy schools, Healthy workplaces, Healthy public policy
- Partnered initiatives with communities, industries, workplaces, school districts, etc.



Studying the Processes of Change

To understand how networks of partners can be engaged to improve primary health care (PHC) at community and regional levels across Northern BC.



Research Questions

- How can relationship-building and networking bring about system change?
- What facilitates or hinders networking and partnering?
- What are the implications for partners who are involved in PHC transformation?
- What information can support efforts to realign health care?

Methods

- Multiple case study over four years (2011-2015)
- 7 communities:
 - Burns Lake
 - Fort St. John
 - Fraser Lake
 - Mackenzie
 - Prince George
 - Prince Rupert
 - Valemount
- In-depth interviews conducted each year in each community and regionally
- Examination of documents such as minutes of meetings, health system data and the results of health authority evaluations
- Themes from analysis brought back to knowledge users at Northern Health and community members for discussion and further input

Participants

		Year 1 2012	Year 2 2013	Year 3 2014
Regional Interviews	Total	21	26	28
NH Board and Executive		9	11	10
NH Administrators and Directors		12	15	18
Community Interviews	Total	58	50	53
NH Staff and Care Providers		33	30	32
Physicians		9	5	6
Community Organizations/Municipal Leaders		16	15	15
Overall Total		79	76	81

A Focus on Municipal Leaders

- What does partnering with Northern Health mean for municipal leaders?
- How does partnering with municipal leaders contribute to PHC development and fostering healthy communities?

Working with Municipalities on PHC - 1

- 2009: Let's Talk About Primary Health Care
 - Gave residents of Northern BC information on improved primary health care and NH heard what it means to them and their communities.
 - Discussed health and health services in the context of primary health care improvement.
 - Listened to, recorded and reported on participants' health concerns, hopes and ideas.

Working with Municipalities on PHC - 2

- September, 2010 - Dialogue on Improving Health: Workshop with Communities - held at the time of UBCM - Whistler
- Partnering for Healthy Communities (P4HC)
- October 2011 - Regional Congress - Prince George
- April, 2013 - Mayors and Municipal Councillors share what it takes to build healthy communities as well as what it takes to work in partnership - Smithers

Mobilized Political Leadership

- Who are the leaders? “People who can move a community in a direction”.
- When you have political commitment you can move forward in an effective partnership.
- “And the mayor phoned up the other leading people [in the community] and said, if I can be involved, you can be involved. So he mobilized the right people in the room.”

An Equitable Relationship

- “Our relationship ... has been superb. They’re really looking at ways to problem solve as opposed to not collaborating. So I value that relationship, because it feels equitable.”
- “People such as Charles Jago and Cathy Ulrich are approachable. When you get hold of NH somebody gets back to you. Also at the local level. And there’s a willingness to share information.”
- “A shared responsibility” for a healthy community

Partnering: In Progress

- “We’re firefighters” Responding to “small fire storms” vs. longer term planning for health
- Physician shortage as a focus of and impetus for partnering
- Addressing local needs while achieving regional goals
 - Giving up some autonomy to get to improved services and healthier communities
- Achieving multiple purposes by people in multiple roles vs. Engaging different publics in different roles for different purposes

Developing Partnership

- Development is not linear:
 - Year 1: “we’re coming together at respective tables”
 - Year 2: “gathering together all of the information”; “this work helps myself and others speak to my colleagues (mayor and councillors) about the value of the programs.”
 - Year 3: “If it is not our responsibility, are we facilitating any action to try and make sure that somebody becomes responsible? It is having conversations and forming partnerships with organizations like NH and saying how do we work together?”

Evolving Patterns of Relationships

- Information sharing (one way sharing between sectors)
- Cooperation (interaction between sectors to optimize resources – formalize work relationships)
- Coordination (adjust policies & programs of each sector to increase horizontal networking among sectors)
- Integration (new policy or program systematically integrates administrative processes, resources, responsibilities & actions) (Solar & Irwin, 2007; Rantala et al., 2014)

Conclusion: NH and Municipalities Beyond Information Sharing

- Municipalities' relationships with Northern Health – Cooperation and Coordination
- Policies and programs increasingly aligned
- Goal and outcomes - Improved:
 - Physician presence
 - Health services
 - Healthy communities

Lessons Learned - Partnering for Change and Research

1. Engage the right decision-makers and researchers
2. Determine what's in it for you and for them
3. Develop a sustained relationship
4. Live in their world once in a while
5. Think of doing your research differently
6. Build integrative research structures

Questions?

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