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POSTER ABSTRACT

The role of health care professionals in collaboration in primary health care

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Background: Research into the interventions of multidisciplinary collaboration within primary care often show limited effects on outcomes for patients. However, a feeling of urgency, involvement and perceived (dis-) advantages of professionals seem essential intermediates for success.

This paper focuses on the relatively unexplored relationship between those health care professionals' experiences and outcomes of multidisciplinary collaboration in primary care.

Methods: Longitudinal data was collected among professionals that were involved in 69 primary care collaboration projects. Professionals were asked to rate the feeling of urgency to collaborate, their involvement and the experienced (dis-)advantages at the beginning and end of the project (T1 and T2). Outcome variables are (1) quality of care changes, as perceived by professionals at T1 and T2, and (2) success of the project, as perceived by project leaders at (T2). To account for the hierarchical structure of the data a logistic multilevel analysis was used.

Results: A higher perceived quality of care was reached when a feeling of urgency was felt and advantages in collaboration were seen by professionals at both T1 and T2. Perceived disadvantages of the collaboration at T1 resulted in a lower perceived quality of care according to professionals. However, these determinants appear not to be related to project success .

Discussion: While collaboration in primary care is often initiated by managers and policy makers, our study shows that the executing professionals are important in achieving quality of care. Professionals' perceptions are therefore important for this aspect of collaboration projects.

Keywords: professionals; inter-organisational collaboration; outcome
