

The Implementation of Emerging Professional Roles on Healthcare Teams

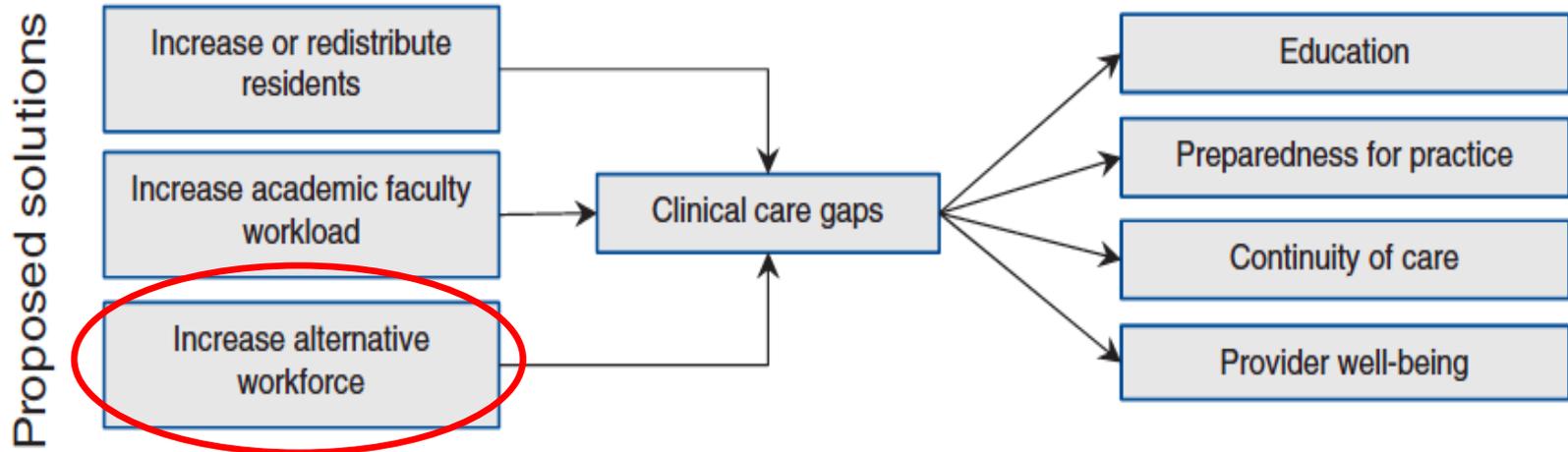
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Background

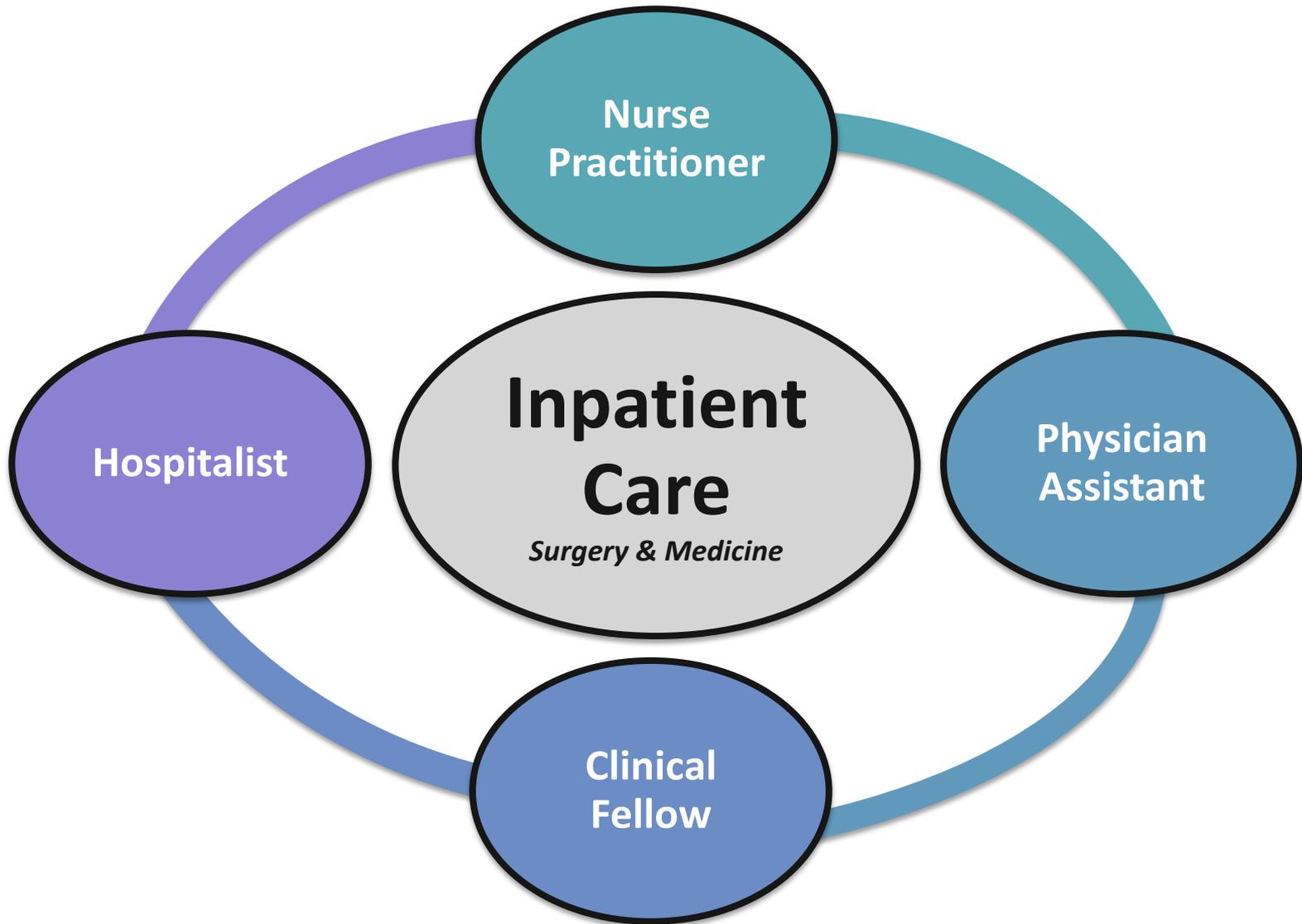


Wu, P.E., Stroud, L., McDonald-Blumer, H., Wong, B.M. (2014).

Background

- Increased use of **emerging healthcare professionals**, also known as “physician-extendenders” or “alternative providers.”
- Largely due to a reduced resident workforce (duty hours restriction, redistribution, cuts) and health care professional funding changes

Four key “emerging” groups



How are nurse practitioners, physician assistants, hospitalists, and clinical fellows integrated into inpatient care at a large Canadian academic hospital?

Methodology

Literature Review



Stakeholder Interviews
(n=14)



Thematic Analysis



Development of
Recommendations

Methodology

Design

- Qualitative Interviews (n=14)

Participants

- Purposive and snowball sampling
- Medicine and General Surgery
- Three groups:
 - Health Care Professionals
 - Key Informants/Expert Consultants
 - Hospital Executives

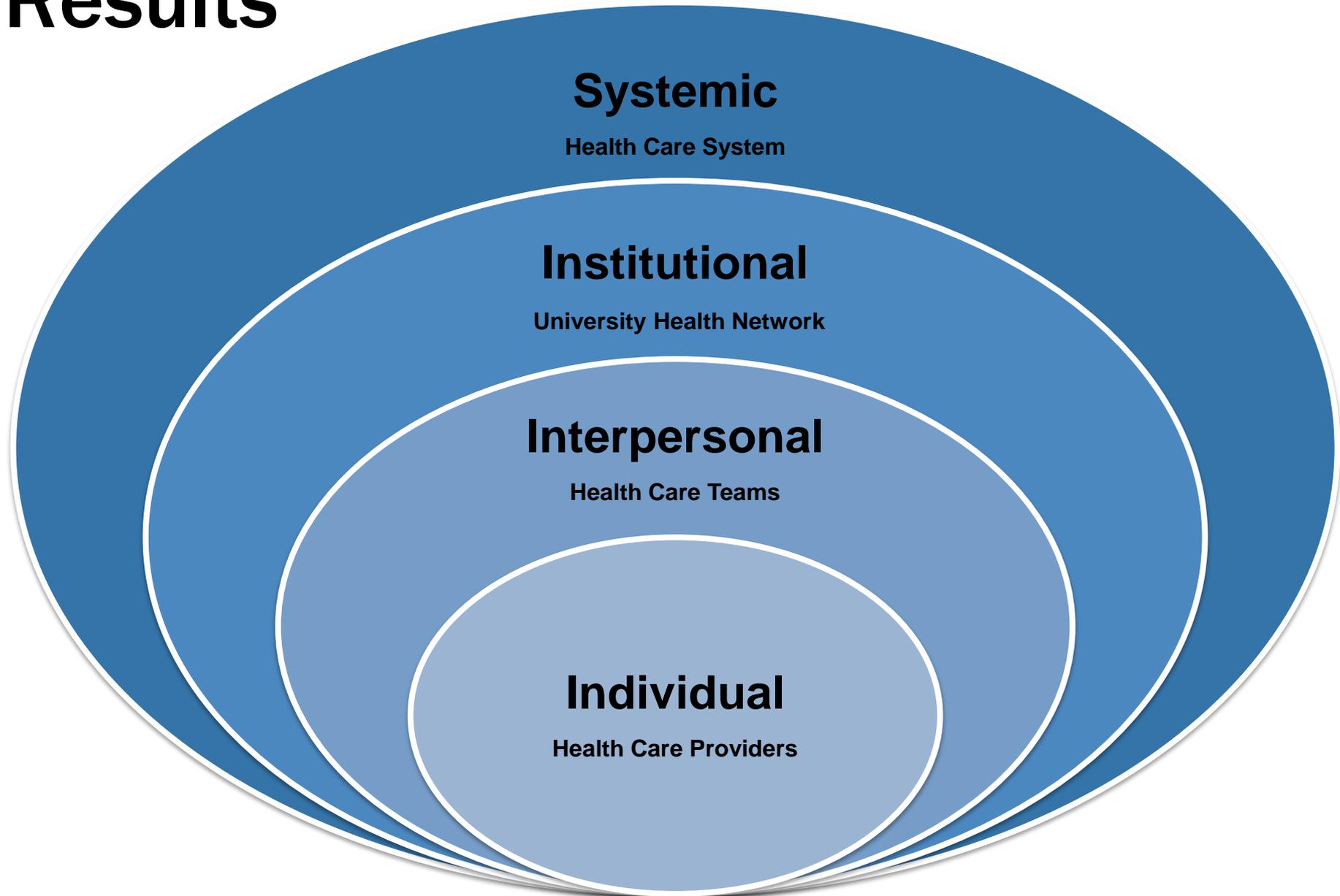
Data Collection

- Semi-structured, open-ended interviews
- Field notes and recordings

Data Analysis

- Content Analysis

Results



Individual

There is unique value in individual health professions

“We are not physicians, we are not physician assistants. We are nurses with extra education and expertise. We come in with a value-add and a holistic view point. I don’t even know if the docs know what we do.” (NP)

Individual

Restricted scope of practice of non-physician practitioners may be affecting patient care

“I wish I could prescribe controlled substances to a degree... I mean we get around that by getting physicians to do it or getting a verbal order. If I have a patient in a lot of pain and it's a day that I'm on my own, I would have to wait for my superior, and that takes time. It is not like I can order it right away, so of course it affects patient care.” (NP)

Interpersonal

Teaching relationships exist that do not follow the traditional hierarchical structure

“When I started I was lost to the system, and [NP] was much more experienced so I didn’t have much to teach [the NP]. (S)he was the one who was helping me with daily non-medical problems to survive in the system.” (Fellow)

Interpersonal

Team tensions are often due to a lack of role clarity, not necessarily role overlap

“It has been challenging because there has been no role clarity of the physician assistant (PA) on the team, because there was no clear role expectation on what this particular individual needed to do within the team. So it led to a lot of confusion: we have this extra person – what do they do?”

(NP)

Interpersonal

Collaborative practice is limited by the need for a Most Responsible Physician (MRP)

“I also am accountable to my staff [physician] and that is who I report off to consistently, but unfortunately staff changes every 2 weeks. The staff overlooks the NPs, fellows and the whole team...the physician runs the team.” (NP)

Institutional

**Health human resource planning is primarily
a financially motivated process**

“The biggest challenge is always money, like in anything else.” (Hospital Executive)

Systemic

The terminology around hospital medicine is ambiguous

“Hospitalist is a very nebulous term with lots of different meanings to it. Some people don’t really like that term at all and prefer the term ‘hospital medicine physician’. Really, hospitalists can be both internal medicine trained or family medicine trained, but in my experience, family medicine physicians are more comfortable with that term and I think internists prefer the term internist.” (Hospitalist)

Implications

1. Institutional education about roles is paramount to their successful integration
2. Institutions should conduct needs assessments prior to hiring health professionals
3. Language around emerging roles must be used clearly and consistently across the health system
4. The expansion of scopes of practice should be a point of larger policy discussion
5. Hierarchical structures in medicine should continue to be challenged

Future Directions

- Phase 2 Research Study (2015 – present)
 - How is this research relevant to other institutions and other health care systems?
 - What are the best practices in hiring, integrating, and retaining the four health professionals?

Questions?