Practice-Based Network Research: A Primer for PIs in Successful Collaboration

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Significance

- Health Care System needs fixing
- After decades of neglect, attention turned to Centrality of Primary Care in effective systems
- Overcommitment to reductionism and specialism requires a balancing dose of integrated knowledge and generalism
Ecology of Medical Care


Limits Of Biomedical Research

- Focus single disease
- Highly selected patients
- Single intervention
- Emphasize hard outcomes
- Exclude effects of non-medical factors
Laboratories For Primary Care

- Capture health and health care events that characterize community-based populations
- Provide access to experience and care provided by primary care clinicians
- Focus activities on practice relevant research questions
- Strive for systematic involvement of clinicians
PBRN Characteristics

- Generalizability - NAMCS
  - serve a nationally representative patient population
  - clinicians demonstrate similar practice patterns
- 75% participate / 90% complete study
Diversity of PBRNs

- International
- North America
- National
- Regional
- Primary Care Disciplines
- Collaborations
Examples of PBRNs

- Ambulatory Sentinel Practice Network (ASPN)
  Oldest (1982-2000)
- Pediatric Research in Office Settings (PROs)
- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
  Network for Family Practice Primary Care Research
  - Collaboration - with 20 local/regional networks
  - Central Office
  - Annual Meeting
  - Communication - Listserv
Reason for Primary Care
Researchers to Collaborate

- Laboratories for Primary Care
- Qualities/advantages of Interaction with Practice (Participant Research)
- Federal Legislation for AHRQ funding mandates research done in PBRNs
IOM Primary Care: America’s Health in a New Era

- Drew attention to core elements of IOM definition of Primary Care
- Outlined a Primary Care Research Agenda
- Emphasized the importance of conducting much of the work in settings that deliver primary care

*National Academy Press, 1996*
IOM Recommendations

- Federal support for primary care research, and a lead agency to direct funding
- Development of a national database on primary care through some ongoing survey mechanism
- Development of standards for data collection including attention to data element definition and improved coding
IOM Research Agenda

- Large majority of health care needs differ by pop and individual pt; what belongs in primary care
- Accessible and integrated health care services
- Sustained partnership
- Accountability for quality of care
- Family and community context
- Specialist provision of care
PBRN Studies

- Card Studies
  - descriptive, casting wide net, quick, cheap, exploratory
- Observational
- Experimental
- N of 1
- Multi-method
ASPN Studies*
*Bibliography

- Miscarriage
- Mammography
- CTS
- HIV
- Headache
- Cough
- Otitis Media
- Consultation
- Depression
PBRN Studies*

- Opening the Black Box of Primary Care
- Improving office function and structure for clinical preventive services
- Improving the quality of Primary Care
- Clinical Trials in practice settings
- Health Services Research

RESEARCH CYCLE
Breckenridge, MB, Developed for Family Health Research Skills course, NJGPPH, and for Dept. FM HSR Fellowship training, 1990.

The Research Cycle

- Policy, practice, funding of further research
- Dissemination of findings - professional and lay audiences, funding sources
- Interpretation of results, generalizations
- Data Analysis
- Preparation of data for analysis
- Data Collection
- Identification of research objectives
- Asking and refining specific research questions
- Finding out what is already known, existing models, relevant theories
- Research design
- Operationalization in particular setting and sample
- Development of protocol and plan for data analysis

Question
Focus
Barriers to IOM Research

Agenda

- Access
- Diverse populations
- Primary care providers
- Focus
- Specialty providers
- Health Care System
PBRN Tensions

- National/Regional
- Health Services/Primary Care
- Fundamental medical knowledge
- Allocation of Indirects
Practice-based Network Research

Reuniting practice and research, the practitioner and the researcher