

The Development and Characteristics of an Effective Healthcare Team

by Capella Healthcare



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about the development and characteristics of an effective healthcare team. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Development of an Effective Healthcare Team
 - a. Structure
 - b. Types
 - c. Stages
2. Characteristics of an Effective Healthcare Team

1. Development of an Effective Healthcare Team

In comparison with other industries, medical teams especially in the dynamic domains of healthcare (such as operating rooms, intensive care, emergency medicine, or trauma, and rapid response teams) work under conditions that:

- change frequently
- may be assembled ad hoc
- have a dynamically changing team membership
- often work for short periods of time
- consist of specialists or several specialist crews
- have to integrate different professional cultures

These teams are often referred to as "action teams". When examining effective teamwork, it is important to consider the specific requirements a team is confronted with. Not all medical teams are "action teams" and teamwork requirements may change based on the nature of the situation (e.g., routine vs. emergency).

1a. Structure

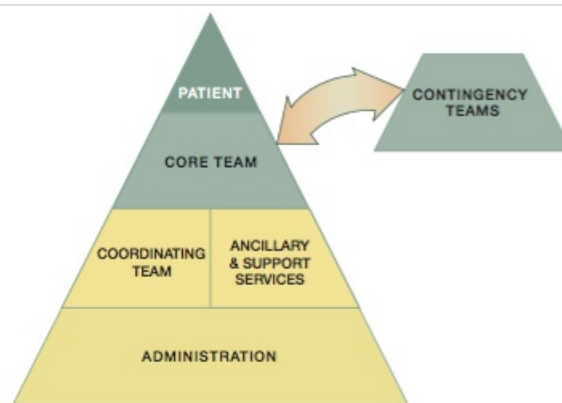
The structure of the task and the situation in which a team functions are critical to understanding and improving teamwork. Healthcare teams interact dynamically and have the common goal of delivering health services to patients. Teams in healthcare can be geographically located, as in a surgical unit, or include a

single discipline such as nursing. Multidisciplinary teams may include doctors, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, and administrative staff. The role these practitioners will play will vary between teams and within teams. Patients and caregivers are important members of the team especially in regard to shared-decision making, informed consent, and taking an active part in their care.

1b. Types

The Team STEPPS™ program is an evidence-based framework to optimize team performance across the healthcare delivery system. It identifies a number of different but interrelated team types that support the delivery of care (AHRQ, 2020):

Types of Teams in Healthcare	Description
Core Teams	Team leaders and members who are directly involved in caring for the patient.
Coordinating Teams	Group responsible for daily operational management, coordination functions, and resource management
Contingency Teams	Formed for emergent or specific events (e.g., disaster, rapid-response). Members drawn from core teams
Ancillary Services	Individuals such as cleaners or staff who provide direct, task-specific, time-limited care to patients or support services that facilitate patient care.
Support services and administration	Individuals who provide indirect, task-specific services in a healthcare facility. Administration includes executive leadership of unit or facility and has 24-hour accountability for overall functioning of the organization.



Safe and efficient care involves the coordinated activities of a multi-team system.

Source: AHRQ. (2020). TeamSTEPPS Fundamentals Course: Module 2. Team Structure. Retrieved 9 October 2020, from

<https://www.ahrq.gov/teamstepps/instructor/fundamentals/module2/igteamstruct.html>

1c. Stages

Research has shown that in order to become a highly effective team that is cohesive, and can navigate and overcome challenges, it usually passes through the following stages:

- **Forming:** Typically characterized by ambiguity and confusion. Team members may be unclear regarding the task. They have not have chosen to work together and might communicate in a guarded, superficial, and impersonal manner.
- **Storming:** A difficult stage when there may be conflict between team members and some rebellion against the assigned tasks. Team members may jockey for position and there may be frustration at a lack of progress on the task.
- **Norming:** Open communication is established within the team and they are able to move on with the task at hand. Generally accepted procedures and communication pattern is established.
- **Performing:** The team focuses all of its attention on attaining the goal. The team is now close and supportive, open and trusting, resourceful and effective

2. Characteristics of an Effective Healthcare Team

After the team is established and continues to grow, they will need to share certain characteristics to be successful.

Characteristics of a healthcare team include:

1. Possess specialized and complementary knowledge and skills
2. Realize their role and the roles of other in the team(s) and interact with one another to achieve a common goal
3. Make decisions
4. Often function under high-workload conditions
5. Act as a collective unit, as a result of the interdependency of the tasks performed by team members (Publications, 2020)

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Support

If you are struggling with a concept or terminology in the course, you may contact RiskManagementSupport@capella.edu for assistance.

If you are having technical issues, please contact learningcoach@sophia.org.