Unit 1: Health IT Teams

Examples and Characteristics

The Health IT Field is Diverse and Expansive

| Surgical Technologists | Patient Care Technician | Private Practice |
| Dentistry | Operating Room | Medical Records & Health IT |
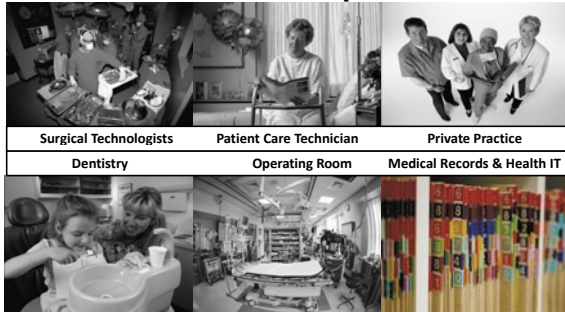
Unit Objectives

After completing this unit, the learner will be able to:

Describe the characteristics of an effective team and work group

Identify and differentiate roles of IT healthcare professionals in teams

Describe the value of teams and the importance of collaboration for the IT professional in teams.

Outline for the Unit:

Introduction

Definition of
- Teams
- Groups
- Important features of team members
  - Communication
  - Coordination
  - Distinctive roles
  - Interdependent tasks
- Examples of Health Information Team members

Teams as a Three-Stage System
- Input
- Throughput
- Output

Characteristics of Effective Teamwork
- Organizational Structure
- Individual Contributions
- Team Processes

Components of Effective Teams

Values of Teams and the Importance of Collaboration

Summary/conclusion

Introduction

Teams and teamwork are important aspects of healthcare delivery today. In a complex healthcare setting, it takes many teams to run the system, deliver safe patient care, and to ensure a smooth throughput process for patients and families.

Reflection

At this time before you learn more about HITS teams, please list 3 different teams you have served on over the past 3 years. In thinking about these teams, what role did you play? What was the key skill/activity you had to perform and what was the team goal, was it identified? (Refer to the PDF entitled "Reflection" for details on this activity).

Team - Definition

"A team is defined as a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance, goals, and approach for which for which they hold themselves mutually accountable" (p. 45) (Katzenbach & Smith (1993).

Important Features of Team Members

- Communication
- Coordination
- Distinctive roles
- Interdependent tasks
- Shared norms

Examples of Health Information Team Members
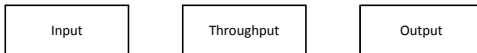
Viewing Teams as a Three-Stage System

Teams are often viewed as a three-stage system that includes:

1. Input – Resources teams utilize
2. Throughput – Maintenance of internal processes
3. Output – Production of specific products

Input	Throughput	Output

Characteristics of Effective Teamwork

1. Organizational structure
2. Individual contribution; and
3. The team processes. Table 1 reflects these characteristics with each characteristic described below.

Table 1. Characteristics of Effective Teamwork

Table 1: Characteristics of effective teamwork

Organisational structure	Individual contribution	Team processes
Clear purpose	Self knowledge	Coordination
Appropriate culture	Trust	Communication
Specified task	Commitment	Cohesion
Distinct roles	Flexibility	Decision making
Suitable leadership		Conflict management
Relevant members		Social relationships
Adequate resources		Performance feedback

(Mickan, & Rodger, S. (2000).

Organizational Structure Components

- Clear purpose/mission
- Appropriate culture
- Specified Task
- Distinct Roles
- Leadership

Clear purpose/mission

- Goal agreement through a common commitment to patients' needs
- Action that will improve the quality of care

> **Healthcare teams need to identify appropriate patient-related goals and link these with both team and professional goals, while upholding the organization's mission (Maple, 1987).**

Appropriate Culture

- Define expectations and mechanisms of accountability for all teams.
- Shared team vision and experiences of success

Specified Task

- Motivating for the team members
- Shared responsibility and accountability for the achievement

> **Healthcare IT teams need to clearly define the specific aspect of complex and inter-related patient care which they address**

Distinct Roles

Roles can be flexible enough in a team to accommodate individual differences, personal development needs, and changes in the members of the team.

Conflicts can be alleviated when the professionals work across disciplinary boundaries in the best interest of the members of the team.

Leadership

- Leadership should reflect the team's stage of development.
- Strategic focus must be maintained

Relevant Members

- Right amount of members
- Appropriate mix and diversity of task and interpersonal skills.

Activity

Team #1 – Community Physician's Office Team For Electronic Patient Record

Activity Cont'd

Team #2 – Dental Office Team For Digital Radiology

Activity Cont'd

Team #3 – Community Hospital Team For Computerized Electronic Patient Record

Adequate Resources

- Financial assistance, administrative and technical support, and education and training
- Safe physical environment

> **In healthcare environments, a potential for conflict can exist due to clinical responsibilities, training needs, and issues of patient safety and confidentiality. (Hackman, 1990)**

Individual Contributions

Think about the teams you have been on. What do you see as your contributions? At a minimum, individual participation in teams requires self-knowledge, trust, commitment, and flexibility.

Self-Knowledge

Personal and professional

Professional expectations

Understanding of the colleague's skills and responsibilities

Perceptions of colleagues images of the individual

Trust

- Through developing confidence in each other's competence and reliability.
- Need to discuss openly any similarities and differences in their professional values and standards.

Commitment

Developed via self-knowledge and ability to trust

Willingness for short-term personal sacrifice for good of the team

Flexibility

- Open attitude
- Accommodate different personal values
- Be receptive to the ideas of others.

Team Processes

Coordination	Communication	Cohesion
Decision-making	Conflict Management	Social Relationships
	Performance Feedback	

Coordination

- Embrace member variety
- Incorporate different perspectives of members
- Optimize integration of unique skill sets

Communication

An observable exchange of information and subtle interactions of power, attitudes, and values

Cohesion

This attribute acknowledges members' personal attraction to the team and the task. Members' cooperate interdependently around the team's task in order to meet team goals.

Decision Making

A range of team member's knowledge and skills that contributes to expand information and generates more legitimate decisions

Conflict Management

- Aid in creative thinking
- Address elements of destructive team processes

Social Relationships

- Showing empathy and support
- Offering assistance when needed
- Sharing information
- Mutual problem solving

Performance Feedback

- Timely and accurate
- Should focus on the future
- Open communication channels
- Targets team performance

Matching Learning Objects

Match these team processes with the definition and function:

_____ Coordination

_____ Communication

_____ Cohesion

_____ Decision-Making

_____ Conflict Management

_____ Social Relationships

_____ Performance Feedback

Summary/Conclusion
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Characteristics of Effective Teamwork

• **Organizational Structure**
• **Individual Contribution**
• **Team Processes**

Roles of Health IT Teams

Value of Collaboration for Health IT Professionals