

Barriers, obstacle, difficulties or challenges in development of health partnerships in community intervention projects: a systematic review

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Background

Engaging communities in authentic partnerships is increasingly accepted as best practice in community intervention projects, despite the many barriers or challenges to doing so.

Objective

The purpose of this study is to identify barriers, obstacles, difficulties or challenges in development of health partnerships in community intervention projects of some countries.

Methods

We conducted a systematic review using the following data sources: PubMed, B-on, Medline and EBSCOhost. We searched articles from September 2006 through January 2016. A standard form was used to extract data using the key words in the search: Health Partnerships AND Community Health AND Primary Health Care. The articles were selected according to inclusion and exclusion criteria. In the end, we grouped these results based on

the six categories used by the Wilder Research Centre: Environment; Membership; Process and structure; Purpose; Communication; Resources, which includes leadership and power.

Results

From the research conducted, 844 articles emerged, which were submitted to the filter, which implied references to at least one of the keywords: Barriers OR Obstacle OR Difficulties OR Challenges. According to the inclusion criteria, a total of fifty-six articles was found. Of these articles, forty-four dealt with factors relating to Environment, which included factors related to community, geography, culture, religious faith and homophily, and politics. Regarding the characteristics of the members that influence the development of the partnership, the relationship between the partners is key and this was commented in fifty-three articles. Factors relating to the process of collaboration were found in a total of forty-six articles, while factors related to structural elements were mentioned in forty articles. Thirty-one articles identified the factors relating to objectives, vision and mission.

Another factor that was highly discussed was communication, appearing in a total of thirty-four articles. Factors relating to resources were given great importance in the literature, appearing in forty-eight articles. In twenty-three articles, the subject of leadership and factors relating to power were mentioned. The literature reviewed highlighted that factors such as relationships, commitment, communication, funding and structure, are key in the long-term sustainability of the partnership. This topic appeared in fifteen articles.

Conclusions

The systematic literature review identified a set of barriers, obstacles, difficulties or challenges for the development of health partnerships in community intervention projects. In each of the categories we present the factors that are related to them and that can positively or negatively influence the development of those collaborations.

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Keywords

Barriers, Obstacle, Difficulties, Challenges, Partnerships.