

Navigating the complexity of chronic care management in general practice

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Introduction or background

Chronic conditions affect over one third of Europe's population, necessitating comprehensive treatment and follow-up. General practices have a central role in delivering such healthcare. Although the burden on physicians is substantial, the trend towards multidisciplinary practices offer opportunities to organize chronic care in a more qualitative and effective manner. However, alongside these opportunities come complex challenges that might mitigate the advantages. This research aims to explore potential pitfalls and effective strategies associated with organizing multidisciplinary chronic care management in general practices to inform and guide future interventions.

Method

This qualitative descriptive study employed semi structured, in-depth interviews guided by the Consolidated Framework for Implementation (CFIR). Purposive sampling was used and resulted in the recruitment of 18 physicians, 8 nurses, 2 dieticians, and 2 receptionists from various primary care settings. Data analysis followed an inductive thematic approach.

Results / analysis

Respondents emphasized the importance of establishing clear goals, a shared vision and resource planning as initial steps in developing a multidisciplinary care organization as well as designating one team member to lead the project. Challenges included engaging all disciplines during the development phase and fostering an open and safe culture for communication. Respondents expressed a need for practical tools and examples to facilitate and inspire the development process.

Conclusion

Developing a multidisciplinary chronic primary care organization requires careful consideration of both strategic and practical implementation aspects. This process is inherently complex and frequently leaves general practices in need of guidance and tangible tools to navigate the complexity effectively.