Development and evaluation of a Community of Practice to reduce waiting time for community outpatient services

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Specific & Timely Appointments for Triage (the STAT model) was found to reduce wait times in ambulatory care by 34% in a large trial conducted by our team.

Translation of research into practice requires more than just dissemination of information. A **community of practice** is an active strategy that can be used to facilitate the uptake of evidence into practice.

"Groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems or a passion about a topic and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis...... Over time, they develop a unique perspective on their topic as well as a body of common knowledge, practices and approaches....They become a community of practice."

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A Shared Goal:
Participants felt overwhelmed by the problem of waitlists & wanted to find solutions for their patients.

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Elements of a Community of Practice

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Interaction & engagement:
- Workshops and forums
- Facebook and Twitter
- Email updates & conversations
- Facilitating connections

Common resources:
- Published academic paper
- Handbook & Video
- Access to the STAT researchers for consultation and facilitation

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What Worked?
- Plain language handbook
- Email updates
- Connecting people
- Multi-service workshops
- Facilitation of shared enthusiasm & purpose
- Facebook did not work & was deactivated

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For more information:  
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Wenger et al, Cultivating Communities of Practice, 2002