

Cambridge Elements

Elements of Improving Quality and Safety in Healthcare
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COLLABORATION-BASED APPROACHES

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Collaboration-Based Approaches

Elements of Improving Quality and Safety in Healthcare

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Abstract: Collaboration-based approaches to healthcare improvement attract much attention. They involve networks of people coming together to cooperate around a common interest, with shared goals of improving care and mutual learning. Long-standing examples of collaborative approaches have been associated with some success in improving outcomes and reducing harm. The evidence for their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness, however, remains inconsistent and contingent on the circumstances in which they are deployed and how they are used for what purpose. Several models for collaboration have been developed, varying in structure, format, and balance between internal leadership and external control. This Element focuses on two approaches: quality improvement collaboratives and communities of practice. The authors explore evidence of their impact on health outcomes, and evidence about how best to organise and implement collaboration-based approaches. Using examples of more and less successful collaborations, this Element offers guidance on the key challenges involved in using collaboration-based approaches to improve healthcare. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

Keywords: collaboration, quality improvement collaboratives, clinical networks, communities of practice, clinical communities

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