



University Medical Center Groningen

University of Groningen

Multi-method investigation of normative integration in a novel inter-sectoral collaboration between mental health care services and public sick leave insurance organizations in Denmark

Poulsen, Rie Mandrup; Pii, Kathrine Hoffmann; Bultmann, Ute; Eplov, Lene Falgaard; Albertsen, Karen; Christensen, Ulla

Published in:
International Journal of Integrated Care

DOI:
[10.5334/ijic.s3138](https://doi.org/10.5334/ijic.s3138)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2019

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Poulsen, R. M., Pii, K. H., Bultmann, U., Eplov, L. F., Albertsen, K., & Christensen, U. (2019). Multi-method investigation of normative integration in a novel inter-sectoral collaboration between mental health care services and public sick leave insurance organizations in Denmark. *International Journal of Integrated Care*, 19. <https://doi.org/10.5334/ijic.s3138>

Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Multi-method investigation of normative integration in a novel inter-sectoral collaboration between mental health care services and public sick leave insurance organizations in Denmark

19th International Conference on Integrated Care, San Sebastian, 01-03 April 2019

Rie Mandrup Poulsen¹, Kathrine Hoffmann Pii², Ute Bültmann³, Lene Falgaard Epløv¹, Karen Albertsen⁴, Ulla Christensen⁵

1: Mental Health Center Copenhagen, Denmark;

2: Københavns Professionshøjskole, Denmark;

3: University of Groningen, Department of Health Sciences, Community and Occupational Medicine, Denmark;

4: Team Working Life, Denmark;

5: Copenhagen University, Institute for Public Health, Denmark

Introduction: Inter-sectoral integration is increasingly warranted between the health care sector and other welfare-sectors. However, lack of normative integration (shared mission, values. and culture) among stakeholders is considered an important barrier. An integrated vocational rehabilitation intervention was established in a novel collaboration between public mental health care and sick leave insurance organizations in Denmark. The purpose of this study is to describe how normative integration was developed between the professionals in the inter-sectoral teams delivering the intervention.

Theory and Methods: Gittells' theory of relational coordination (RC) was used to design the interventions' integration-activities. The theoretical sub-concepts from RC shared knowledge, shared goals and respect were considered aspects of normative integration and constituted the main analytical framework for this study. A mixed methods approach was used to examine the professionals' perceptions of and experiences with mutual respect, shared goals, and shared knowledge across sectoral borders. This was investigated abductively through 30 semi-structured interviews with professionals and supervisors, 12 participant observations of inter-sectoral meetings, document analysis of 12 inter-sectoral plans, and the validated RC questionnaire. Contextual factors influencing normative integration was investigated inductively through the same data. Data collection began one year after intervention initiation.

Results: Synthesizing data showed that mutual respect was established through trust and shared experiences between individual workers from the two sectors. Development of shared goals mainly took place through a growing focus on the predefined purpose of the intervention 'fast return to work', though this was initially difficult to internalize for health care professionals. Inter-sectoral meetings with both professionals and the service user on sick leave were assessed to have great potential as a forum for the creation of shared knowledge about the service users. Few inter-sectoral working relationships with co-located full-time professionals supported the development of normative integration.

Discussions: This study found that the shared experiences between individual professionals from two sectors were key to the creation of normative integration in the inter-sectoral team. Organization of integrated teams with very few inter-sectoral relationships might be difficult to implement and could compromise intra-professional specialization. However, we argue that team-size and full-time commitment of employees should be considered important factors in novel team-based inter-sectoral collaboration.

Conclusions: Normative integration in the intervention was developed through professional's adaption of intervention goals, increasingly better use of intersectoral meetings and respect build on shared experiences and trust. Few inter-sectoral relationships, full-time employees and co-location were valued important for integration by the professionals.

Lessons learned: Few inter-sectoral relationships and shared experiences were facilitators of normative integration across sectors.

Limitations: Following initial data collection, the organization of professionals was changed, and analysis showed that there was considerable potential for further development of normative integration thereafter. The long-term perspective was subsequently only investigated through follow-up interviews with supervisors 2.5 years after intervention initiation.

Suggestions for future research: We suggest the development of respect, shared goals, and shared knowledge in newly established inter-sectoral integration should be investigated with a long-term longitudinal design.

Keywords: integration: relational coordination: inter-sectoral collaboration: vocational rehabilitation: mixed-methods
