

Factors promoting and obstacles hindering joint working: A systematic review (2000)

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The study

In 2000, Cameron and colleagues carried out an important systematic review exploring the factors that supported and hindered successful joint working. They also aimed to explore the effectiveness of different models of joint working.

Findings

Four categories of models for joint working were identified. These were: placement schemes; multi-agency teams and projects; case or care management; and strategic level working.

The team identified 32 studies across 38 papers which demonstrated that the supporting and hindering factors for joint working can be grouped into three themes:

1. Organisational issues
2. Cultural and professional issues
3. Contextual issues

At this point in time, there was no conclusive evidence that joint working between health and social care was effective in terms of improving service user outcomes.

Key messages for practice

- Factors which may improve joint working practices include:

Mutual understanding and clear, realistic aims and objectives between organisations	Involvement of frontline staff to create a sense of ownership
Clarity about staff roles and responsibilities	Good communication and information sharing, including adequate IT systems
Organisational commitment to joint working	Adequate resources
Past history of joint working between the organisations	Co-location
	The 'right people' or personalities
	Ongoing evaluation and monitoring
- Barriers include:

Lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities	Complex management systems
Differences in organisational aims and objectives	Inadequate resources, financial uncertainty and frequent staff turnover
Overly ambitious aims and objectives	Negative professional stereotypes, and professional differences
Lack of organisational commitment or strategic support	Political climate
Poor communication and IT systems	Constant reorganisation and instability
- Strategies to overcome these barriers must be identified before embarking on any joint working initiative.