

Early evaluation experience of an Emergency Medicine Network in British Columbia, Canada using PARTNER tool.

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August 7, 2019

The [British Columbia Emergency Medicine Network](#) (EMN) was officially launched September 12, 2017. Emergency practitioners (working full-time or part-time in 108 emergency departments) can connect with each other and access current, practical resources via four core programs: clinical resources; continuing professional development; innovation; and, real-time support.

Its goals are to:

- + provide real and sustainable emergency systems improvements in BC
- + create a robust network of emergency practitioners, policy makers, provincial and local emergency care leaders, researchers, quality care experts, educators, and patients
- + effectively share clinical expertise from across the province to ensure ‘point-of-care’ clinical resources and real-time visual support of best practices
- + evaluate the network and its initiatives to continuously improve its functions

The EMN is predominantly an inter-organizational clinical network with an emphasis on clinical knowledge translation and mobilization. It is being planned, developed and implemented commensurate with scholarly knowledge and practical experience ([Abu-Laban, et al, 2018](#); [Christenson, 2014](#); [Marsden, et al, 2019](#)).

The EMN leadership has taken a comprehensive approach to evaluation, particularly in the early stages, with a goal to provide empirical evidence of progress, share findings, learn from what is working and what is not, and course correct as required. The evaluation approach was developed in collaboration with network members, including patient representatives, to address key perspectives. The evaluation employed mixed methods – quantitative and qualitative – which complement each other and increase the rigour of the evaluation. The quantitative instrument was administered first, employing PARTNER tool. Qualitative data were then gathered through purposively sampled semi-structured interviews of emergency practitioners and analyzed using a constructivist grounded theory approach as a means to inductively,

comparatively, interactively and iteratively elicit findings. Additionally, comprehensive analytics of the EMN website were regularly performed.

Four levels of EMN activity were evaluated consistent with the scholarly literature (Popp, Milward, MacKean, Casebeer, & Lindstrom, 2014; Popp, et al, 2005): 1) vision/mission/goals (What is the EMN is trying to accomplish?); 2) structure (Is the EMN organized appropriately?); 3) process (Are EMN members working well together?); and, 4) service delivery (Are EMN members supported in their roles?).

Visible Network Labs prepared a custom report using the quantitative data gathered by the online survey which was then selectively incorporated into the final evaluation report along with the findings of the qualitative component.

Despite cautions around a formative evaluation of the EMN so early in its development, the findings suggest that the criteria for a successful network are largely being met. There will be continuous evaluation of effectiveness of future cycles to measure progress over time and provide course correction as necessary.

References

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Note: Sponsors of the EMN who provided funding or in-kind support include:

British Columbia Academic Health Science Network

British Columbia Ministry of Health

BC SUPPORT Unit

Institute for Health System Transformation & Sustainability

Rural Coordination Centre of BC

The University of British Columbia – Faculty of Medicine