

HOSPITAL SCHOOLS

building a community of practice

A Practical Discussion from Saskatchewan Hospital Teachers
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The Hospital Educator and Academic Liaison Virtual Conference
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ABOUT US

brief introduction



We are teachers who work for an urban public school division in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Heather is a teacher on the pediatric unit of the general hospital in our city. This unit provides acute care for patients age 0-17 from the Southern half of our province. Her role is to work as part of an interdisciplinary team, provide continuing instruction for K-12 students, and foster a climate of belonging and engagement.

Miranda is a student support teacher at an elementary school. Her role is to support students with academic, medical, behavioural, and social difficulties.





A PRACTICAL DISCUSSION
FROM SASKATCHEWAN
HOSPITAL TEACHERS

01 What is a Community of Practice? What value does it bring to our daily best practice and commitment to life-long learning?

02 How is a Community of Practice facilitated? Who and where do the members come from?

03 Where do you start and what do you do in a Community of Practice? What types of resources are needed?

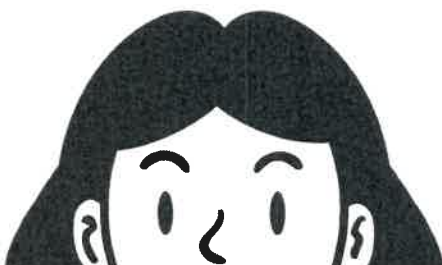
04 Roundtable discussion.

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

What is it?



A Community of Practice is a group of self-selected and self-directed group of educators who share a common concern, interest, or passion. They collaborate regularly with a focus on improving and sharing one's teaching and learning practices and experiences with the goal to improve student achievement.



VALUE OF A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



Educates

- collect and share information that is member initiated and led
- connect people who might not otherwise cross paths, or with those who work in isolation
- create awareness within and beyond



Cultivates

- ignite and sustain passion with professional development that is relevant to context of members
- enable dialogue and meaningful connection
- intentional time to learn and work



Empowers

- promote the work of members through discussion and sharing
- validate learning as work, safe place to take risks
- use new knowledge for real change

STARTING A COMMUNITY

● Initiate

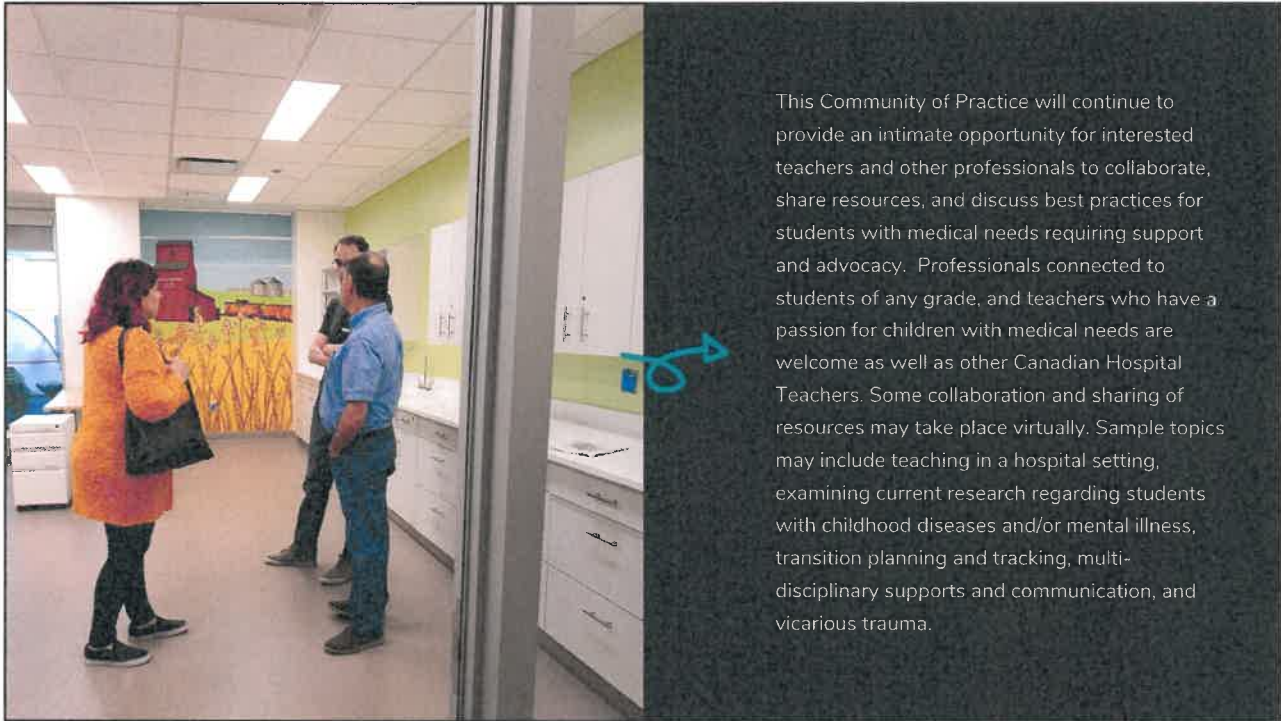
- identify a facilitator and co-facilitator if needed
- outline role, time commitment and expectations

● Share Vision

- post a brief summary of the CoP passions, possible topics of discussion, and short or long term goals
- determine an initial meeting place or platform

● Recruit Members

- initiate a sign up process
- promote opportunities for contributing, identify strengths and experiences, remind all of collaborative nature



This Community of Practice will continue to provide an intimate opportunity for interested teachers and other professionals to collaborate, share resources, and discuss best practices for students with medical needs requiring support and advocacy. Professionals connected to students of any grade, and teachers who have a passion for children with medical needs are welcome as well as other Canadian Hospital Teachers. Some collaboration and sharing of resources may take place virtually. Sample topics may include teaching in a hospital setting, examining current research regarding students with childhood diseases and/or mental illness, transition planning and tracking, multi-disciplinary supports and communication, and vicarious trauma.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY

● Identify and Introduce

- set aside time for each member to not only introduce themselves at the beginning, but also if/as new members join
- validate each member, their willingness to attend, and experiences

● Be Intentional

- schedule team building activities into each agenda, identify and utilize strengths, personalize resources whenever possible,
- ask for preferences and find ways to celebrate each one (favourite author to favourite hot beverage)

● Engage

- remind, encourage and invite members to contribute, big or small, each time you plan the next agenda,
- great leaders empowers others to contribute,
- take time to thank guest presenters with a small gift, showcase the value each and every contribution



THE WILLINGNESS TO
SHOW UP CHANGES US.
IT MAKES US A LITTLE

braver each time.

-Brené Brown

*"Sit with the winners
the conversation is different"*

-Dr. Jody Carrington



FACILITATING A COMMUNITY

● Invite and Welcome

- confirm membership, generate momentum
- plan first agenda, prepare to host
- attendance tracking in place

● Collaborate and Plan

- take time to know each member, their compelling why, and areas of experience or expertise
- prioritize hot topics or calendar events, secure spaces, invite speakers
- identify short and long term goals and topics for meeting times throughout the year

● Prepare and Equip Others

- create a short and long range plan
- secure or order resources, NOT an inservice or workshopping
- begin scheduling guest speakers or outings

SPACES IN YOUR AREA

GAIN INSIGHT BY EXPLORING PLACES YOUR STUDENTS MAY BE WHEN THEY ARE NOT WITH YOU



You do not need to travel far to have an adventure.

STARTING A COMMUNITY

Hospital Schools Community of Practice

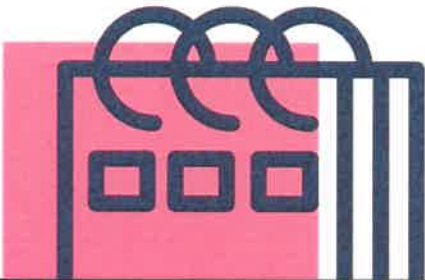
Question 1: Can you do a Community of Practice if your school division/district does not currently list it as a priority?

Question 2: How many members are recommended? What are the advantages of a smaller group?

Question 3: Do we have to meet in person?



THE REAL QUESTIONS



Time

Be intentional, set aside 2-4 times/school year, making at least every other meeting mandatory. Half-days work well to make meeting time valuable and productive.

Money

Use spaces that you have access to and use them in creative ways to avoid renting spaces or parking fees. Meet virtually to include those who may not have means to travel each time. Set aside a small budget to purchase professional resources as needed. Engage your community by seeking donations to use for door prizes or incentives for members or guest presenters.

Tasks

Prepare and distribute an agenda, use a sign in sheet, schedule presenters, and schedule wellness breaks. Plan a field trip experience and use alternative public or private spaces to gather. Follow-up, keep the momentum going during longer breaks, consider posting highlights in a collaborative space.

People

Invite people you work with, people you want to work with, or people who do interesting work to speak, share, or join your community.

Variety

Use a variety of resources...people, professionals, print, local, published, draft, documentaries, programs, services...those that are important to you and the work you do!

Organizations

Reach out to organizations you work with, want to work with, or do work you are interested in.

Topics

Pick topics that the group is interested in. Topics can remain the same all year, or change session to session.



RESOURCES





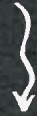
JUST-IN-TIME PD

"...one of the top benefits of a community of practice is access to new information, often recommended by other participants. Identifying, reviewing and sharing resources is a key component of building collective knowledge and sharing with others."

-ERLC



DO YOU HAVE ANY
QUESTIONS?



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