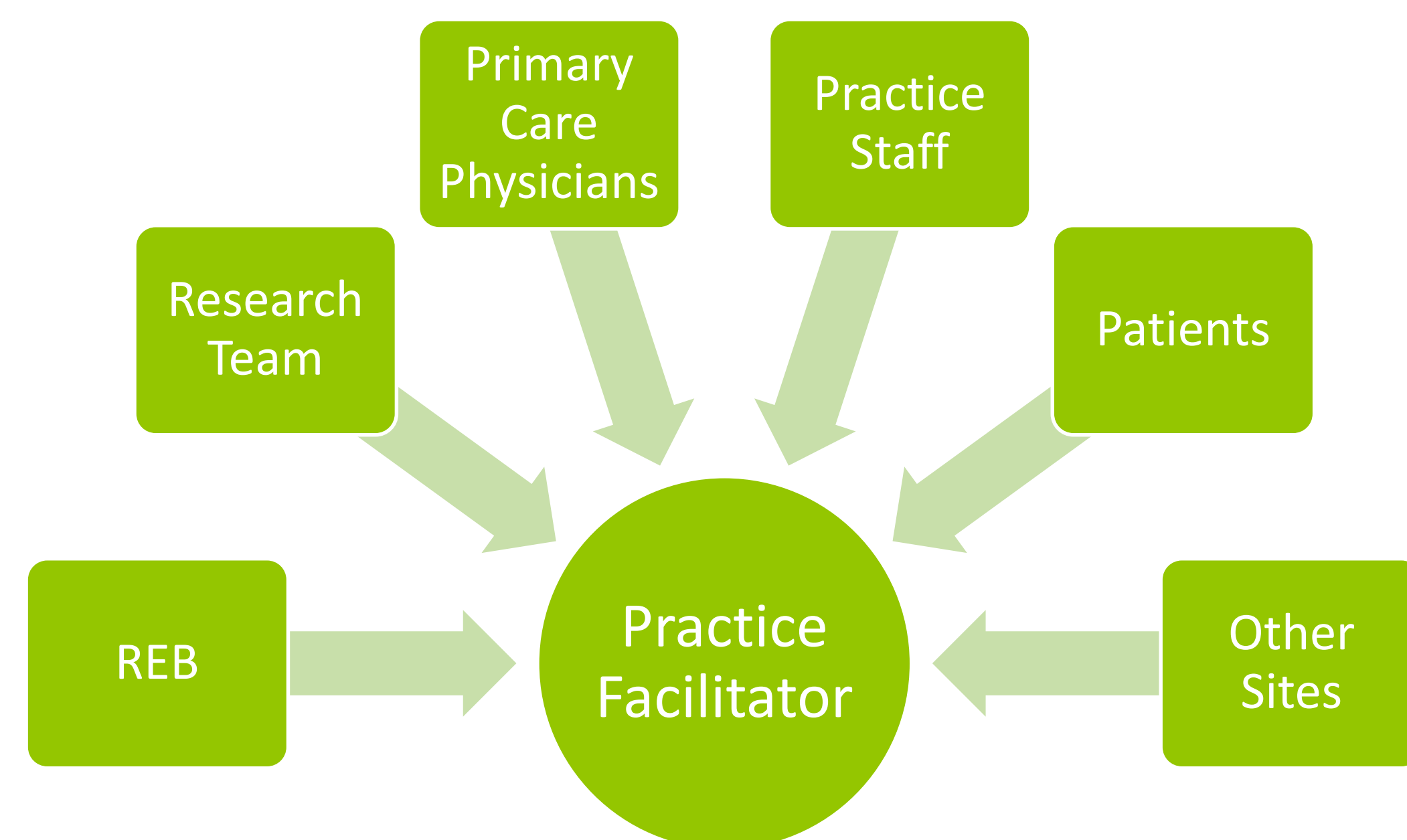


What We Do

Practice Facilitators (PF) provide a wide range of supportive services to primary care practices in order to improve the quality of care delivered, patients' experience with care, and patient outcomes. Currently, UTOPIAN has three practice facilitators available to engage with research initiatives across all sites.

Many primary care practices do not have adequate resources to undertake essential research activity in their practice. As trained professionals, PFs are able to assist research teams in:

- facilitating research ethic's board approval;
- distributing patient and/or physician surveys;
- recruiting eligible patients
- collaborating with practice staff, patients and researchers;
- connecting research teams with interested sites
- conducting EMR searches and chart reviews;
- collecting and analyzing research data;
- other activities depending on the project's needs and the goals of the practice.



Practice Facilitation in Action

As the “*living laboratory*” for studying patient populations and care providers, UTOPIAN has provided support to numerous researchers through practice facilitation since the first PF was recruited in 2014. The expertise of UTOPIAN PFs combined with the practical insights of skilled researchers/clinicians allows for the generation of research ideas that can be significant for practice.



The following are some highlights of how PFs have supported practice-based research projects.

“Using Screening Forms in Primary Care”. MA O’Brien, F Sullivan

- PF Role: Submitting REB, coordinating and completing agreements between various parties involved, recruiting practices, setting up Ocean in practice EMRs and Tablets, training site staff, consent and data collection, analysing data, contributing to final report (6 practices, 831 questionnaires collected, 24 interviews conducted with FPs, office staff and patients)

“Design and Evaluation of an mHealth Behavioural Intervention of the Self-Management of Type 2 Diabetes”. J Cafazzo, G Lewis, E Seto, S Goyal

- PF Role: Recruiting sites, coordinating multiple REB submission, conducting preliminary searches for eligible patients, confirming eligible patients with physicians, liaising between site personnel and study coordinator (3 sites, 18 patients recruited to RCT)

“Validating an EMR search algorithm of health professional contacts in a family health team”. A Pinto, S Mekhail, A Pasricha, G Arbess

- PF Role: Submitting REB, coordinating team meetings, conducting EMR chart review, liaising between site personnel and study coordinator (2 FHTs, 1400 charts reviewed)

Key Learnings

Site recruitment:

- Front line staff, nurses, data managers, and other individuals should be involved from the beginning
- Early involvement can minimize miscommunication and misunderstanding of project goals and requirements at the site
- Staff feedback can improve project workflows for the site

Identify potential patients early and efficiently:

- Using de-identified data from CPCSSN, PFs can run queries for sites in order to identify potential eligible patient
- Identifying eligible patients before site recruitment reduces workload on sites and allows the project team target sites with higher numbers of potentially eligible patients

Be flexible:

- Not all sites have the same capacity for research activity
- Working with sites to create an effective workflow reduces the impact on the site and enables better use of time and resources
- Leaving buffer periods in the project can avoid missing deadlines

Summary

PF support focuses on building organizational research capacity for continuous improvement within the practice and may be provided onsite or virtually. One major benefit to involving PFs is leveraging the existing relationships between practices, hospitals, REBs and UTOPIAN in order to inform and generate participation among all parties involved, and to improve patient care.

For more information, contact UTOPIAN Practice Facilitators:

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