Abstract

U.S. Army Commander's Ready and Resilient Councils: Fostering Collaboration in Community Health

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Background: Army installations, similar to communities in the civilian sector, are comprised of interdisciplinary, complex elements that impact Army Family health. The Army developed Commander's Ready and Resilient Councils (CR2C) to mitigate the natural stovepipes occurring within separate chains of command, and to more effectively synchronize health promotion programs and services on Army installations. As part of a larger evaluation strategy, leadership sought to determine the extent to which an Army council was achieving collaborative and integrated decision-making related to outcomes.

Methods: A social network analysis was conducted at one Army installation as a case study. Thirty-one council members completed the Program to Analyze, Record, and Track Networks to Enhance Relationships (PARTNER) Tool and data were analyzed with UCINET software. Key measures of social network functioning included density, connectedness, centrality, and integration.

Results: Council members reported about half (45.9%) of all possible relationships within the council. The social network map indicated that the council was not dominated by a single member; members participated in the council as a collective whole. The greatest proportion of council members (44.6%) reported involvement in integrated activities.

Conclusions: Findings indicate council performance is not driven by a senior ranking military officer, and instead is influenced by membership integration and partnerships. The relatively high level of integration further suggests that separate chains of command on the Army installation collaborate and equally participate in the council. Study implications may be extended to the civilian sector to demonstrate the importance of examining member relationships within community health coalitions.

Conduct evaluation related to programs, research, and other areas of practice Public health or related organizational policy, standards, or other guidelines