

Building a community of practice

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‘One of the greatest opportunities of the 21st century is the potential to safely harness the power of the technology revolution, which has transformed our society, to meet the challenges of improving health and providing better, safer, sustainable care for all.’

National Information Board

What challenges does the system face in harnessing data for better health?

Access to quality data in a timely fashion

“Data silos & systems that don’t talk to each other mean that NHS data is nowhere near as useful or accessible as it should be”

Enough analysts with the right skills

“We just don’t have the numbers of skilled people to meet the demand – and we have no money to recruit.”

Effective communication between analysts and decision makers

“Sometimes analysts have done great work but are unable to explain clearly or concisely, so get ignored.”

Access to the right tools

“We really need to automate some of the routine tasks that take up so much of our analysts’ time.”

Engaging with patients and the public to ensure that data reflects lived experience

“There are many untold and unheard stories around health and care in this pandemic... People’s experiences need to be listened to, learnt from, and highlighted by all decisionmakers so that decisions and communications are based on what people actually need and want.”

Analytical literacy at all levels of seniority

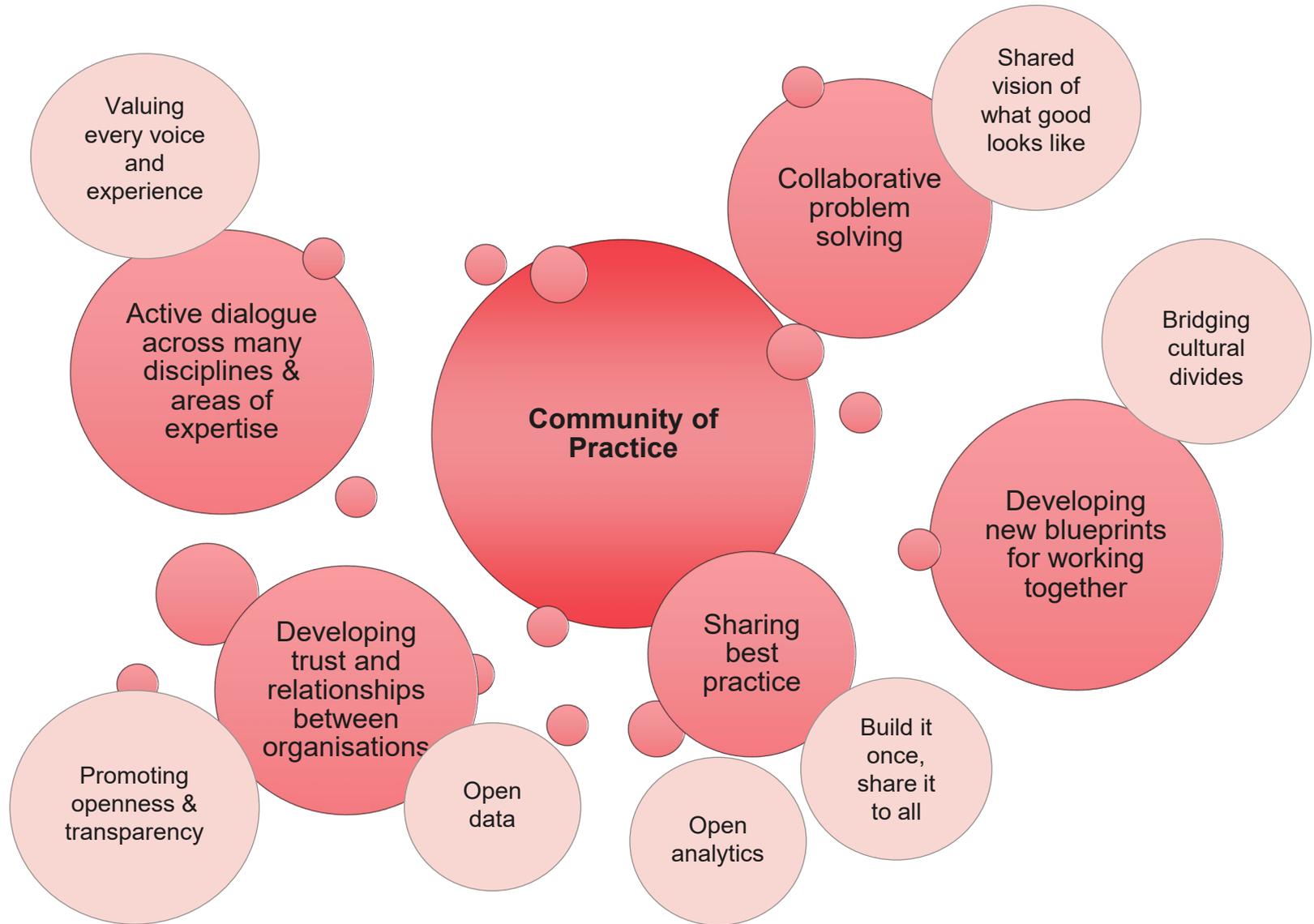
“We’ll know we’ve won when there are staff at board-level in managerial and strategic roles who once did an inner join in SQL just as we have clinical leaders who once treated thousands of patients”

Quotes taken from Understanding Analytical Capability in Healthcare

What We Need Now; National Voices (2020)

Goldacre et al. (2020)

How can communities of practice address these challenges?



Case study: Community of Practice for social care data analytics

The pandemic has revealed major weaknesses in the social care data system.

These problems made it harder for the country to respond to outbreaks and to support carers to provide care during the pandemic, and ultimately led to avoidable suffering for our most vulnerable people.

The social care system faces further challenges in harnessing data for better care:

- Building trust across providers, commissioners and people needing care and their carers.
- Developing data infrastructure that supports the collection and reporting of both operational data and data that supports what matters to the person being cared for
- Building a shared understanding and common purpose – what does good look like?

Our Community of Practice, led by Future Care Capital, brings together people who use care services, carers, providers, care tech developers, local authorities, researchers, and membership bodies for providers and for front-line staff.

The Community will:

- Develop norms around how data can be used within social care, opening up discussions about good and poor practice
- Facilitate relationships across a fragmented and siloed field, providing opportunities for new collaborations
- Provide a space for innovative exemplars to share their code, methodology and findings, so that other analytics teams across the UK can learn with the projects in real time and adopt their methods to improve their own systems.
- Engage decision makers with the value and potential of data, creating demand for quality analysis
- Provide a space for those who need and use care, as well as their carers and advocates, to engage with conversations that they might ordinarily be excluded from

“There is nothing more complicated than running the NHS and if we don’t do it as smart as any organisation in the world then we’re really betraying the taxpayer and we’re betraying our patients.”

Matthew Swindells