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MCH Innovations Database Practice Summary & Implementation Guidance

PATCH Toolkits

Helping Adolescents Gain More Independence and Responsibility Over Their Health & Health Care Decisions

With youth voice and perspective at the forefront, the Toolkits provide educators a step-by-step guide to facilitate an introductory health care education session to adolescents and parents/guardians/caregivers of adolescents. The intent is to help adolescents gain more independence and responsibility over their health and health care decisions.



Location

Wisconsin



Topic Area

Access to Health Care/Insurance, Family/Youth Engagement, Primary/Preventive Care



Setting

Varies (Rural, Urban, Clinical, School-Based, etc.)



Population Focus

Adolescent Health, CYSHCN



NPM

NPM 10 and 12



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Contact Information

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Section 1: Practice Summary

PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

The PATCH Toolkits are initiatives of the PATCH Program – a program committed to improving adolescent health outcomes alongside and in true partnership with youth – and were created to capitalize on, and enhance the impact of, existing PATCH efforts which are working to change the way adolescents receive, experience, and utilize health care.

The *PATCH for Teens* and *PATCH for Parents* Toolkits were created for educators working in schools, communities, faith-based organizations, businesses, health care systems, and public health agencies. These resources are intended to help young people gain more independence and responsibility over their health and health care decisions. With youth voice and perspective at the forefront, each Toolkit contains a step-by-step guide that provides information, materials, and activities necessary to deliver an empowering and interactive health education session. The *PATCH for Teens* Toolkit was released in 2017 followed by the *PATCH for Parents* Toolkit in 2018; both underwent an initial pilot and small-scale implementation phase before being released to the public. The *PATCH for Parents* Toolkit was transcribed into Spanish in September 2020.

The *PATCH for Teens* Toolkit aims to empower young people to begin managing their own health care and equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate and advocate for youth-friendly services.

The *PATCH for Parents* Toolkit is intended to engage and educate parents, guardians, and caregivers on teen rights and responsibilities in health care settings and help them to support young people in becoming responsible managers of their own health.

CORE COMPONENTS & PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

Interested parties purchase either the *PATCH for Teens* and/or the *PATCH for Parents* Toolkit via www.patchprogram.org; one authorized facilitator per Toolkit.

Core Components & Practice Activities

Core Component	Activities	Operational Details
PATCH Online & PATCH Chat	PATCH Online provides Facilitators access to downloadable materials, additional resources, and an interactive platform (PATCH Chat) to connect with PATCH Staff and other individuals across the nation who are also using this Toolkit.	Upon purchase of the Toolkit, each Facilitator will receive a unique User ID and password to use when logging in at www.patchprogram.org .



Facilitator Guide	A guide that provides detailed information about how to utilize the Toolkit(s).	A printed copy will be sent in the mail within 7-10 days of purchase. An electronic version can be found at PATCH Online.
PATCH Script and Materials	Includes all the information, language, and facilitation materials needed to lead a <i>PATCH for Teens</i> or <i>PATCH for Parents</i> session.	Printed copies are included in the purchase of the Toolkit; electronic versions can be found at PATCH Online.
Additional PATCH Resources	A variety of brochures and resources are included in the Toolkits.	These resources can be distributed during the PATCH session and may also be shared throughout the community.

HEALTH EQUITY

Where adolescents live, work, play, and learn drastically impacts their overall health. These toolkits serve as an educational resource, providing foundational knowledge related to health care rights and responsibilities during the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Youth and their parents/caregivers need to understand how they may navigate and become their own advocates in health care settings. Conducted by an adult facilitator, these toolkits can be used in schools, homes, and community setting and can be tailored to match the unique needs of the population served.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

The PATCH Toolkits were drafted by program staff based on its existing evidence-based programming with added input from youth, academic partners, community stakeholders, literature, and recommendations of medical professional organizations. Various program stakeholders reviewed the content, and initial pilot projects examined feasibility, time, effectiveness, and adaptations needed based on different populations and settings.

The findings from the *PATCH for Teens* Toolkit pilot project, which included 10 school-based health professionals from 6 Wisconsin school districts reaching 430 adolescents, are published in the *Journal of School Nursing*: Aeschbach CJ, Burrough WB, Olejniczak AB, Koepsel ER. Teaching adolescents to manage their own health care. *J Sch Nurs* 2019. DOI: 10.1177/1059840519867363.

We continue to rely on collected data to help guide and support ongoing quality improvement, as well as determine overall effectiveness. The Toolkits contain evaluations which are geared toward understanding effectiveness and impacts, while others are focused on process and ongoing improvement. Evaluations are available in various forms to accommodate different administration strategies.



Section 2: Implementation Guidance

COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS

While youth remain the most critical and valued partners, PATCH is intentional about bringing together various sectors – such as education, public health, youth programming, advocacy, academia and care delivery. It is our hope to develop a culture of shared responsibility and accountability in ensuring adolescents can live healthier lives.

Practice Collaborators and Partners		
Partner/Collaborator	How are they involved in decision-making throughout practice processes?	Does this stakeholder have lived experience/come from a community impacted by the practice?
PATCH Staff (Adults)	PATCH Staff continuously assesses need and makes connections within their local communities. Staff meets on a regular basis.	PATCH Staff live within specific geographic regions throughout WI, many of which supervise and support a team of youth. As trusted adults, they gain critical insights into the concerns, preferences and realities of today's youth.
PATCH Youth	PATCH employs and empowers teams of youth on an annual basis. Teams meet at least 4 hours/month for ongoing enrichment and engagement. Through a unique youth-adult partnership, PATCH brings youth voice into important adolescent health conversations while also providing the necessary knowledge, resources, support, skills, and opportunities needed to become healthy, connected, and thriving adults.	PATCH is committed to improving adolescent health alongside and in true partnership with youth. We pay them for their efforts and provide spaces in which they can make their voices heard.
National, State & Community Partners	PATCH has various advisory and support teams that help guide its ongoing	Partners and stakeholders lend insight into ways in which we can enhance our efforts and make connections with



(e.g., Parents of Youth, Health Care Providers, Schools, Community Organizations)	efforts; PATCH leadership also serves on various adolescent health teams.	others in the field. Many are parents of youth themselves, or directly work with youth/parents of youth.
PATCH Evaluation Team	PATCH has an internal team that leads evaluation, dissemination and quality improvement efforts. This team consists of PATCH Leadership as well as external consultants and academic partners. They meet on a monthly basis.	While some are parents to adolescents, this team monitors and evaluates efforts.

REPLICATION

PATCH is in the process of piloting and integrating these Toolkits into various initiatives throughout Wisconsin, and a handful of non-Wisconsin folks are also using these resources within their locality. Several changes in funding and priorities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic have hindered the momentum of being able to implement and gather quality data.

INTERNAL CAPACITY

One Facilitator is authorized and responsible for delivering PATCH content. With the information provided in the Toolkit(s) and support provided by the PATCH Program, Facilitators should be well-equipped to deliver an empowering and interactive health education session.

PRACTICE TIMELINE

Upon purchase, Facilitators gain access to downloadable materials and resources via PATCH Online. Printed copies are mailed within 7-10 business days. Implementation timelines vary and is up to the discretion of each Facilitator.

Phase: Planning/Pre-Implementation		
Activity Description	Time Needed	Operational Details
Determine Contextual Fit & Feasibility Factors	Varied	To what extent can the PATCH Toolkits enhance existing efforts? Who is best suited to implement successfully? How can this practice be sustainable?
Secure Needed Resources & Purchase Toolkit(s)	Varied	Determine who is going to support, implement, and sustain these efforts. Interested parties purchase the PATCH for



		Teens and/or the PATCH for Parents Toolkit via www.patchprogram.org ; one authorized facilitator per Toolkit.
Review Facilitator Guide & Toolkit Contents	Varied	Facilitator reviews Toolkit(s) in its entirety to determine integration, adaptations, and appropriate implementation plan.
Plan for Implementation	Varied	Determine and plan for session logistics (promotion, location, and time) and considerations (specific needs of audience and tailored resources).

Phase: Implementation

Session Facilitation	45 – 120 minutes	The time needed to facilitate a session depends on various factors such as group size, learner needs, and how much discussion is encouraged. Facilitators may also consider doing multiple mini sessions instead of a longer, single lesson.
Session Evaluation	5 – 10 minutes	Facilitators are highly encouraged to evaluate the impact of their efforts and are provided different methods based on audience and specific need. Additional incentive is provided to those who share their anonymous data with the PATCH Program to aid in program improvement efforts.

Phase: Sustainability

Program Improvement & Adaptation	Varied	Facilitators are encouraged to be creative and innovative to ensure the content meets the needs and priorities of their community, while staying true to the overall goal and messaging. Facilitators should rely on evaluation data, as well stakeholder input.
Program Integration	Varied	Facilitators are encouraged to work with other people and organizations who have an interest in adolescent health to further their reach and impact (providing resources and linkages to external community resources; integrating information into existing initiatives).



PRACTICE COST

Each Toolkit costs \$250, or \$450 if purchased as a bundle. Some organizations have grants to cover strategic Toolkit distribution within their community, while others have had organizations who sponsor and pay for the Toolkit to be used in a specific setting or priority population.

LESSONS LEARNED

Need: The *PATCH for Teens* and *PATCH for Parents* Toolkits serve as a baseline intervention to help young people gain more independence and responsibility over their health and health care decisions. Program stakeholders and those that have implemented the Toolkits have indicated the need for such content, indicating the lack in clearly teaching all youth how to navigate health care transition. Furthermore, when used simultaneously, these resources could help parents and teens gain a mutual understanding and basis for ongoing conversations about health care.

Interdisciplinary: By addressing the underlying factors impeding important interpersonal communication in health care settings, various quality improvement initiatives see the benefit of using the Toolkits to address their specific goals and outcomes (e.g., health care transition, mental health, and sexual health). The ability to foster cross-sector collaboration towards a common goal is exciting and holds great potential.

Time: Time constraints and competing priorities can be significant barriers to adoption and implementation of a new practice. The Toolkits have served as a guide and have provided flexibility based on individual circumstances. The initial preparation and planning phase is, inevitably, most time consuming. However, once Facilitators are familiar with the content and have implemented a few times, it naturally becomes less and less burdensome.

Parent Engagement: Unlike youth, there often is not a universal space where parents congregate (e.g., school) which forces Facilitators to be more innovative and creative in their efforts. The well-documented barriers of parent engagement are also applicable to the *PATCH for Parents* Toolkit.

Fidelity / Adaptation: Facilitators are not staff and have purchased the product. As a result, one of the major trade-offs is the inability to fully control implementation fidelity. Facilitators have indicated the ability to easily adapt and integrate such information into their existing efforts.

Evaluation: Once you've released a product to the public, it can be difficult to continuously assess its impacts. We are hopeful that with intentional integration into our existing efforts, we can have our staff serve as facilitators and provide the evaluation information we desire.

NEXT STEPS

There have been several competing priorities and shifts that have impact the ability for people to utilize these Toolkits. We are hopeful that with added staff capacity (a recent change in our organization) we will be able to thoroughly assess these initiatives in our upcoming 2022-2023 youth programming year. We have a specific interest in determining:

- Continued need/interest of these resources.
- Impacts and overall effectiveness.
- How the use of these Toolkits enhances our existing PATCH Teen Educator Program by having educational components for providers, teens, and families in a single community.
- How these resources might impact specific populations or identities differently.

We hope to keep the Toolkits relevant as youth and the world continue to change.

