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## **MCH Innovations Database** Practice Summary & Implementation Guidance

# PATCH Teen Educator Program

A Replicable, Youth-Driven Intervention to Improve the Way Adolescents Receive, Experience, and Utilize Health Care



Location

Wisconsin



Topic Area

Family/Youth Engagement,  
Primary/Preventative Care



Setting

Community



Population Focus

Adolescent Health



NPM\*

NPM 10: Adolescent Well-Visit  
NPM 11: Medical Home NPM  
12: Transition



Date Added

July 2020

\*As a health care communication program, this program has the possibility to complement other adolescent health strategies and activities (such as physical activity). Yet, the ones listed here are ones that are most often used.

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# Section 1: Practice Summary

## PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

As an initiative of PATCH (Providers and Teens Communicating for Health), the PATCH Teen Educator Program seeks to improve adolescent health and wellbeing alongside and in true partnership with youth. The goal is to empower young people to actively participate in their health care with a deliberate focus on enhancing communication and building strong patient-provider relationships.

This community-based program complements existing adolescent health care initiatives (such as those improving the quality of health care services and supporting health care transition) by providing teen-centered education, awareness, and encouragement to youth and health care professionals, alike.

## CORE COMPONENTS & PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

Core Components & Practice Activities		
Core Component	Activities	Operational Details
<b>Program Coordinator</b>	<p><b>Coordinator Training</b> Before programming begins the coordinator (with relevant support people) is required to participate in a 16-hour in-person training lead by PATCH in their community.</p> <p><b>Ongoing Coaching &amp; Mentorship</b> All replication programs will work closely with a PATCH-assigned Coach to help support all aspects of program planning, implementation, and evaluation.</p>	All PATCH Teen Educator Programs must hire an adult Coordinator at a range between 0.5 - 1 FTE. This Coordinator should be from the community and will commit to at least one year with the local program. The Coordinator is responsible for executing all PATCH programming efforts in their community. They are advised by the support team and their PATCH Coach and may work in partnership with an intern. They are a direct supervisor to the team of Teen Educators.
<b>Teen Educators</b>	<p><b>Training</b> Each program year begins with a 20 hour, in-person training for all Teen Educators. This sets the foundation for the year and ensures they gain the knowledge &amp; skills to do their job.</p> <p><b>Enrichment Meetings</b> Throughout the year, Teen Educators participate in regular, topic-focused meetings that provide knowledge and skills</p>	Each program year, Teen Educators, ages 14-18, are hired by the Coordinator to share their authentic insights into adolescent health care experiences, concerns, and preferences. PATCH intentionally brings diverse youth voices together – representing various identities, such as those related to age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic location, family life, religion, ability, gender, and sexual identity.



to help support healthy growth and development.

**PATCH Model  
for Youth  
Engagement**

**Youth-Driven Programming**

All aspects of PATCH programming center on youth and allied adults working together toward a common goal. Youth provide input and share in decision making, ultimately shaping the program over time with their creativity, insight, and ideas.

**Youth-Adult Partnerships**

The success of PATCH programming relies heavily on a supportive and dynamic relationship between youth and their PATCH Coordinator. Coordinators are available to youth as both coworkers and mentors, providing a variety of supports from logistical and practical to social and emotional.

**Employment**

Supporting job readiness models, youth apply, interview, and then are hired, trained, and paid for their work.

**Education**

Through training and ongoing enrichment youth gain knowledge and skills to help support healthy growth and development. They are offered opportunities to explore their own values and attitudes related to their change-making work with PATCH.

**Empowerment**

The PATCH model ensures youth are meaningfully engaged in spaces that typically only include adult perspectives, lending youth voice to programs, policies, and practices that affect them directly.

All programs are trained in the PATCH Model for Youth Engagement and are expected to maintain fidelity to the key elements through ongoing coaching and mentorship.

The PATCH Model for Youth Engagement is rooted in theories related to Positive Youth Development and Social Connectedness.

While youth must be paid for their work, programs can work to employee youth in a variety of ways to ensure the structure works for their organization.

**PATCH  
Workshops**

Teen Educators are hired and trained to facilitate workshops within their local community.

**PATCH for Providers Workshops**

The 90-minute PATCH for Providers Workshop helps health professionals understand the health care concerns, preferences, and realities of today's youth, offering better ways to connect with adolescent patients and ensure high-quality, youth-friendly services.

Coordinators work with local community members to schedule workshops with priority populations that can help ensure youth and health professionals alike grow in their knowledge, confidence, and ability to access or provide youth friendly services.



### **PATCH for Teens: Peer-to-Peer Workshops**

The 60-minute PATCH for Teens: Peer-to-Peer Workshop empowers young people to learn to manage their own health care and equips them with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate and advocate for youth-friendly services.

## HEALTH EQUITY

The PATCH Teen Educator Program cultivates a space for youth from all walks of life to participate and share their insights. The representation and blending of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives enhances PATCH's relevance and innovation in addressing health equity.

We encourage programs to place an emphasis on hiring and engaging youth in their community that experience the highest health disparities including youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth, youth with special health care needs, and youth from rural areas. The activities in the program also provide youth with the knowledge and support to understand the impacts of health equity. Young people have the ability to be incredible advocates for the health of their generation if given the space and tools to do so.

## EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

Our ongoing evaluations of the PATCH Teen Educator Program suggest the important need of addressing the underlying misunderstandings and misconceptions hindering effective adolescent patient-provider communication and relationships in health care settings. By attending a one-time, 60-to 90-minute workshop led by trained youth, both teen and provider audiences report changes in knowledge, confidence, and intended behavior. Youth leading those workshops indicate more noteworthy impacts of the program in terms of workforce development, and its impacts of supporting positive growth and skills for adulthood. The PATCH Program is proud to share PATCH's evidence, impact, and lessons learned through various mediums. For impact reports, publications, and presentations visit [www.patchprogram.org](http://www.patchprogram.org).

# Section 2: Implementation Guidance

## COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS

You will likely have many stakeholders invested in your program's success who provide guidance, financial support, or programmatic opportunities, such as being a guest speaker or promoting workshops.

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?
<b>PATCH Coach</b>	A coach is assigned to each Teen Educator Program by the PATCH Program to assist in program planning, implementation, and evaluation. PATCH Coaches mentor each coordinator in ways to cultivate strong and meaningful youth-adult partnerships and prioritize youth-driven programming.	The coach is responsible for creating a community of practice among replication partners. They also guide any adaptation to ensure quality programming that better meets local needs.
<b>Coordinator Support Team Members</b>	Formally convening a Support Team of stakeholders can help ensure ongoing community collaboration and support for your Coordinator. With their support, Coordinators are often able to expand their professional network and/or community connectedness to PATCH, while also building up Coordinator capacity to run effective programming. Support team members often participate in youth recruitment, workshop promotion & scheduling, connection to guest speakers, content experts, and community-based resource for youth, in-kind resources like materials, space, and food, and general championship of the work.	These individuals work and/or live within the community. They should come from all sectors touched by PATCH programming like health care systems, schools, and community-based organizations. It should also include youth. The support team should be representative of the general diversity of the community.
<b>Guest Speakers</b>	Guest speakers are content experts who provide youth with new adolescent health perspectives, resources, connections, and information at Teen Educator Training and Enrichment Meetings.	These individuals work and/or live within the community. As experts, they come from a variety of fields and may have lived experiences related to a particular health topics.
<b>Health Care Systems &amp; Professionals</b>	Teen Educators, with supervision from the Coordinator, educate and empower a wide variety of health care professionals on better ways to build trusted relationships and more effectively communicate with teens in health care settings. Health care professionals and clinic systems, in turn, are encouraged to advocate for systems-level change that could improve adolescent health care experiences.	These institutions are often located within your community and the individuals often work and/or live within the community. By training them, they can in turn help improve the health of young people throughout all corners of your community.



**Peers**

Teen Educators, with supervision from the Coordinator, educate and empower other youth to learn to manage their own health care experiences, and equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to get the health care they need and deserve.

These young people often live, go to school, and/or seek health care within the community. They are directly impacted by the practices of local health care systems & professionals.



## REPLICATION

PATCH began its replication efforts in 2014, four years after inception, when a local health insurance plan awarded funds to pilot the replication of the intervention in rural Wisconsin. A local public health employee hired, trained, and supervised a team of youth to conduct the newly revised workshops within their community. A year later, additional funds, provided by an academic endowment fund, broadened replication into an urban Wisconsin community. These two pilot projects examined the factors necessary for full-scale program replication including time, cost, feasibility, and adaptations needed based on different populations and settings. The findings led to minor program updates and a well-developed coaching model, ensuring communities implementing the intervention have the proper foundation and support to be successful. The first non-Wisconsin community began implementation in 2017.

To date, PATCH teams have varied in geography (rural and urban), organizational structure (government and non-profit), capacity, and overall reach. With support from PATCH, communities have adapted the program to their specific needs and priorities (e.g., hiring and training systems-involved youth as Teen Educators or simply integrating programming into existing public health initiatives).

Health care and public health entities continually express interest in the PATCH Teen Educator Program as it seemingly provides a creative and youth-driven approach to addressing other public health priorities (e.g., health care transition and trauma-informed care).

## INTERNAL CAPACITY

At a minimum, PATCH Teen Educator Programs must hire a Coordinator and a Teen Educator Team. Programs may choose to also bring on an intern (paid or unpaid) for programmatic support.

- **Coordinator:** A Coordinator is required to implement the PATCH Teen Educator Program and may range from 0.5 – 1 FTE depending on program size and reach. This Coordinator is employed by the organization replicating the PATCH Teen Educator Program. The Coordinator must work well with various populations to be successful due to the diversity in roles and responsibilities (i.e., building authentic relationships with teens, maintaining meaningful connections with community stakeholders, and working with a variety of health care professionals). Coordinators should be committed for at least one program year, though continuation past one year is encouraged for program growth and sustainability.
- **Teen Educator Team:** The replication partner, via their Coordinator, will hire a team of 8-12 youth (recommended ages 14-18) from the community to lead PATCH workshops and advocate for change within the community and health care system. Each Teen Educator is expected to fulfill a commitment to one program year.





## PRACTICE TIMELINE

PATCH runs on a July 1st – June 30th program year and highly recommends that all PATCH programming run on a complimentary 9-month programming timeline that aligns with the school year.

On this timeline, youth typically begin their program year with PATCH Teen Educator Training in August and wrap up with a celebration in May. Start and end dates can be adjusted based on community needs, funding, etc. The Coordinator utilizes the summer months for planning, preparation, and preparing for new Teen Educators.

Phase: Planning/Pre-Implementation		
Activity Description	Time Needed	Responsible Party
<p><b>Determine programmatic fit &amp; secure needed resources.</b></p> <p>PATCH Staff is happy to discuss its history, development, theory, and model with interested parties. For those looking to replicate, these initial conversations also help determine community need, community readiness, organizational capacity, and funding. Prior to beginning programming, replication partners will need to lay a foundation for support within their local community.</p>	Varied	<p>Replication Partner / Host Organization Leadership</p> <p>Support provided by PATCH</p>
<p><b>Enter into agreement with PATCH.</b></p> <p>Parties ready to replicate will sign a licensing agreement to initiate a transparent, collaborative, and personal mentorship with PATCH.</p>	Varied	PATCH & Replication Partner /Host Organization Leadership
<p><b>Develop a staffing &amp; support structure.</b></p> <p>Prior to Coordinator Training, replication partners are expected to identify and/or hire a Coordinator to lead the PATCH Teen Educator Program efforts in their community. PATCH Coaches will provide job descriptions and duties to help aid in this process.</p>	1-3 months	<p>Replication Partner/Host Organization Leaderships</p> <p>Support provided by PATCH</p>



<p><b>Coordinator Training</b></p> <p>A Coordinator Training helps lay the foundation for successful implementation and for effective coaching and mentorship between the PATCH Coach and locally employed Coordinator. Coordinators are required to attend training in full, additional support people are also invited to attend. Training should ideally be schedule at least 1 month prior to implementation</p>	<p>16 hours over 3 days</p>	<p>PATCH Coaches lead training on-site for the Coordinator &amp; additional supporters</p>
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**Phase: Implementation**

<b>Activity Description</b>	<b>Time Needed</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
<p><b>Youth Recruitment, Interviews, &amp; Hiring</b></p> <p>Typically, applications for youth stay open for anywhere between 2 weeks – 2 months, depending on the community. Once applications close, youth are invited to interview, typically over a 2-week period, and then youth are invited to join the program (or not) and sent a welcome packet with necessary onboarding paperwork.</p>	<p>1-3 months</p>	<p>Local Program Coordinator</p>
<p><b>Teen Educator Training</b></p> <p>PATCH provides a training curriculum for Coordinators to follow, but there will be additional preparation and decision making needed to adapt it to local community needs. All hired youth are required to attend training. Training dates and times should be set and shared with youth as part of the application process. We suggest beginning 2-3 weeks after youth are notified of their acceptance.</p>	<p>20 hours, usually spread out over 2 weeks</p>	<p>Local Program Coordinator</p>
<p><b>Teen Educator Enrichment Meetings</b></p> <p>Following Training, Teen Educators will participate in twice-monthly enrichment meetings that are organized by the Coordinator and feature a guest speaker and content expert to focus on a specific health topic. These meetings are usually 2 hours long and begin within 2-weeks after training and wrap up prior to the end of students’ school year.</p>	<p>2 hours, 2 times per month for 8-9 months</p>	<p>Local Program Coordinator</p>
<p><b>PATCH Workshop Promotion &amp; Delivery</b></p> <p>Following Training, Teen Educators are ready to deliver workshop to providers and youth in your community. The Coordinator will work to schedule 2-3 workshops per month starting after training. These happen alongside the enrichment meetings.</p>	<p>8-9 months, simultaneous with enrichment</p>	<p>Local Program Coordinator</p>



<p><b>Ongoing Coaching &amp; Mentorship</b> The PATCH Coach will host 1 hour coaching calls each month. In addition to these required calls, Coordinators will be invited to shorter, focused coaching calls and other community of practice opportunities to connect with fellow coordinators. The Coach will also provide support for all activities outlined above.</p>	1+ hour(s) each month	PATCH Coach with participation from the Coordinator
<p><b>Evaluation</b> PATCH provides a robust evaluation plan that begins during Teen Educator Training and continues throughout the year. There are a handful of required evaluations for key activities and even more optional evaluations available to collect ongoing process and quality improvement information.</p>	Ongoing	Local Program Coordinator, with support from PATCH Coach & PATCH Evaluation Team

**Phase: Sustainability**

Activity Description	Time Needed	Responsible Party
<p><b>Monitor, Learn From, and Improve Implementation</b> PATCH Coaches will help Coordinators &amp; program leadership consider sustainability in a variety of domains. All parties will have access to evaluation data and coaches will maintain regular check-ins.</p>	Ongoing	Replication Partner / Host Organization & PATCH
<p><b>Begin Second Year Programming</b> Because PATCH operates on program year cycles, activities from the implementation phase are repeated annually, based on the local programming calendar.</p>	8-9 months	Local Program Coordinator with support from PATCH Coach.

**PRACTICE COST**

The average contractual cost to launch a PATCH Teen Educator Program is approximately \$14,000. This includes the licensing fee, initial implementation materials, and Coordinator Training.

PATCH Coaching in year one is an additional \$3,600. Coaching costs will vary in future years and are agreed upon annually in the licensing agreement.

Additional funds are needed to cover staff salaries and youth stipends, office and meeting space, supplies, transportation, lodging, meals, and materials. In subsequent years, program start-up costs no longer apply and the cost to maintain a PATCH Teen Educator Program varies based on programmatic goals, reach, and capacity. Existing PATCH Teen Educator Programs have utilized different approaches to cover program costs, including grants, sponsorships, partnerships, and in-kind space and/or materials.



## Budget

Activity/Item	Brief Description	Quantity	Total
<b>Program Start-up Costs (Year 1 Only)</b>			
PATCH Teen Educator Program Replication License	Required to replicate the PATCH Teen Educator Program. License covers implementation of one PATCH Teen Educator Team. Multi-team license is available upon request	1	\$7,500
PATCH Teen Educator Program Coordinator Training	Includes 16-hours of in-person Coordinator Training and all related materials: up to 5 PATCH Training Manuals, PATCH for Providers Workshop facilitation materials for 100 participants, and PATCH for Teens: Peer-to-Peer Workshop facilitation materials for 100 participants.	1	\$2,500
Travel Expenses for Coordinator Training	Transportation, lodging, and meals for two PATCH Coaches to lead Coordinator Training	1	Varies based on training location and travel options.
<b>Average Start-Up Cost = \$12,000-\$15,000</b>			
<b>Annual Coaching Costs (vary by year)</b>			
PATCH Coaching	Level of coaching is agreed upon annually in a Licensing Agreement between the PATCH Program and the replication partner. Full coaching of 48 coaching hours (\$3,600) is required for all first-year programs.	12-48 hours	\$900 - \$3,600
<b>Annual Coaching Cost: between \$900-\$3,600</b>			
<b>Estimated Annual Implementation Costs (will vary based on program size and reach)</b>			



Staff Salary & Benefits	A PATCH Coordinator is required to implement programming and may range from 0.5 – 1 FTE. Staff time required will vary based on program size and reach.	0.5 - 1 FTE	Varies based on replication partner. PATCH encourages fair and just compensation.
Youth Payments	Teen Educators should be fairly compensated for their expertise. We suggest a generous training stipend followed by a minimum of \$12/hr. based on cost of living. Estimated at 6-8 hours/month per youth.	Average 8-12 Teen Educators	\$6,500 - \$15,000
Guest Speaker Payments	Guest speakers and content experts are key to Teen Educators' learning, growth, and connections and should be compensated for their contributions. While you may bring in as many as 20 speakers throughout the year, this is estimated at 5-10 paid speakers at \$100-\$200 per session.	Average 5-10 paid speakers	\$500 - \$3,200
Teen Educator Shirts	Official PATCH Teen Educator shirts should be provided to all Teen Educators to be worn during work-related events. \$22-\$26 each	Average 8-12 Teen Educators	\$200 - \$400
Operational Funds	Funds for day-to-day implementation such as transportation, food, supplies, space rental, mailing, swag, technology, additional workshop materials, etc.	N/A	\$2,500 - \$7,000

**Annual Implementation Cost: \$32,000 - \$75,000**

## LESSONS LEARNED

Initial implementation of this program model began in 2010 with a single \$10,000 grant. PATCH is thankful for the ongoing support from various non-traditional partners (public health, care delivery, education, youth programming, academia, advocacy, businesses, and more!) who have undoubtedly contributed to the program's growth, success, and sustainability. Although not an exhaustive list, the following are some key lessons we have learned over the years.

- Teens change, and so must we to better meet their needs and priorities!
- Youth can be incredible advocates if given the tools, space, and resources to do so.



- While time consuming, capacity building (the development of infrastructure and key community partnerships) and pre-implementation phases are critical. Thus, multi-year funding commitments give Teen Educator Programs the best chance for success.
- Coordinator turnover should be avoided whenever possible to maintain strong youth-adult partnerships and community connectedness.
- The intentionality and approach to youth engagement has led to more authentic, positive, and sustained youth engagement.
- A well-developed coaching model, in addition to a thorough Coordinator Training, has been critical for successful implementation of the PATCH Teen Educator Program in local communities as it heightens partnerships between PATCH Coaches and local program Coordinators.
- Since interpersonal communication plays such a critical role in the delivery of quality care, communities are interested in how this intervention might support existing adolescent health priorities and quality improvement efforts (e.g., health care transition, medical home, and preventive care, teen birth rate, injury prevention, and vaccinations).

## NEXT STEPS

PATCH is continuously learning and striving to apply the most advanced information and research to be a revolutionary leader in public health. We value integrity and actively assess program's alignment with evidence, guidelines, standards, and emerging trends. We recognize, value, and celebrate the fact that youth change and thus, our programming and efforts need to adapt, too. We strive to keep the program relevant in an ever-changing society and aim to meet the growing demands of today's youth. PATCH uses a variation of the Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle to quality improvement and is informed by our ongoing collection of process, outcome, and impact data. PATCH annually reviews and revises (as deemed necessary) the program's strategic plan, programming, and materials. Our original Wisconsin-based PATCH communities serve as our model while we explore ongoing adaptation, pilot new material and programs, and continually improve upon our current efforts.

Moving forward, we hope to add to the published evidence base with support from experts in the field. More importantly, we look forward to encouraging, supporting, and collaborating with others who are interested in such efforts and would love to see Teen Educator Programs expand to other communities. Together for adolescent health!

## RESOURCES PROVIDED

- PATCH Youth Programs Planning Guide
- 2022-2023 Year in Review

## APPENDIX

- N/A

