

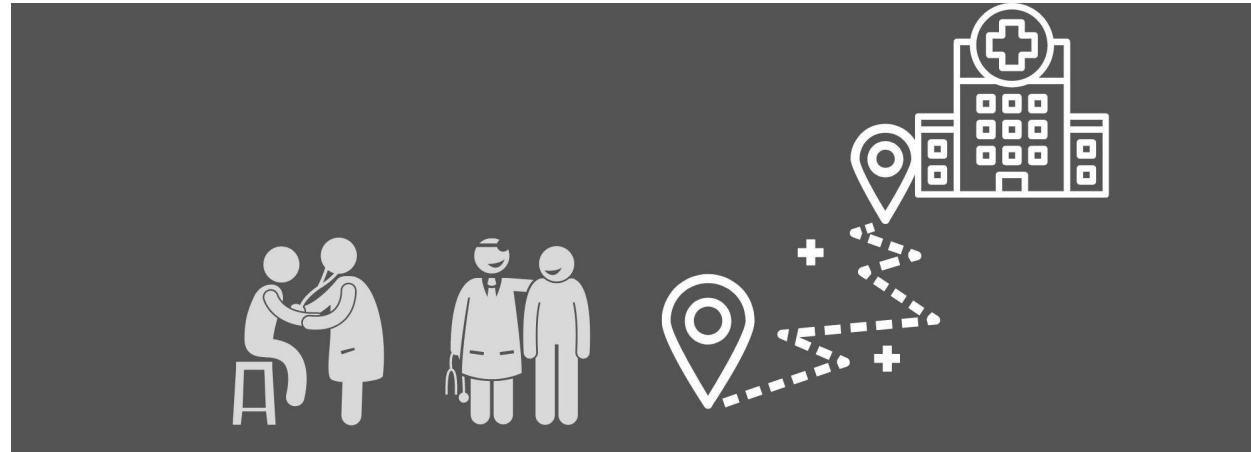
Feasibility and acceptability of bilingual community navigators in general practice of Sydney, Australia



Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity

Never Stand Still

Sabuj Kanti Mistry



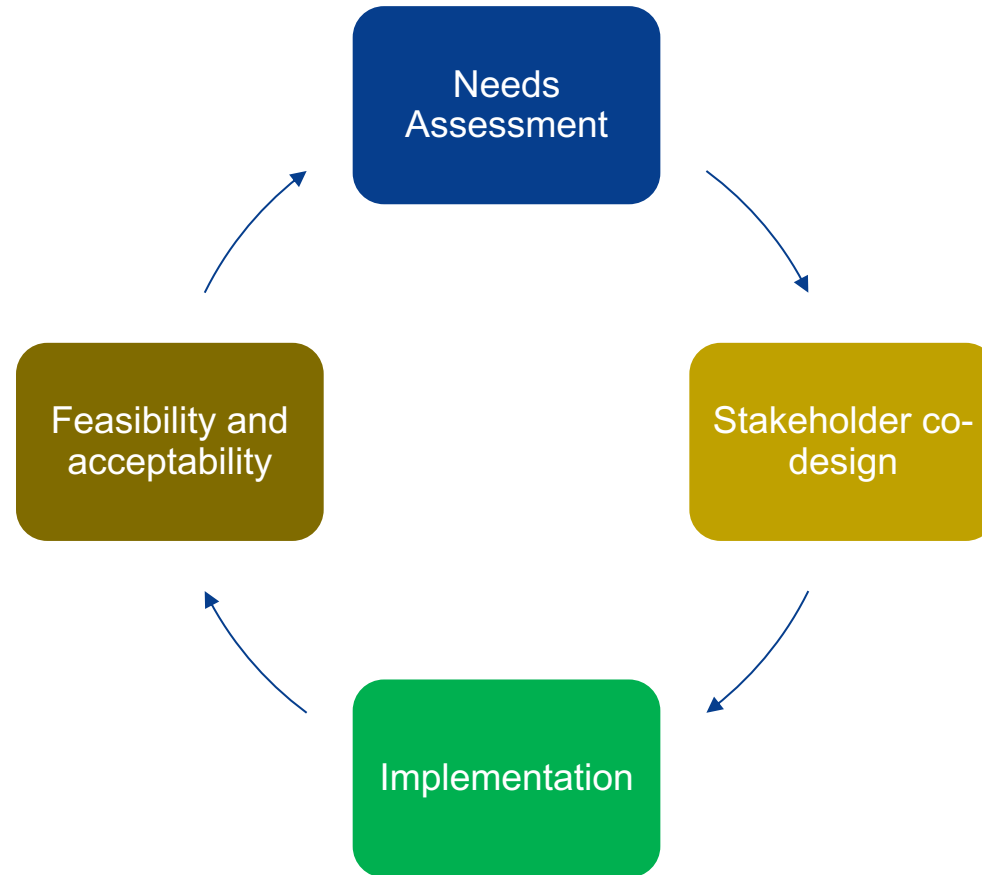
Is there difficulty in healthcare navigation?

- Fragmentation within health system in Australia
- Health system too-complex-to navigate
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds face difficulties **accessing appropriate health and social care services** (Meadows, G.N., et al. 2015; Ou L, et al. 2010; AIHW 2020)
- Limited capacity within general practice to increase navigation support for patients
- Involving **community navigators** is a potential way of addressing it (Mistry et al. 2021)

Objectives of the research

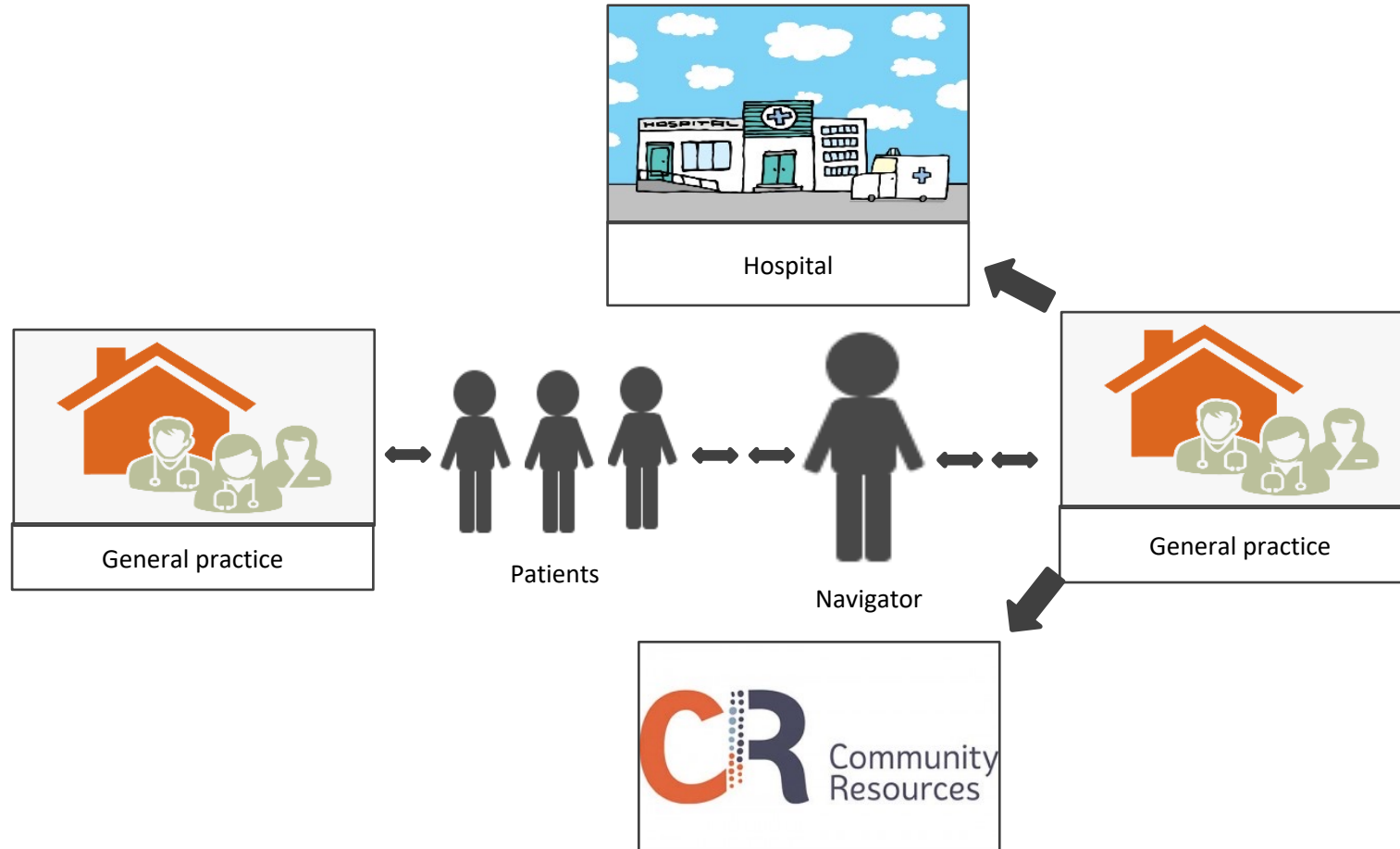
To assess the feasibility and acceptability of involving CHWs as bilingual community navigators in providing navigation support to CALD patients in general practice setting of Sydney, Australia.

Methods



Multiphase mixed method design

Navigation model of care



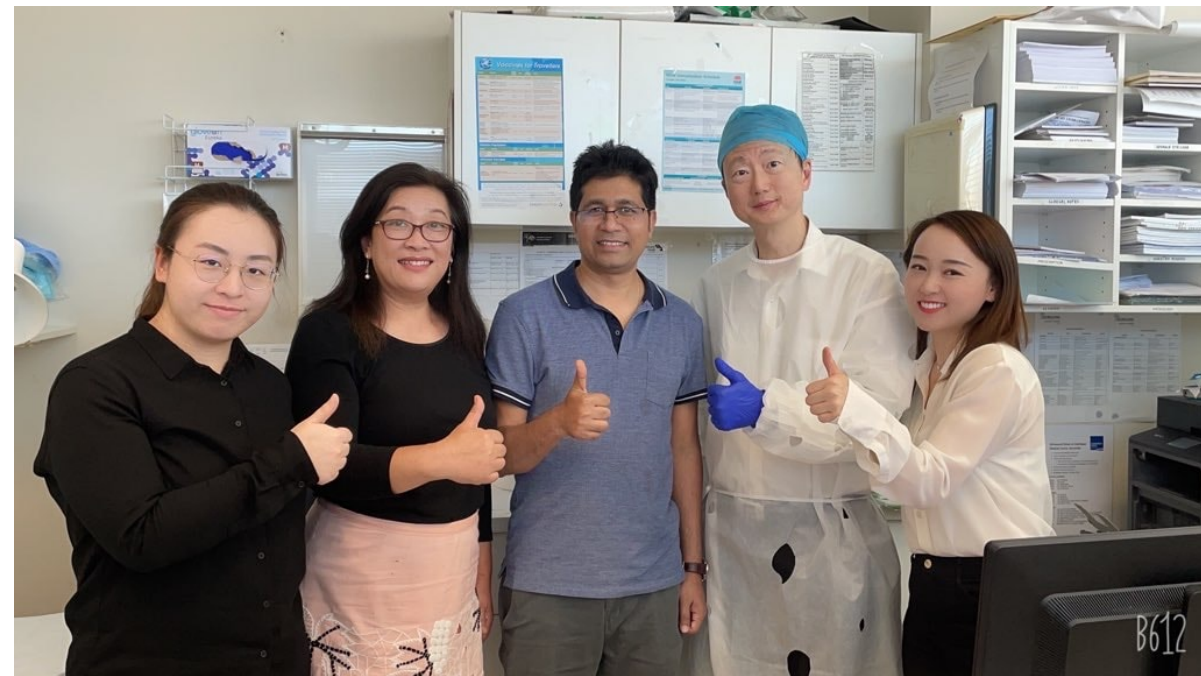
Recruitment and training of the navigator

- 12 CHWs from five culture groups: Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, Arabic and Samoan
- Blended training: Face-to-face (4 hours) and online training (20 hours)
- Ten online modules each for 2 hours: YouTube presentation with audio, notes, supporting videos, supporting reading, quiz





- 3 Navigators in 2 practice (Chinese, and Samoan) for 8-10 weeks
- Two sessions in a week – each session is 3 hours long
- Additional 2 hours in each week if required (e.g., for follow up of patients outside the two sessions)



Evaluation of intervention

- Mixed method design
- Navigator logbook for quantitative information
- In-depth interviews with 16 participants: 10 patients, 3 navigators and 3 practice staff

Findings

- A total of 95 patients served from 2 practices: most aged ≥ 65 years (66.3%), female (65.3%), speaking Mandarin (64.2%) and suffering from NCDs (54.7%)
- Roles included: booking appointments, helping navigate services, arranging transport, cultural support, explaining care plan, health education, resource mapping etc.
- Around half of the patients received one service, while 34.7% received two services and 15.8% received three or more.
- Most of the patients had one encounter with BCNs (66.3%) and the average navigation time was around half an hour.

Facilitators of BCN roles

Patient level

- Perceived need
- Acceptability of BCN roles

BCN-patient interaction level

- Language similarity
- Cultural similarity
- Interpersonal skills of BCNs
- Motivation of BCNs
- Training of BCNs

Practice/organizational level

- Organizational fit of BCNs
- Improved efficiency of care in the practice
- Support provided by BCNs for other roles

Contribution of BCN roles

Patient level

- Overcome communication problems
- Improve health system literacy

BCN-patient interaction level

- Building trust

Practice/organizational level

- Navigating services/referral
- Identify/access local resources

Barriers of BCN roles

Patient level

- Lack of awareness of BCN existence and roles
- Uncooperative patients

BCN-patient interaction level

- Inadequate health system knowledge and experience

Practice/organizational level

- Lack of awareness of BCN existence and roles
- Difficulty identifying culture specific health and social care
- Inefficient communication between BCN and GP

Limitations of intervention

- BCN time
- Discontinuity of the service

Conclusion and next steps

- Effective way of improving access and navigation to care for vulnerable and disadvantaged people
- BCN role feasible and acceptable in bilingual general practices
- Needs replication in a diversity of culture groups including refugees
- Needs organisational base for training and accreditation and funding mechanism to be sustainable
- Larger study see effectiveness

Outputs so far

- Mistry, S. K., Harris, E., & Harris, M. (2021). Community health workers as healthcare navigators in primary care chronic disease management: A systematic review. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 36(9), 2755-2771.
- Mistry, S. K., Harris, E., & Harris, M. F. (2022). Scoping the needs, roles and implementation of bilingual community navigators in general practice settings. *Health & Social Care in the Community*.
- Mistry, S. K., Harris, E., & Harris, M. F. (2022). Learning from a codesign exercise aimed at developing a navigation intervention in the general practice setting. *Family Practice*.

