

# Barriers and Facilitators for Scaling-Up an Integrated Care Package of Type 2 Diabetes and Hypertension: A Method for Cross-Country Analysis applied in Slovenia, Belgium and Cambodia

**Background and purpose.** The growing burden of type 2 diabetes and hypertension poses a challenge to healthcare systems worldwide. Countries are trying to scale-up integrated care for these diseases at micro (patient-provider), meso (organisation of care) and macro (national) levels. The challenges differ on country's resources, institutional set-up and culture. This paper presents a method and its application to analyse the barriers and facilitators for scaling-up in three very different countries - Slovenia, Belgium and Cambodia.

**Methods.** A mixed deductive-inductive method was used to develop a common code tree. Based on a common theory, a topic guide was developed. During data collection it was further contextualised according to the needs in each country; data collection was carried out using focus groups and structured interviews with stakeholders at micro, meso and macro level. The analysis largely used a bottom-up (inductive) approach; codes were defined and divided into different thematic groups, resulting in a specific code tree for each country. In a second phase, the country code trees were merged to search for common codes in repeated sessions with researchers from all three countries.

**Results.** A four-level hierarchy was used in the country code trees. A common code tree was developed with unified first two levels of codes; it contains 12 main topics (leadership; financing; organisation; service providers; patients; community actors; cooperation; media; pharmacy; information system; mentality in health care; and politics) and 52 sub-topics of the first level that classify barriers and facilitators.

**Conclusions.** This study provides a method for a cross-country analysis of barriers and facilitators of scaling-up integrated care. The common code tree points to important similar issues that occur in three countries despite the different context, while more detailed levels allow for country-specific analysis. This approach will also be useful for other countries and will facilitate cross-country learning.

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