

# Describing the contribution and value of Public Health Nurses to health system outcomes

## Background

- Largest group within the public health workforce, **better utilization of PHNs** would optimize the financial investment (NHSRU, 2009)
- **PHN vulnerability to replacement** by less expensive practitioners (National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice, 2013)
- Many aspects of PHN practice are **invisible and need to be made explicit** (Royal College of Nursing, 2016)
- Paucity of literature on PHN outcomes

## Study Overview

- **Purpose:**  
**Describe the value of PHNs to health system outcomes by capturing the perspectives of PHNs and Nursing Leaders.**
- **Methods:** qualitative cross-sectional design, individual telephone interviews (45-60 min.)
- **Sample :** member CHNIG/OPHNL,  $\geq 2$  years experience
- **Analysis plan:** content analysis

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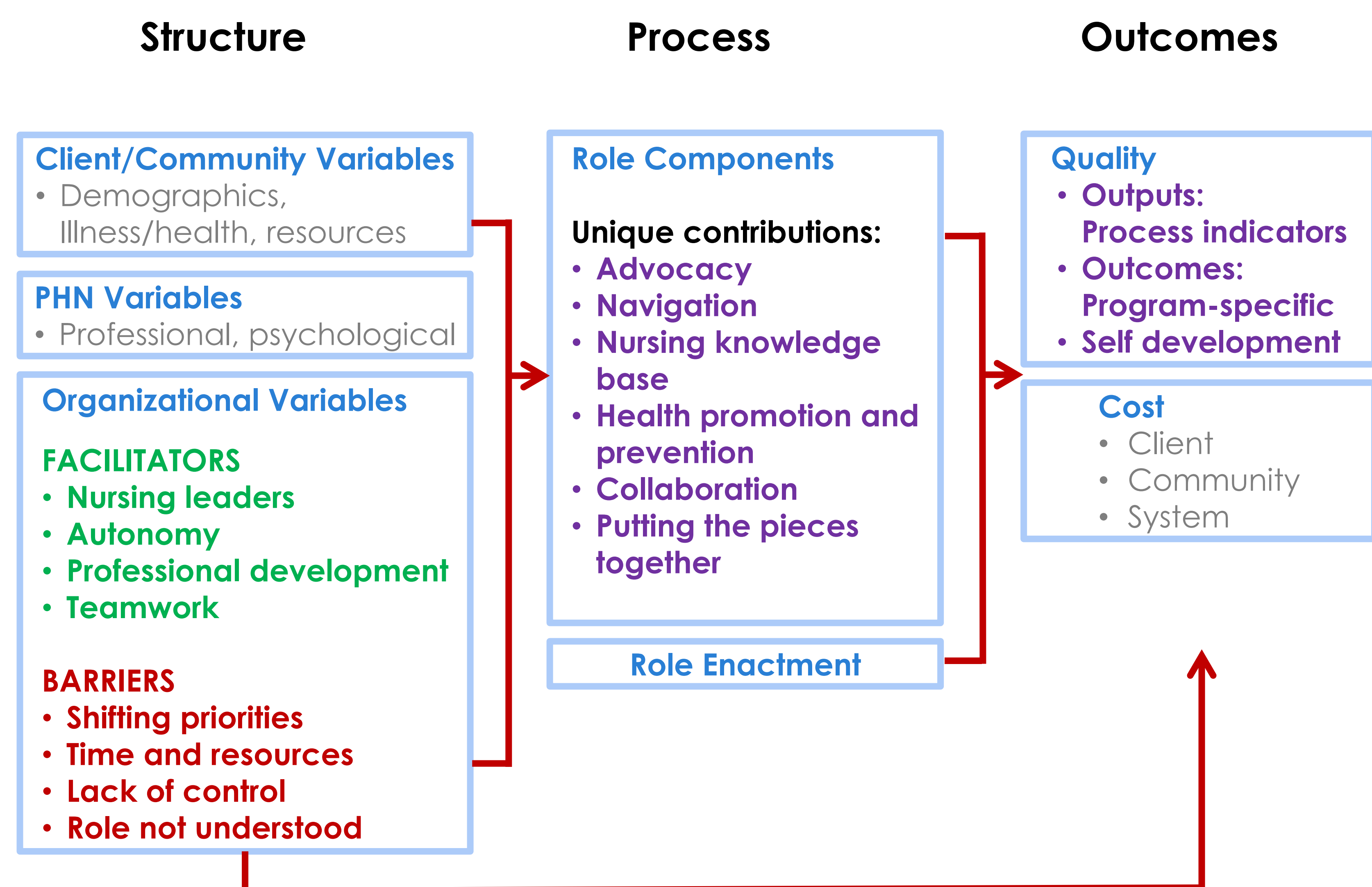
The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders  
Leading the Way for Public Health Nursing

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## Preliminary Findings

PHNs n=22 Mean years experience = 19.6



**Challenges to measurement:**

- Difficult to measure impact in public health
- Long term outcomes needed
- Feedback might be verbal

Adapted Role Effectiveness Model (Sidani & Irvine, 1999)

...influence all levels of policy to promote access, decrease barriers ...the voice of the client and community

Navigate the system for vulnerable and marginalized populations

We bring the large lens that community piece, being able to work with community partners, working well with others, that collaborative model, that's what we do very well

We are out there protecting the health of populations and communities.

A Nursing Lens...  
...knowledge of the community, see the 'Big Picture', understand the complexity, form caring and therapeutic relationships, responsive to client's needs, experts in the field...

If providing education was the answer, we would be finished our work years ago.

...putting the pieces together that don't look related  
...working with vulnerable or marginalized clients who would otherwise fall through the gaps  
...looking across the layers from individuals to communities and the population

Monitoring metrics  
...work is driven by targets  
...shows a small fragment of what we do  
...our impact goes undetected

I know I am changing the trajectory for a lot of kids and how they are achieving their milestones and their development.

We are influenced by the political climate at the time...do they really know what you do?

Nurses in leadership roles  
...they understand what we are doing...they sit at the table and share our voice...the voice of the community...

Not everyone really knows exactly what public health nursing is. Our families are very vulnerable.

## For Consideration

- Strategies to communicate role and unique contributions to various audiences (public, other disciplines, partners)
- Capture and communicate impact of programs and services staffed primarily by PHNs

## Next Steps

- Knowledge translation dialogue Fall 2017
- Formulate action strategies with PHN associations
- Set research agenda e.g. PHN-sensitive outcomes