



# Learning communities of practice in care, a study into contributing factors of success for professional learning in daily practice

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## ABSTRACT

Lifelong learning is necessary for nurses and caregivers to provide good, person-centred care. To facilitate such learning and embed it into regular working processes, learning communities of practice are considered promising. However, there is little insight into how learning networks contribute to learning exactly and what factors of success can be found. The study is part of a ZonMw-funded research project 'LeerSaam Noord' in the Netherlands, which aims to strengthen the professionalization of the nursing workforce and promote person-centred care. We describe what learning in learning communities looks like in four different healthcare contexts during the start-up phase of the research project. A thematic analysis of eleven patient case-discussions in these learning communities took place. In addition, quantitative measurements on learning climate, reciprocity behavior, and perceptions of professional attitude and autonomy, were used to underpin findings. Reflective questioning and discussing professional dilemma's i.e. patient cases in which conflicting interests between the patient and the professional emerge, are of importance for successful learning. Strikingly, there seems to be an inner conflict on the part of the professional between what is seen as the patients' self management and their own professional responsibility.

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## Figures and tables



Fig. 1. The four phases of learning (after Maslow).

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Fig. 2. The learning pyramid (National Training Laboratories, Bethel Maine).

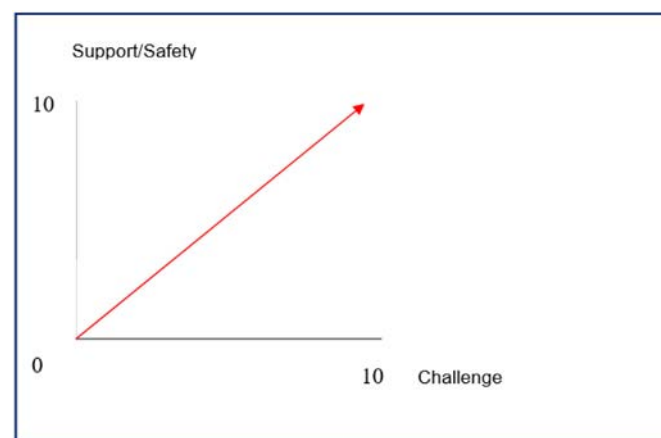


Fig. 3. Support/safety versus challenge.

#### CRedit authorship contribution statement

**Margreet van der Cingel:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Funding acquisition. **Heleen Reinders-Messelink:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – review & editing, Supervision. **Gonda Stallinga:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Funding acquisition.

#### Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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#### Declaration of interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

#### Further reading

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**Dr. Margreet van der Cingel** is Professor of Nursing Leadership & Research at the University of applied sciences NHL Stenden in the Netherlands. She is a registered nurse, nurse scientist (MscN) and holds a PhD in philosophy on compassion in nursing practice, a guiding principle in quality of care. She started her career as cardiac care nurse. During and after her master study she had various jobs in nursing staff and management positions. She made a career move to teaching as a college professor and worked as a senior researcher and associate professor at several research groups, contributed to the national curriculum for nursing and supervised a research programme on person-centred care. During her career she has built up expertise in qualitative and design research; participatory action research; person centred care, care ethics and compassion, and

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She can call herself a driven nursing researcher who strives to improve both health care and nursing by making 'functioning' (defined in the ICF) as a focus of health care and the identity of the nursing profession.