

System Support Mapping

Context:

Used when it is important to understand the role, responsibilities, needs, resources, and wishes of individual participants navigating and/or supporting a system. This tool has been particularly useful in the context of care coordination or coaching. It is also useful when studying a fragmented system in which many stakeholders shape outcomes.

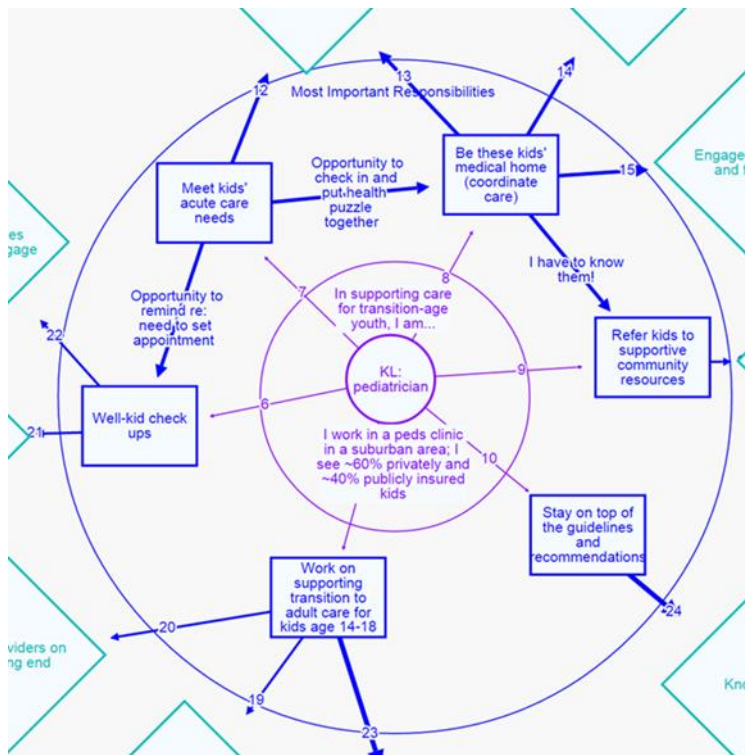
Steps:

1. It is very important for the particular problem and system your team is working on to be clear before you begin the exercise. Now is a good time to establish consensus in your group around your shared definition of the system and scope of work to be studied. For simplicity, consider the work proposed in your (current draft of) the project aim statement, or the day-to-day work each team member contributes related to your challenge statement).

This exercise will walk you through reflecting on and documenting your role in the system under study, your responsibilities/objectives/goals, and what supports you in meeting these responsibilities/objectives/goals. Keep in mind as you write that you will share your map with your team at the end of this activity.

2. Draw 4 concentric circles, with space in each ring for a post-it note (see figure at below)

What role do you play in this system? Are you a patient, a family member, a teacher, an organizational leader, a legislator, a community member, etc?



3. When you identify your role, write it on a purple post-it note, and place it in the innermost circle (in the center of the map). *Do you want to clarify your role by providing any context that will help others understand your unique situation? For example, if you are a provider, what is your specialty and what kind of patients do you typically see?*

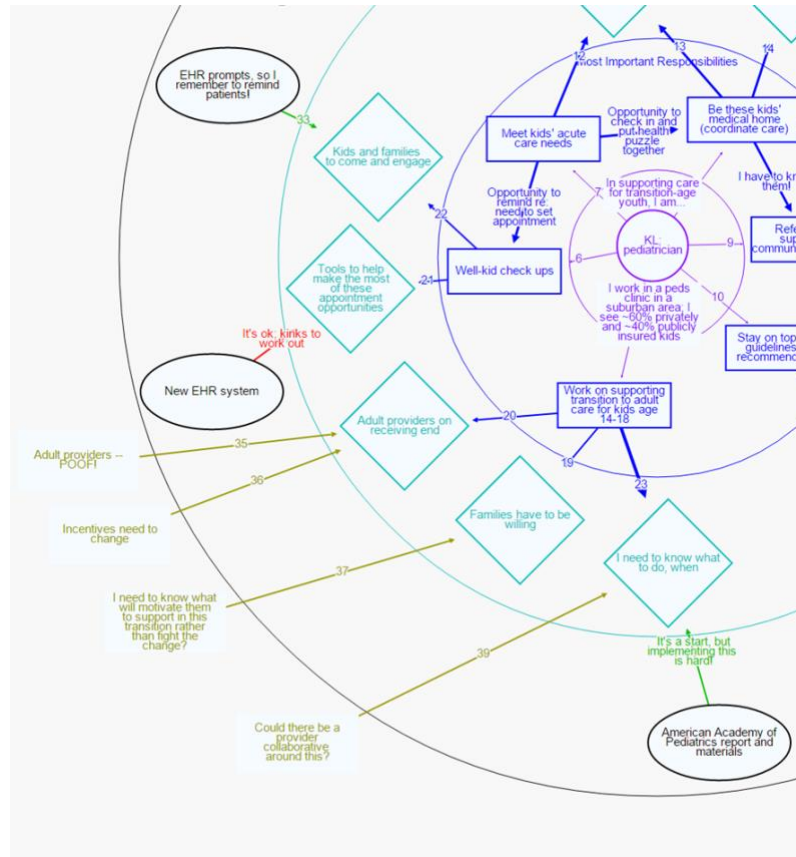
4. This information should be written on a second purple post-it note and slipped under your role (make sure it's partially visible so we know it's there)!

In your role in the system your team is studying, what do you see as the main activities you are responsible for/objectives you are working toward/goals? Identify your 4-6 most important responsibilities.

- a. Write each responsibility on a separate blue post-it note, and spread these around the second ring (the one surrounding your role).

- b. Draw arrows from your role to each responsibility it creates for you.

Next, we want you to consider each responsibility, one at a time, and identify what you need – in general terms – to get it done. Think about this as a recipe. To meet a given responsibility/objective/goal, what ingredients would you need? Common responses include time, money, reimbursement, buy-in from my organization, information, access to ____, etc. Please be creative here – it really helps if this list is complete. Also consider internal needs – like patience, empathy, energy, creativity, etc.



- c. Write each need on a separate aqua post-it note, and stick them in the ring surrounding responsibilities/objectives/goals.
- d. Draw arrows that link each responsibility to the needs it generates. Repeat for each responsibility.

The next step is to think about the needs you listed. Are there any specific resources that you have tried (whether or not they have helped you) to get that need met? What supports you? If needs are ingredients in a recipe, resources might include things like a favorite recipe, particular brands of an ingredient, or a store that sells many ingredients on your list. In public health, resources commonly include websites, brochures, training programs, and organizations in your community. Here we also want to know about your experience with each resource. Did it help you? Why or why not – what about the resource worked/didn't work?

- e. Write each resource on a separate gold post-it note, and place it in the ring surrounding needs, close to the need(s) it targeted.
- f. Put a green, black, or red star on the post-it to indicate whether the resource helped, was neutral, or did not help/support you, respectively. If you can, make a note in that color of marker explaining. This map is meant to reflect only your own experiences, so don't be concerned about judging the usefulness of a service based on your own experience.
- g. Please draw an arrow from each resource to the corresponding need they targeted.

Check over your map. Are all the arrows there? Is anything missing? Take some time to make sure your map is complete before moving to the next stage.

- h. Fill in any missing arrows, responsibilities, needs, and resources.

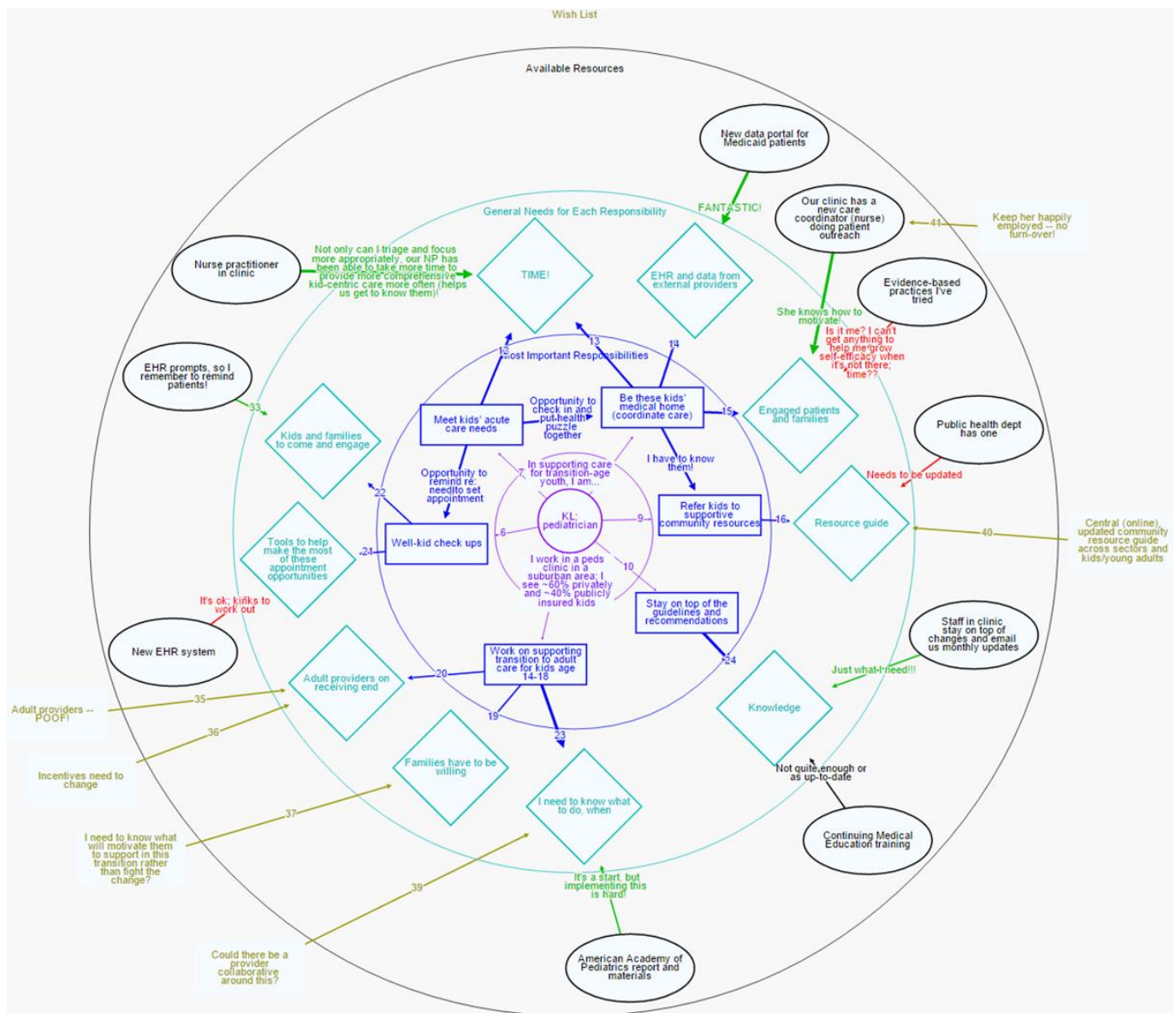
In the area outside the resources ring, we now want you to add your top three wishes for what would most help you meet your responsibilities/objectives/goals. What would most help you meet your responsibilities? How could the system better support you? Are there any responsibilities you just can't begin to get your head around that you'd like help with? Do you have an unmet need? Do you wish a current resource were different in some way?

- i. Write one wish on each of three red post-it notes. Draw an arrow from the post-it note to whatever the wish targets in their map.

History:

Adapted from “Gabe’s Map” care mapping, and ecomaps.

Here is a full example from the perspective of a pediatrician supporting the transition for kids in her practice to adult providers.



Here is a full example from the perspective of a father of a transition-age youth with autism, reflecting on his role for caring for his son during this time of transition.

