

## **PPN Midlands Community of Practice Guidance Document**

### **What is this paper for?**

To define and explain how to create a Community of Practice (CoP).

### **Community of Practice definition:**

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.<sup>1</sup>

### **Why Communities of Practice are important**

According to Wenger (1998)<sup>2</sup> communities of practice provide five critical functions. They:

1. **Educate** by collecting and sharing information related to questions and issues of practice
2. **Support** by organising interactions and collaboration among members
3. **Cultivate** by assisting groups to start and sustain their learning
4. **Encourage** by promoting the work of members through discussion and sharing
5. **Integrate** by encouraging members to use their new knowledge for real change in their own work

### **Examples of Communities of Practice**

#### **[Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner Professional Network](#)**

Children and Young People Community of Practice – Has 3 subnetworks under its umbrella:

**[Child Wellbeing Practitioners \(CWPs\) subnetwork](#)**

**[Education Mental Health Practitioner \(EMHP\) subnetwork](#)**

**[Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists \(CAPTs\) subnetwork](#)**

### **How to create a Community of Practice**

1. Identify an idea for a Community of Practice that you wish to establish and lead
2. Things to think about – Does this CoP already exist elsewhere within the Midlands? If so, make contact with them.
3. If this does not already exist, email the **[PPN Midlands](#)** about your idea
4. Speak to your colleagues to gauge interest and support
5. The PPN Midlands will do a call out to members to see if there is any interest
6. If there is interest, you can work together with the PPN Midlands to organise your first meeting

<sup>1</sup> <https://library.hee.nhs.uk/knowledge-mobilisation/knowledge-mobilisation-toolkit/communities-of-practice>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.communityofpractice.ca/background/why-communities-of-practice-are-important/>