



WHAT IS TEAMWORK IN INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE?



NATIONAL CENTER for
INTERPROFESSIONAL
PRACTICE and EDUCATION

Practical Guide: Volume 1

What is Teamwork in Interprofessional Collaborative Practice?

A PRACTICAL GUIDE: VOLUME 1

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Overview

The National Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education receives numerous requests from educators, practitioners, and researchers in the interprofessional education and collaborative practice (IPECP) community. Many requests concern teamwork as it occurs within interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP): how to define it, how to measure it, and how to develop a plan for assessing it at the individual team member and collective group levels. Across our community of users, people want access to high quality measurement tools. They also seek guidance on how to appraise and select the right tools for their particular purposes and settings.

The purpose of our Practical Guide series is to help users assess IPCP teamwork at different points throughout the education-to-practice IPECP continuum.³³ In presenting a workshop on these topics in August 2016, we also learned that many people confuse *assessment* (of individuals, teams) with *evaluation* (of programs and strategic interventions). We recognize that people want to know more about how to develop a plan for evaluating programs designed to teach and assess IPCP teamwork.

The framework for these Guides grew out of research conducted by the National Center in 2015.^{58, 59} Drawing from the science of teamwork and a national survey of 32 thought leaders, the Center identified 11 essential teamwork competencies. These are competencies exhibited by effective teams as a whole. We also identified 20 individual-level competencies which are believed to impact an individual's ability to successfully contribute to team performance. Although there is overlap between these competency lists and those developed by others, for example, by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC),³² we feel our competencies have value due to their basis in the literature, specifically on teamwork, and the consensus results from our survey.

Volume 1. ***What is Teamwork in Interprofessional Collaborative Practice?*** —

Introduces and explains teamwork concepts, based on the literature of effective teams across many disciplines, including health and social care.

Volume 2. ***Assessing Interprofessional Collaborative Practice Teamwork*** —

Describes important measurement concepts for assessing IPCP teamwork competencies and performance across the continuum, from undergraduate training through continuing professional development.

Volume 3. ***Steps for Developing an Assessment Plan*** — Provides a step-by-step process for developing an assessment plan of IPCP teamwork competencies and performance; can be applied at the undergraduate, graduate, or professional development levels.

Volume 4. ***Assessing Teamwork: Stories from the Field*** — Provides case studies of assessing IPCP teamwork in academic and practice settings. To be published in Spring 2017.

Volume 5. ***Incorporating IPCP Teamwork Assessment into Program Evaluation*** — Provides guidance for evaluating programs designed to strengthen teamwork capacity and performance. To be published in Fall 2017.

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Today, interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP) teams in healthcare are composed of professionals from a wide array of multi-sector backgrounds, engaging people/patients, families, and communities. These diverse individuals must learn and work together to provide comprehensive care and services. Therefore, developing teamwork skills is essential to performance.

What does teamwork look like specifically in interprofessional collaboration? How might performance in healthcare be different from other kinds of teams?

Teams have been defined as a set of members who learn and/or work interdependently. Membership on a team may be continuous; however, more commonly, teams have a limited and variable lifespan of membership. IPCP teams

- share valued goals for people/patients, families, communities,
- have specific roles or functions to perform, and
- have commonly understood guidelines for working together.

However, interprofessional team members have the added challenge of coming from a variety of different educational, cultural, and experiential backgrounds. *Volume 1* introduces teamwork specifically for interprofessional collaboration in healthcare. It is organized around several critical questions:

- What is teamwork in an interprofessional context?
- What are the barriers to effective IPCP team performance?
- What IPCP team performance metrics are important?
- What are critical IPCP team competencies?

The bulk of *Volume 1* focuses on the last question. It defines 11 critical team competencies and describes ways to foster effective teamwork.

Trends in the world of healthcare delivery are important to acknowledge directly from the start. First, IPCP teamwork takes place in many environments: acute care in hospital, ambulatory clinics, transitional care units, community agencies, home health care, the home, and the workplace. Traditionally, health systems have used the term “patients” and “clients” for the users of their services. Given the changing healthcare environment, the use of the term “patient” may not be appropriate for all environments. Therefore, the terms “patient” and “people” are used interchangeably throughout *Volume 1*. Also, we have used the phrase “health and social care” to acknowledge the diverse array of environments, professions, and services involved in healthcare delivery.