

Interprofessional Education using Standardized Patients in a Multidisciplinary Health Professional College: Student Perceptions and Lessons Learned

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BACKGROUND/RATIONALE

The goals of this interprofessional education (IPE) exercise were to enhance knowledge of other healthcare professional's roles, foster positive attitudes about collaboration in patient care management and improve communication skills among healthcare professional students.

This was the first time this university incorporated eight disciplines into a simulated patient scenario.

Table. Mean differences (SD) between post and pre survey results.				
Statement	PT n=45	PA n=33	CSD n=47	DH n=34
Interest level in learning about IP collaboration	.20 (.51) ^a	.15 (.57) ^b	.65(.71) ^{a,b}	.66(.60) ^{a,b}
Understanding of teamwork in IP collaboration	.07 (.54) ^a	.21 (.64)	.57 (.62) ^a	.24 (.70)
Understanding of values/ethics needed for IP practice	.07 (.50) ^a	.12 (.59) ^b	.56(.62) ^{a,b}	.30 (.63)
Understanding of roles/responsibilities of other HCPs on the patient care team	.47 (.79)	.45 (.75)	.61 (.65)	.48 (.79)
Knowledge of basic IP communication skills necessary to provide person-centered quality care	.34 (.64)	.15 (.51) ^b	.59 (.65) ^b	.36 (.74)
Comfort level in communicating with other HCPs when conflict exists	.45 (.66)	.53 (.67)	.70 (.79)	.57(.75)
Experience on IP teams in the simulated delivery of health care	.88 (.86)	.84 (1.06)	.77 (.78)	1.33 (.95)
Experience on PI teams in the real-world delivery of health care	.47 (.69)	.36 (.60)	.43 (1.08)	.43 (1.06)
Experience on an IP research team	.46 (.85)	.63 (1.05)	.66 (1.05)	.78 (.99)
^a significant difference between PT and other groups ($p \leq .008$)				
^b significant difference between PA and other groups ($p \leq .008$)				

METHODS/METHODOLOGY

- Students (n=150) from eight disciplines participated in an IP simulated case study.
- Teams were comprised of students who were in their program's final academic year including dental hygiene (DH), physician assistant (PA), physical therapy (PT), communication sciences and disorders (CSD), public health sciences, doctor of nursing practice, medical laboratory sciences, and first year medical students.
- A standardized patient was used: a veteran with leukemia.
- A pre/post evaluation self-measure survey using a Likert scale rating (1-5) was administered.
- The areas that measured were:
 - Knowledge and ability of basic IP communication skills
 - Comfort level in communicating with other healthcare professionals when conflict exists
 - Experience with simulated or real world clinical IP teams
 - Experience on an IP research team
 - Understanding, interest and previous experience with IPE

Details of Veteran with Leukemia Case

- Vietnam veteran
- Needs a bone marrow transplant
- Poor fitting prosthetic leg
- Onset of gingiva bleeding
- Overall weakness
- Hearing loss

RESULTS

Dental hygiene(DH), physician assistant (PA), physical therapy (PT), communication sciences and disorders (CSD) had sufficient numbers of students from which to analyze the data:

- Changes in pre and post survey scores were significantly different between PT and PA students and CSD and DH students regarding interest level and understanding of values and ethics in IP practice.
- Differences in pre and post survey scores were also noted between CSD and PA students in basic knowledge and between CSD and PT students in understanding teamwork (Table)
- Responses to open ended questions between these four groups of students were similar.

“Ability to learn and continually educate ourselves with interaction through other professions”

LESSONS LEARNED

- Difficulty for faculty to find time to develop IPE events due to over load on top of teaching expectations.
- The pre and post surveys measured attitude and do not necessarily indicate practice behaviors upon graduation.

CONCLUSIONS

- This IPE event proved to be successful in improving the students' opinions and increased their ability and comfort level in working with each other.
- Overall, the students valued the time with other disciplines.