Exploring the Impact of Interprofessional Mentoring

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Background

Support for interprofessional development had been identified as a priority by the American Interprofessional Health Collaborative and the National Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education, based on repeated inquiries from constituents and attendee comments at previous meetings.

Introduction

• With the help of Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, a mentoring program was piloted in 2017 to help support faculty with diverse IPE-related needs in areas such as leadership, curriculum design, teaching methods, classroom-clinical experiences, and evaluation.
• Applicants for mentors and mentees were solicited through organizational email lists and newsletters in early spring.
• Twenty-six faculty representing almost a dozen health-related professions and institutions cross all regions of the United States applied.
• Six mentor-mentee pairs were selected, based on alignment of stated needs and experience.

Purpose

This research study aimed to explore and interpret the perceptions of mentors and mentees who participated in the pilot program.

Methods

• A semi-structured, open-ended interview was used in this qualitative research design.
• Eight participants from five unique pairs agreed to participate. These participants represent the following professions: Education, Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Sociology.

Results

Relationship is central to mentoring, and you need to build it

Learning is a 2-way street.
Mentees seek affirmation, advice; Mentors love to learn, new opportunities

IPECP is a new frontier.
Charting our own course—both mentees and mentors

Need structure yet flexibility.
Cross discipline/professional work is messy and complex

Solid ideas for path forward.
Strong commitment to build on this formative work

Discussion

• Participants perceived a mutually beneficial, positive experience even when fit wasn’t perfect.
• They confirmed the need for mentoring to help interprofessional leaders navigate their way.
• They desired additional opportunities and methods to connect with their mentor/mentee to develop a more fruitful relationship.

Next Steps

• Based on participant feedback, enhancements have been made for the next iteration of the mentoring program.
• The Aihc Program Committee will explore opportunities for funding to ensure sustainability.
• The working group will continue to gather qualitative data through program evaluation to understand needs, expectations, and outcomes.
• Applicants are being recruited for the second cohort. Visit the Aihc website for more information: https://aihc-us.org/