Faculty Collaboration for Interprofessional Education in Health Sciences: Embedding IPE Content into Existing Discipline-specific Curricula

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Abstract
Interprofessional learning opportunities are often limited in health sciences education due to stringent curricular requirements and limited time. Educators value, but struggle to adopt, IPE activities in the classroom. A potential solution is integration of IPE into existing curricular content, while promoting attainment of core competencies for interprofessional collaborative practice.

Background
Interprofessional Education (IPE)
- Essential component of healthcare education
- Should be integrated into health sciences curricula
- IPE education models lag behind IP collaborative practice models
- Graduates are not prepared to work in IPE teams

IPE Team-based Healthcare
- Improves patient outcomes/lowers healthcare costs
- Strengthens healthcare systems outcomes
- Contributes to effective quality patient care
- Improves patient healthcare experiences

IPE in Health Sciences Programs
- Educators value IPE learning experiences yet struggle to integrate them into an already demanding curriculum.
- Persistent silos in health professional education
- Lack of resources and faculty commitment to IPE
- Faculty inexperience with IPE
- Increased workload required to create IPE experiences
- Inconsistent perceived value of IPE for both faculty and students
- Scheduling conflicts between programs with clinical requirements

Aims
- Develop a coordinated activity that embeds IPE content into existing discipline-specific curricular requirements
- Provide a forum to highlight student projects and promote lifelong learning of IP values
- Develop a new learning approach and assessment strategy that mutually achieves IPE and discipline-specific outcomes

Methods
Health Sciences Interprofessional Research Posters
- Designed to integrate IPE into existing curricular content
- Disciplines for pilot activity included nursing, dental hygiene, and counseling students
- Students required to identify and incorporate discussion of IPE Roles & Responsibilities into existing research projects

Faculty Collaboration
- Faculty embedded IPE poster assignment guidelines into courses
- Multiple meetings between nursing, dental hygiene, and counseling faculty to establish poster presentation project guidelines and event details
- Faculty & students collaborated to identify discipline-specific roles and responsibilities for specific research project
- Grant application for funding

College of Health Sciences IPE Poster Day
- Marketed event to all faculty, staff, and students in COHS
- Invited key University personnel (Undergraduate Research Director, COHS Dean, Honors College Dean, community stakeholders)
- Hired event-day coordinator (student worker) to assist with registration & feedback
- Used grant funding to purchase door prizes and food for increased participation
- Collected event-specific feedback and poster-specific feedback surveys

Results
- 167 conference attendees, 5 disciplines
- 93% overall satisfaction in event
- 91% research topics relevant to practice
- 93% more aware of roles and responsibilities
- Self-reported IPEC competencies improved
- Interaction with other health disciplines was most valuable aspect
- Posters accepted at national conferences
- Areas for improvement include: better coordination between students from different disciplines working together; provide set times for students to collaborate face-to-face in addition to virtually

Conclusion
The interprofessional student research projects and poster presentation conference is an effective sustainable model for IPE education.

The conference offers an annual forum for students to showcase their research and develop professional presentation skills.

Student Comments
“Sharing the poster with others helped to understand my group’s point of view a bit better. Interacting with various health-care students also helped me to gain new perspectives and methods for improvement.”

“We had a lot of good feedback on our poster. The graduate students were super helpful and even made handouts for us to give out.”

“I loved being able to collaborate & discuss different views with people in different fields. I liked collaborating with the counseling students.”

“IPE [Poster] day gave us a good experience in presenting our posters to other health professionals.”

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