



# Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice in the Graduate Nursing Mental Health Practicum Course

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## Introduction

- Inter-professional Education and Collaboration (IPEC) was introduced by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing in the *Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (2006) and Core Competencies were introduced by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (2011). The Institute of Medicine (2011) challenged nurses to be full partners with all health care professionals.
- Taken together, these factors call for a paradigm shift in the education of future nurses and nurse practitioners towards interprofessional and team-based patient care.
- The mental health terminal practicum course was redesigned to incorporate these IPEC core competencies. The purpose of this research is to present the process for integration of these competencies and evaluate student attitudes about IPEC.

## Methodology

### Students

- Students were in Doctor of Nursing Practice (post-baccalaureate, post-masters) and post-masters mental health certification programs.
- The convenience sample consisted of all students enrolled in the mental health terminal practicum course over two separate semesters.

### Course

- Content and power- points were provided to students on the core competencies:
  - ❖ values and ethics
  - ❖ roles and responsibilities
  - ❖ interprofessional communication
  - ❖ team and teamwork
- Students completed four assignments that built upon each other.

### Instruments

- Student attitudes towards IPEC, professional roles, and teamwork were assessed using two survey instruments:
- **Readiness for Inter-professional Learning Scale (RIPLS)**
  - ❖ Taken prior to start of course.
- **Inter-disciplinary Education Perception Scale (IEPS)**
  - ❖ Pre survey taken prior to introduction of IPEC content.
  - ❖ Post survey taken at the conclusion of the semester following completion of IPEC assignments.
- The Institutional Review Board designated the study as exempt.

## Results

Selected Responses Readiness for Inter-professional Learning Scale for 5 point Likert Scale n = 24	Strongly agree Mean
Learning with other students will help me become a more effective member of a health care team	4.5
Clinical problem-solving skills can only be learned with students from my own department	1.79
Shared learning will help me to understand my own limitations	3.91
I would welcome the opportunity to work on small-group projects with other health-care students	3.71

Selected Responses of Significant Results Inter-disciplinary Education Perception Scale Survey Comparing pre mean to post mean (N= 23) Percent Based on 5 point Likert Scale	T test pre : post	P- value (one- tailed)
Individuals in my profession are able to work closely with individuals in other professions	- 0.8904	0.1914
Individuals in other professions respect the work done by my profession.	4.1594	0.1293
Individuals in other professions think highly of my profession.	4.6380	0.058
Individuals in my profession are extremely competent.	4.5532	0.0673
Individuals in my profession work well with each other.	-4.1275	0.1358
Individuals in other professions often seek the advice of people in my profession.	0.9008	0.1887

## Conclusions

- Students reported they were ready for Inter-professional Learning Pre survey compared to Post survey:
- Some students lowered their opinion that NPs are able to work closely with other professions.
- Some students lowered their opinion that NPs work well with each other.
- There was an increase of student opinions that NP are respected by other professions and think highly of the NP profession.
- There was an increase of student opinion that NPs are competent and other professions seek the advice of NPs.

## Summary

- This IPEC model supports student learning by providing a step-wise approach for a practice change to improve health outcomes.
- The findings of this study are congruent with previous findings that students developed an improved confidence working within a team and communicating with other health professions, and a better understanding of other professions. Other studies examining interprofessional attitudes have shown that students who participate in experiential learning showed improvements in professional confidence and knowledge of their own professional roles following engagement with other professions.
- Future plans include faculty education for IPEC and integration into additional practicums.
- Limitations of this study include a small number of students.
- Responses from one student were dropped from data for pre/post due to incomplete survey.

### Selected Student Comments

- *What I learned from this project is that it really does take a village to take care of each client appropriately! It is time-consuming and at times stressful... it is also heart-warming and empowering to work with such a professional and caring interprofessional team and see how much they each worked independently and together for the betterment of this client and to provide truly patient centered care.*
- *I learned that both other professionals were excited about the prospect of working collaboratively to bring solutions to the barriers of treating depression in a young adult.*
- *Prior to this project, I would have said "access to care" is the most important issues individuals face regarding healthcare in today's society. However, after this project and working at a community health clinic, I feel that the continued segregation of care patients receive is a major issue that healthcare professionals need to address.*
- *There seems to be deficit in healthcare worker knowledge of and ability to work with other healthcare team members. This can lead to serious health consequence for the client and contributes to the increasing cost of health care.*