Interprofessional Education Enhances Nursing and Pharmacy Students' Confidence in End-of-Life Care Through Simulation

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Interprofessional education in end-of-life care is a relatively new development from the Robert Wood Johnson and City of Hope’s End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) Core Curriculum. Research from the student’s perspective is in the early stages and relies on outcome surveys and anecdotal feedback. IPE using simulation methodology has been shown to be effective in increasing student confidence levels in other areas of patient care.
Aim

Using a quantitative one group pre- and posttest intervention design, the aim of this study was to show the effect of IPE using simulation on perceived confidence levels for end-of-life care in nursing and pharmacy students.
Method

Students were asked to complete the End of life Professional Caregiver Survey (EPCS) before and after the educational sessions (Lazenby, Schulman-Green, & McCorkle, 2012).
Method

Educational session included:

- Online preparation using multi-media curriculum materials developed for end-of-life education
- Clinical lab simulation of patient assessment for nursing students
- Preparation on medications common in end-of-life care for the nursing and pharmacy students
- Faculty briefing before and debriefing after a simulated interdisciplinary team meeting
Method (cont.)

The role play simulation case study was developed for the ELNEC core (2015) and is used in both undergraduate and graduate level professional programs.
Sampling

- The sample included 86 university students in their third year nursing or pharmacy programs.
- Students had participated in two IPE class sessions designed to build collaborative practice skills before the study class.
Data Analysis

- Results of the survey were coded and entered into SPSS for analysis using the paired measures t-test for comparison of means within groups.
Results

- The t test revealed that the students’ comfort levels following the class were significantly different from their levels before the class $M=(20.40)$, $t=(9.962)$, $df\ (85)$, $p=.000$ with a significant increase in both classes.
Results (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>PostScore - PretestScore</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>PostScore - PretestScore</td>
<td>20.39535</td>
<td>18.98562</td>
<td>2.04727</td>
<td>16.32482 - 24.46587</td>
<td>9.962</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>.000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

- The confidence of students preparing to care for patients at the end of life may improve with the use of case studies and simulation offerings.
- Students report that role playing in simulated case scenarios increases their comfort and confidence levels in caring for and communicating with families and patients at the end-of-life.
- IPE course offerings are shown to give students the opportunity to build communication skills in an interdisciplinary care approach such as palliative and end-of-life care.
Conclusions

- Palliative and EOL care require an interdisciplinary collaborative approach to meet the multi-dimensional needs of dying patients, their families, and caregivers (Archer, Latiff, & Faull, 2017; WHO, 2016).
- Undergraduate and graduate education is needed for healthcare providers in all disciplines to effectively provide palliative and end-of-life care.
- This study suggests that students benefit from IPE and simulated role play to meet these education needs.
Limitations

- Although the study is limited by a small sample size (n=86) and a one-group design, results may contribute to the practice of undergraduate nursing and pharmacy education/curriculum development using current tools and approaches.
- Ongoing research is needed with larger samples and an experimental design to reliably inform practice.
The World Health Organization estimates that 40 to 60% of all dying patients need palliative care (WHO, 2016). In 2014, a global resolution on palliative care encouraged countries to improve access to palliative care in primary care and home-based services. In the home setting especially, nurses and pharmacists play important roles in safe and effective care. Interdisciplinary collaboration for palliative and end-of-life care promotes optimum outcomes. Provider education for palliative care can utilize an IPE approach with simulated role playing to promote competency in all dimensions of palliative care for patients with life-threatening diseases, especially chronic illness.
References


