TEACHING PEDIATRIC ORAL AND SYSTEMIC HEALTH SCREENING ASSESSMENTS USING INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Kathleen A. Kent (PI), DNP, APRN, CPNP-PC
Carol A Clark, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC

ABSTRACT

Oral health is essential to systemic health at all ages and an important consideration when educating future oral and healthcare providers. Training that is limited to discipline-specific topics does not teach providers to assess conditions beyond their traditional scope of practice. Inter-professional education (IPE) can foster life-long inter-professional practice (IPP).

BACKGROUND

14% of children have elevated BP or hypertension
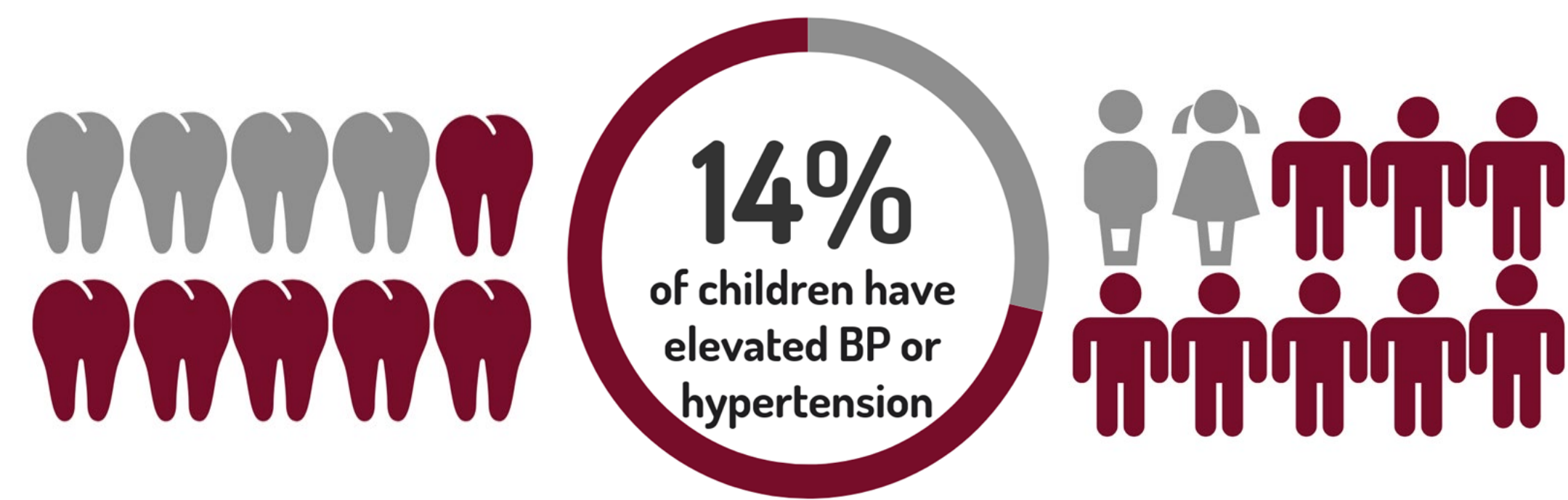
Often undiagnosed, dental caries, obesity, and hypertension are common conditions in children which can result in adverse health effects into adulthood. Guidelines recommend screening in both oral health and primary care settings with providers performing these outside of their "expected" scope of practice. However, experiential opportunities to learn collaboratively are lacking during professional training with the assumption these skills will somehow be acquired once in practice. If dentists and nurses practitioners (NP) are to collaborate in practice, they must learn about, from and with each other while in training.

METHODS

Through collaborative learning, students:
- Learned the responsibilities and scope of practice of the other profession.
- Performed oral examinations and measure blood pressure (BP) and body mass index (BMI).
- Assessed perceptions concerning IPE before and after the practicum experience.
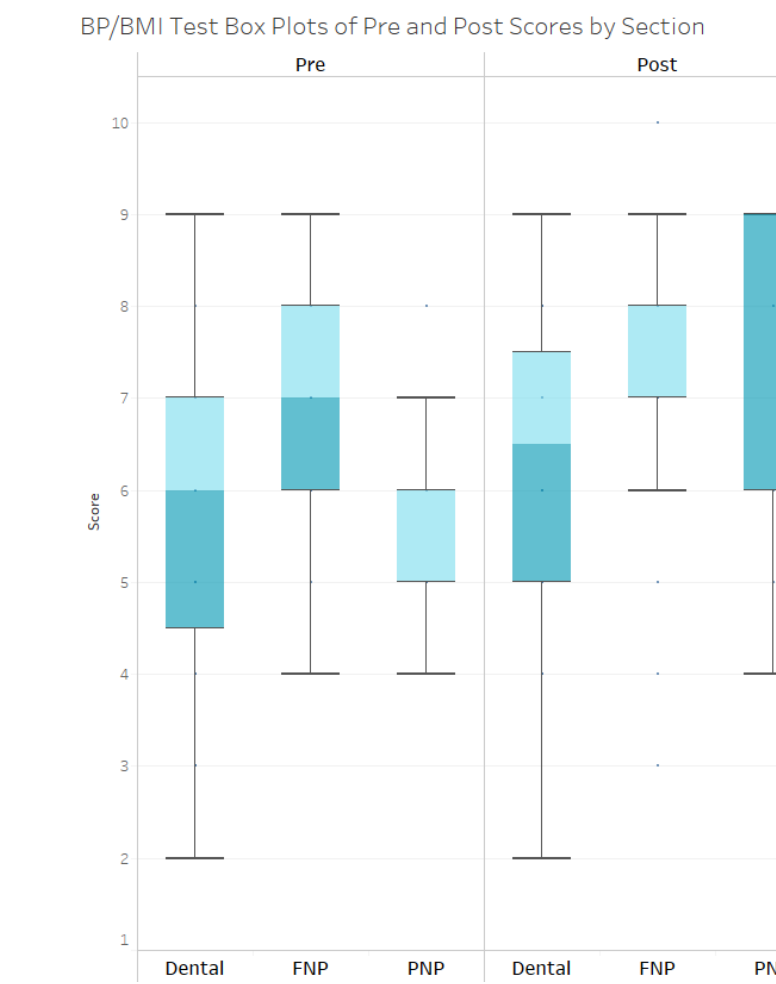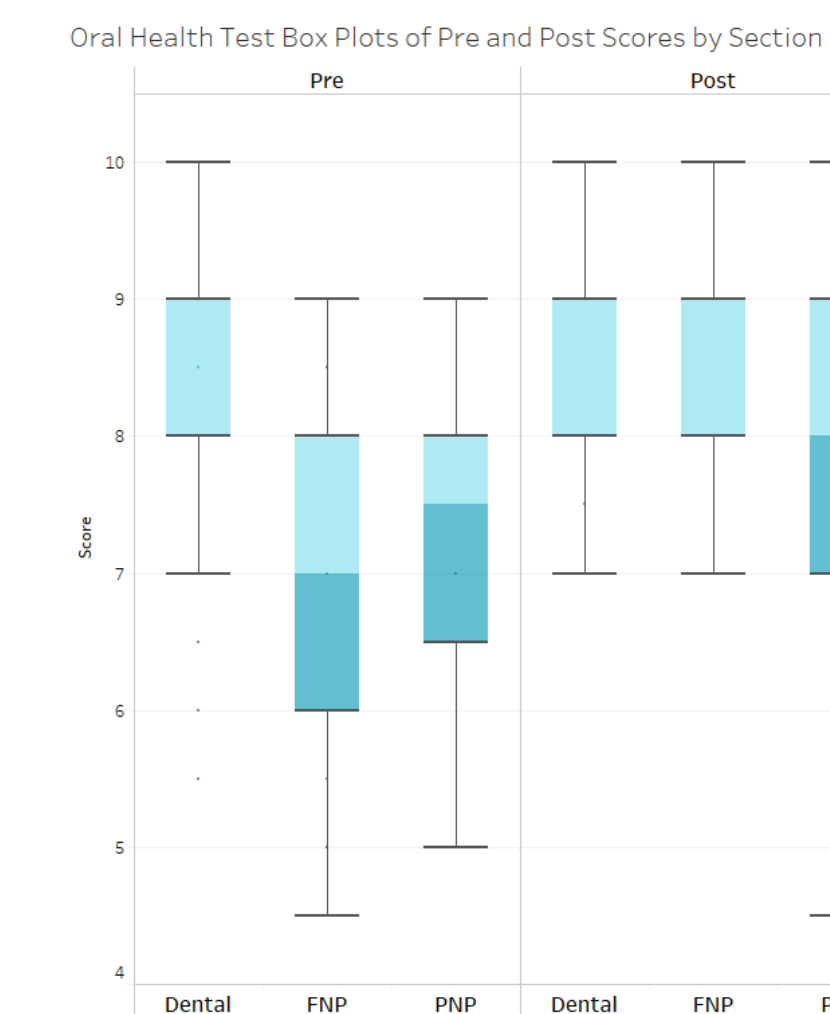

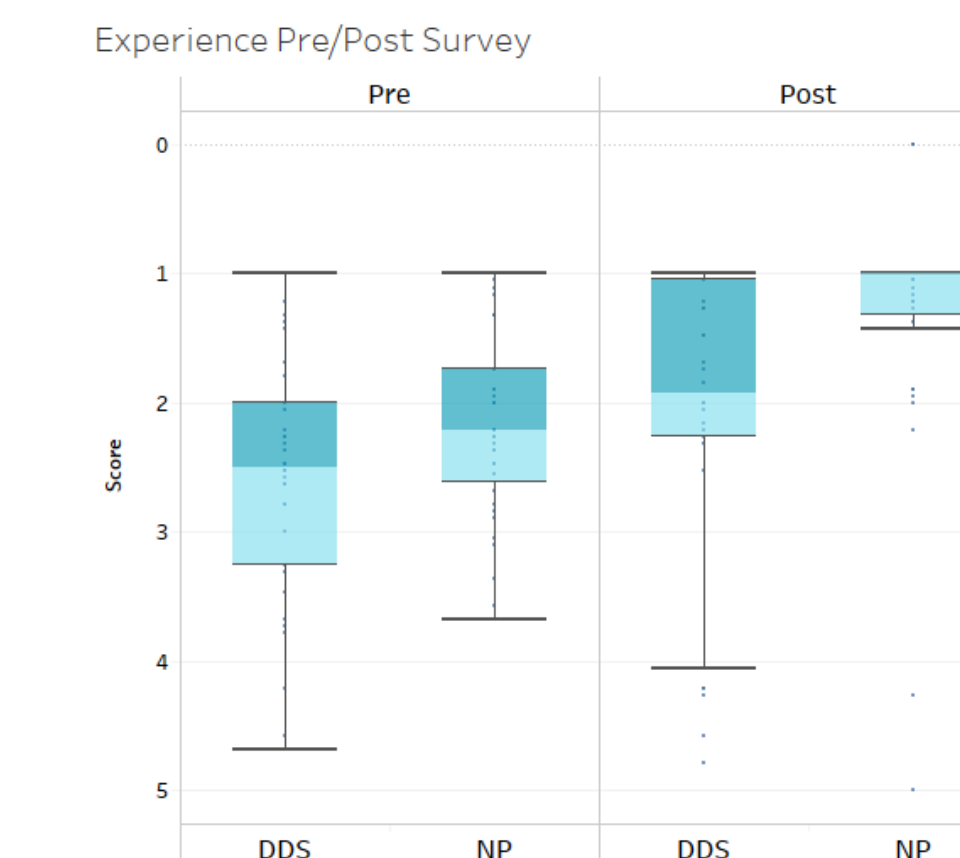Photo by Kathleen Kent and used with permission.

1. Pre-tests on oral health and BP with BMI concepts were administered to all students.
2. All students completed the modules on oral examinations, BP with BMI measurement, and the value of inter-professional education and practice.
3. Students and faculty discussed IPE and IPP.
4. Students were paired in inter-professional teams to perform assessments on pediatric volunteers, allowing them to be both learners and teachers.
5. A validated tool was used to measure their perceptions of IPE before and after the learning experience, along with a debriefing session.
6. Post-tests on oral health and BP with BMI concepts were administered to all students.

RESULTS

Fourth year dental students (D4) post-test scores for non-dental content significantly improved after education and clinical experience with NP students.

BP/BMI Test Box Plots of Pre and Post Scores by Section

Oral Health Test Box Plots of Pre and Post Scores by Section

NP oral health post-test scores equaled D4 scores after education and clinical exposure.

All students rated this IPE experience favorably on a 1-5 scale (1=most favorable).

Experience Pre/Post Survey

DISCUSSION

This IPE experience included 36 D4s, 10 pediatric NPs, and 26 family NPs for a total of 72 students.
Ninety percent of students strongly agreed or agreed that this experience provided opportunities to learn with and from one another. Also, 92% of students agreed or strongly agreed that following this IPE experience they had a deeper appreciation of collaborative patient-centered care.

Based on statistical results, faculty determined this IPE event helped the students achieve the learning objectives. It also allowed the faculty an opportunity to pilot this in a structured environment that highlighted variables affecting outcomes. The faculty are working together to incorporate this IPE opportunity into dental and NP curricula.

Students comments include:
"DDS students should follow NPs in the hospital."
"Great program. We need more programs in IPE."
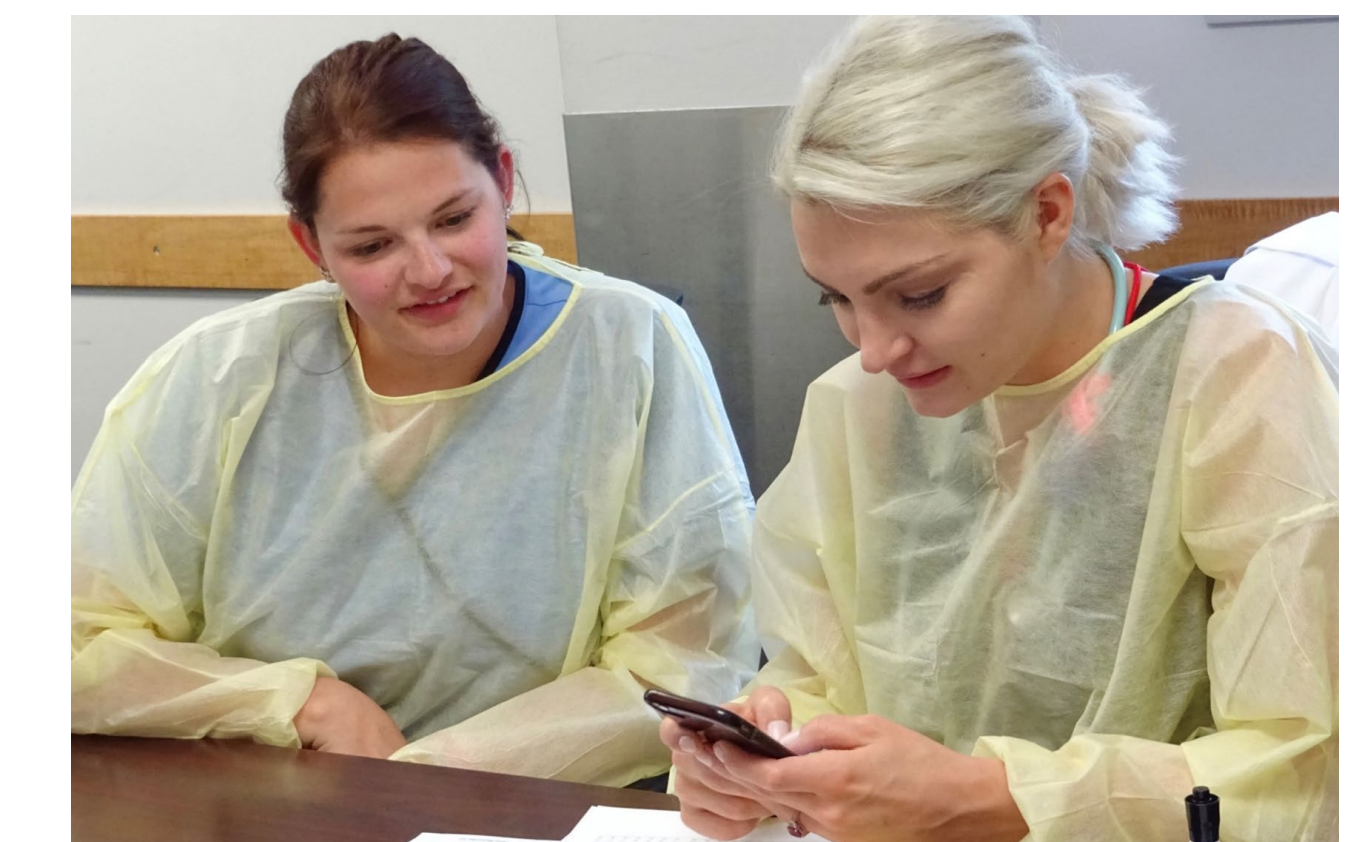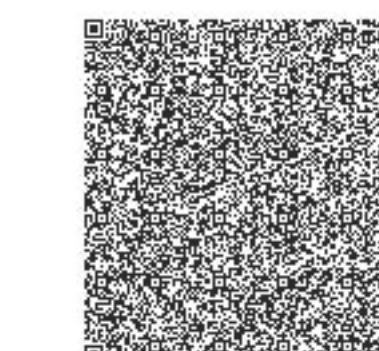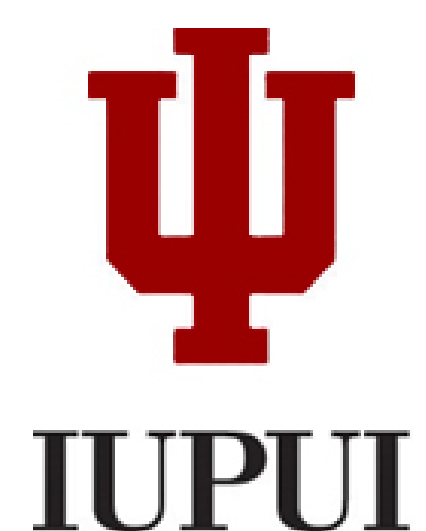*"It was a fun learning collaborative experience."*

Photo by Kathleen Kent and used with permission.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & REFERENCES

Scan this code for a complete list of references