Enhancing Care of Vulnerable Populations through Development of a Holistic Model to Evaluate Interprofessional Education

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Introduction/Background

Inadequate educational preparation of health professionals for working together has been linked to greater numbers of medical errors, lower provider and patient satisfaction, decreased workforce retention, higher costs, and suboptimal community engagement (WHO, 2010).

Reforming health professions education in order to prepare all future health professionals for collaboratively working together through advancement of Interprofessional Education (IPE) opportunities is vital.

The Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Expert Panel (2011) proposed four domains of Interprofessional Collaborative Practice that should be components of health professions education:

- Values/Ethics
- Roles/Responsibilities
- Interprofessional Communication
- Teams and Teamwork

These domains were primarily developed by educators and members of professional societies, with limited input from active healthcare practitioners, students, and diverse members of the community (consumers).

In addition, there are currently few models for evaluating IPE experiences and their influence on collaborative practice (IOM, 2015). Therefore, development of a new holistic model for measuring the impact of IPE on the professional growth of health professions students during their education is needed.

Aim/Goal/Purpose

The purpose of this project was to facilitate leadership development of an experienced nurse faculty member through expansion of the skills needed to successfully lead an interprofessional team in the development of a holistic model to evaluate interprofessional education experiences for health professions students caring for vulnerable populations in a community-based setting.

Methods

Led by the faculty scholar, an interprofessional project team consisting of representatives from the Colleges of Nursing, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Allied Health was convened during the first phase of the project.

Collaborative forums were held with members of three key stakeholder groups involved with operation of a student-run interprofessional self-management clinic established through a partnership between the St. Vincent de Paul Society social service agency and the University of Cincinnati Academic Health Center.

Key stakeholder groups included:

- Community partners (agency staff and clients)
- Health professions students
- Health professions faculty

During forums, existing IPEC domains and competencies were presented to stakeholder representatives. Participants then provided both verbal and written feedback, as well as suggestions for additional domains and competencies needed to ensure a more holistic assessment of the IPE experience.

IPE project team members met following each forum to analyze data and refine the emerging model. Upon completion, the final model was shared with each stakeholder group to ensure adequate representation of participant insight provided during forums.

Results

The final model expanded the original four IPEC domains to include two new interprofessional domains identified during stakeholder forums:

1. **Patient Centeredness**: purposefully placing patient/client and his/her family at center of healthcare experience

2. **Environment of Care**: actively contributing to improving the environment of care for self and other health care professionals and staff

Conclusions

The newly developed Holistic Model of Interprofessional Care is being tested and refined as part of a Masters thesis by a student in the College of Allied Health. IPE team members are guiding this project.

Development of a nurse leader, as well as a holistic model to evaluate IPE, requires strategic planning, collaborative partnerships, and time. Participation in the ENFLA provides scholars an opportunity to reflect on personal leadership qualities, and incorporate this self-knowledge in creation of a tailored leadership development plan under the guidance of mentors and faculty accomplished in the field of nursing leadership. Leadership skills are further refined through the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the leadership project, in partnership with university and community colleagues.

“If you want to go far, go together.”

Literature Cited


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