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Addressing Opioid Misuse and Abuse through Interprofessional Engagement and Education: One University's Experience

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Background & Purpose

To prepare for the evolving interprofessional approach (IA) in health care practice, health profession students are expected to learn “about”, “from” and “with” each other through interprofessional education (IPE) initiatives¹. The management of chronic pain is exemplary of the need for an IA which includes the safe use of opioids.

Methods

An interdisciplinary committee organized an interprofessional (IP) discussion around the opioid epidemic to afford students to learn about and from faculty in their respective professions and the healthcare team. Faculty from counseling, nursing, occupational therapy (OT), pharmacy, physical therapy (PT) and representatives from the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention (CCPDAP²) and the JP Prescription Drug Awareness Foundation (JPPDAF³) formed the panel (Table, Image 1). Discussions included opioid epidemiological data and a personal reflection about a child's death related to mixed drug overdose³. Education and resources addressed safe use, storage, and disposal of opioids². Practitioners described real-world vignettes on how opioid misuse and abuse affected practice and patient care (Table). The panel concluded with discussion and a program evaluation. Advertising for the event included email, posters, and campus intranet (Image 2).

Results

Of the 70 participants, forty-four (63%) completed the program evaluation. The majority (80%) of students indicated the panel was an excellent IP educational event that was helpful, informative and enjoyable. Students reported gaining a greater appreciation for the magnitude of the problem (43.2%) and an increased appreciation of IP approaches to opioid management strategies (perspectives, impact on, role in management/treatment; 36.4%). Additional details provided below regarding Participation by Profession (Figure 1), Satisfaction of Format (Figure 2, blue) and Satisfaction of Topics (Figure 2, yellow).



Image 1



Image 2

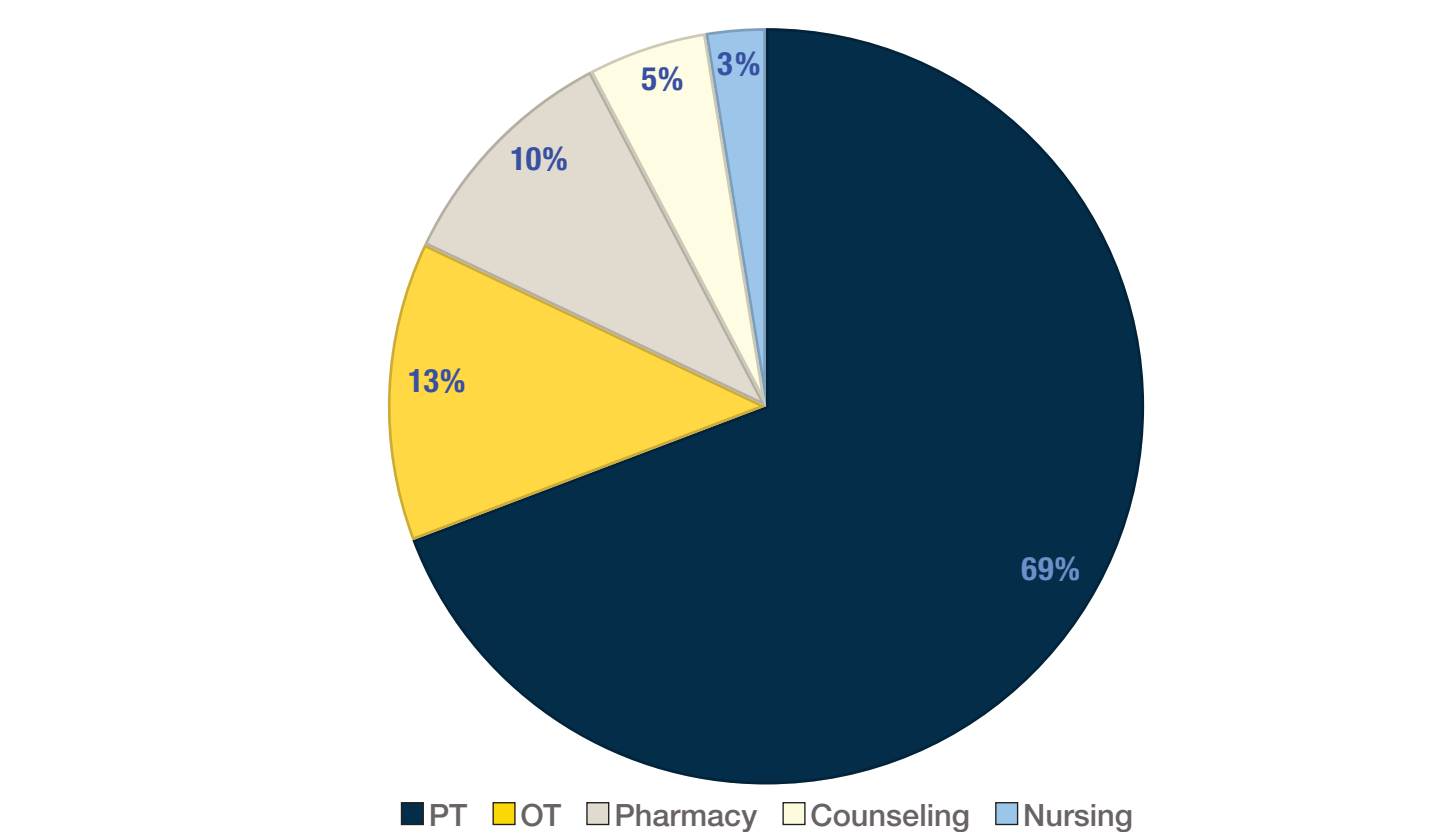


Figure 1: Participants by Profession

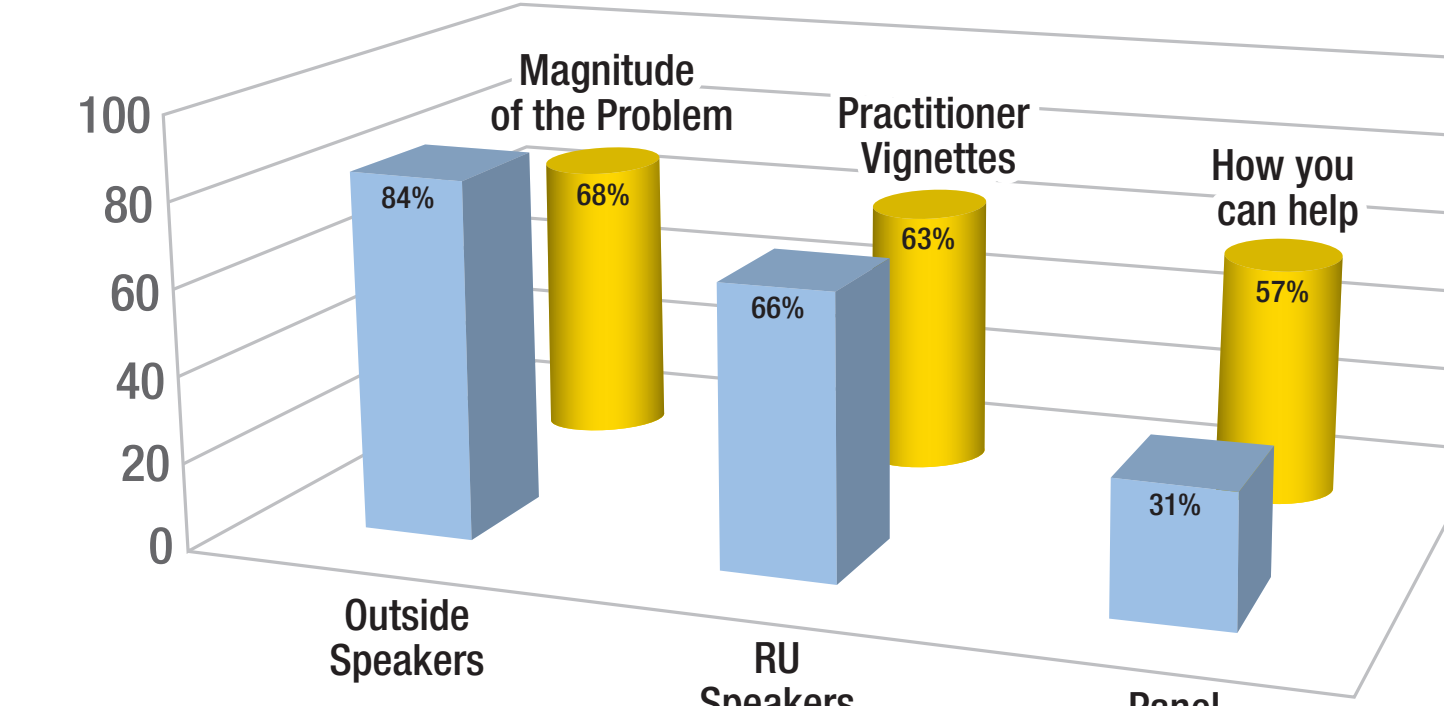


Figure 2: Overall program satisfaction was high

Conclusions

Uniting healthcare professionals is needed to combat prescription overdose deaths. Education models such as this IP panel discussion, demonstrate a positive model and perceived value for linking IP and collaborative practice. The evaluation results indicated that the students were satisfied with the event and had a greater understanding of the magnitude of the epidemic. Importantly, participants identified the need to ‘own’ their individual responsibility as future health care professionals, while also working collaboratively as part of an IP team to combat the opioid epidemic and ensuring adequate and appropriate pain management for our patients.

Future Directions

- Include interprofessional reflection learning “with” one another.
- Greater emphasis on interprofessional dialogue and practitioner vignettes.
- Add prescribing professional perspective

References

1. Bainbridge L., Wood, VI. The power of prepositions: A taxonomy for interprofessional education. *J Interp Care.* 2013; 27(2), 131-136.
2. Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Prevention. Consortium prescription drug abuse data dashboard. <http://www.corxconsortium.org/wp-content/uploads/New-Prescription-Drug-Abuse-Data-Dashboard1.pdf>. Accessed July 22, 2016.
3. The JP Prescription Drug Awareness Foundation. <http://www.jpawarenessfoundation.org/>. Accessed August 18, 2016.

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Table

Role/Association	Vignette
Keynote speaker – Opening JP Prescription Drug Awareness Foundation Representative	Reviewed opioid epidemic including overdose death rates nationally and in Colorado, with statistics from the CDC, and costs associated misuse/abuse. Closed with specifics on the loss of her daughter to polysubstance abuse.
RHCHP MS, RN Instructor, School of Nursing	Provided perspective on workplace misuse and abuse highlighting the accessibility of opioids to healthcare professionals and the availability of resources to help individuals with addiction.
RHCHP PT, DPT, PhD, MSPH, BA Associate Professor, School of Physical Therapy	Spoke to the impact of the epidemic on the profession of PT sharing the <i>Move Forward Campaign for Pain Management</i> . Included information on policy and legislation happening under the Obama administration regarding opioid misuse/abuse.
RHCHP PharmD Assistant Professor, School of Pharmacy	Focused on personal experience dealing with an over prescriber of opioids. Discussed action steps including talking with the physician, but ultimately turned the physician in to legal authorities due to lack of action towards the issues raised by the pharmacist.
RHCHP OTD, OTR, BCPR Assistant Professor, Creighton-Regis Occupational Therapy Program	Shared insights into the role of Occupational Therapy in helping patients develop strategies to handle pain and still function in their day-to-day lives. Addressed the emotional and physical challenges related to pain and completing activities of daily living.
RHCHP PhD, LMFT, LP Associate Professor, Division of Counseling and Family Studies	Shared a story of a multigenerational family dealing with issues of pain and opioid misuse/abuse. Spoke to the emotional effect of chronic pain on family relationships, coping mechanisms, and the pervasiveness influence of opioid addiction.
Featured speaker – Closing PhD, RPh Coordinating Center Director, Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention (CCPDAP)	Provided additional statistics regarding the magnitude of the opioid epidemic. Focused on the <i>Take Meds Seriously Campaign</i> from CCPDAP which promotes Safe Use, Safe Storage, and Safe Disposal of prescription drugs. Provided handouts from the <i>Take Meds Seriously</i> website: http://takemedseriously.org/