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IPE Grand Rounds: A Student-Led Initiative

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Interprofessional Education (IPE) Grand Rounds is an innovative student-run initiative designed specifically to increase the clinical relevance of IPE for all health professions students. By creating new opportunities for students from medicine, nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, couple and family therapy, physician assistant and pharmacy to interact with health professionals who are actively participating in interprofessional work environments, the IPE Grand Rounds program allows students to develop a more complete picture of what it means to be a member of a collaborative practice team. During these sessions, students and panelists discuss both the benefits of working with team members from professions other than their own, as well as the real-world challenges they face in practice. While exploration of the effectiveness of IPE Grand Rounds in helping medical and other health professions students achieve IPE core competencies is currently underway, initial positive feedback indicates that this extracurricular experience may help to bridge the gap between interprofessional education curricula and collaborative practice.

Claire Sokas, Medical Student:

The most exciting day of medical school for me, thus far, was my first day of clinical rotations during third year. I was fresh from my board exam, and now the youngest member of the white surgery team in the hospital! The opportunity to see my first patient and to take ownership of my learning from the classroom to the clinic was challenging and overwhelming, made even more so by my 4AM start. Every day I am amazed by the coordination and teamwork across specialties and disciplines required to effectively take care of patients. I had learned about medicine in my first two years of medical school, but the complexity of patient care beyond a diagnosis wasn't a reality until I joined an interprofessional team.

I had first been exposed to IPE through our Health Mentors Program, and have been working with JCIPE for the past few years. This past spring, a group of students and faculty began to explore new opportunities to introduce students to interdisciplinary teams in the real world. We formed our own interprofessional team of sorts -- a medical student, a nursing student and two pharmacy students -- to look for more health mentors. However, the mentors we were searching for were no longer patients, but physicians, nurse practitioners, pharmacists and other clinicians; these mentors were faculty and staff that we were eager to learn from and one day hope to call our colleagues. Our monthly lecture series introduces a new practice team to students from all Jefferson health professions schools at all learning levels. It's a lunchtime lecture, and the combination of free food and stellar speakers has elicited a great turn-out!

Chelsea Gorman, Nursing Student:

One of the major reasons that I decided to pursue my nursing education at Jefferson was the university's emphasis on interprofessional education. I knew that major culture shifts were occurring in the world of health care and I was eager to take part. During my first semester at Jefferson, I participated in the Health Mentors curriculum. This program helped me to better understand the experiences, knowledge, and roles of students from other professions. As I began my first clinical rotation, however, I quickly realized that I had very little understanding of how health care professionals worked collaboratively in a clinical setting.

When the opportunity arose, I decided to join a committee of students interested in creating a new IPE experience. Over the course of several meetings, the mission and format of IPE Grand Rounds began to take shape. The enthusiastic feedback from our pilot event in April let us know that our peers were also eager to learn how to apply their interprofessional education in a clinical setting. I feel that we have succeeded not only in creating an extracurricular experience that will enhance students' understanding of collaborative teamwork, but also in demonstrating the effectiveness of student "collaborative practice teams" in strengthening interprofessional education.

JCIPE would like to invite students of all health professions to submit their interprofessional research to be published! Interested students can contact Claire (claire.sokas@jefferson.edu) or Chelsea (chelsea.gorman@jefferson.edu).