

Research Question

How do interpersonal relationships affect teamwork and resilience? Does additional time for social connection have implications on teamwork in the healthcare field?

Abstract

Healthcare practitioners take on the responsibility of helping clients maintain or improve their quality of life. Interprofessional collaboration is a key aspect of treating clients in order to provide them with the best possible care. Each healthcare profession has their own therapeutic process, yet they compliment each other very well. The state of the research shows that high functioning healthcare teams can improve the quality of care provided to clients by decreasing communication failures and reducing medical errors (Babiker, et al., 2014; Rosen et al., 2018; Smith, et al., 2018). The aim of the Interprofessional Team Immersion (IPTI) was to provide University of New England and Rosalind Franklin University students with the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each healthcare profession and have a chance to practice communication skills in a telehealth setting. The current group included students from occupational therapy, physical therapy, social work, osteopathic medicine, allopathic medicine, dental hygiene, and nursing programs. The immersion consisted of 10 total hours, 80 minutes of which were dedicated to direct patient care with client actors. At the end of IPTI, students concluded that they felt more confident defining the roles and responsibilities of other healthcare professionals. It was evident that communication played a key role in the successful approaches the team took, and having opportunities to get to know one another outside of patient simulations allowed the team to build trust, leadership, and cohesion (Cohen-Konrad et. al, 2014). Students also felt that their motivational interviewing skills and ability to navigate difficult client interactions improved because of the IPTI experience.

How each practice contributed

- OT
 - Energy conservation strategies
 - Coping techniques
 - Environmental adaptations
- PT
 - Rehabilitation education
 - Cardiovascular training education
 - Avenues for exercise for mental health
- Nursing
 - Medical educator
- DH
 - Medical history
 - Researched medications
- DO
 - Medical advice and education
 - Management of medications
- SW
 - Patient navigator
 - Mental health evaluation
 - Coping strategies

Implications for future practice

- Spend more time communicating and collaborating with team unit
 - Importance of advocating for paid collaboration time with other healthcare professionals
- Gain a more clear understanding of the interventions each profession can provide
- Work and collaborate as a team unit on patient care plans
- Using an interprofessional unit as a resource or referral to improve patient outcomes

What we would do differently

- Build better rapport from the initial visit
 - Provide a patient navigator from the initial visit
 - Be more intentional with our suggestions
 - Be more intentional about which practitioners we send in
 - Be more confident answering questions
 - Improve on language choices during interactions

Why IPTI?

- Advanced team-based training that takes your IP awareness to the clinical practice level
- Interpersonal communication skills for diverse and difficult healthcare conversations
- Gain comfort in identifying, acknowledging, and taking steps to prevent/correct medical error
- Make professional contacts outside of your own profession

Limitations

- Difficulty building trust & rapport with client through telehealth
- Lack of time for building interpersonal relationships within the team
- Decreased exposure to other student health program demands throughout our curriculums

Strengths

- Taking the additional time to meet as a group outside of designated IPTI time
- Mutual respect and understanding of each profession's roles and scope
- Each student prepping their own ideas and plans before meeting to be able to contribute and collaborate together

Receiving feedback

- Positive:
 - Acknowledgement of patient feeling
 - Validation of patient feelings
 - Patient advocacy
 - Patient navigator
 - Patient centered goals
- Negative:
 - Language choosing importance
 - Analogy choices
 - Background questioning overload

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