

Developing an Interprofessional Collaboratory Course to Foster Team - Based Learning for Students of Health Professions: Benefits and Challenges

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Poster Description

Background

Education across health professions, rather than in siloes, is essential to preparing future healthcare providers for team-based healthcare. A major challenge is how to involve distance learners in IP team activities. This poster documents progress and challenges encountered in engaging an interprofessional (IP) design team of students and faculty working in partnership, to develop an on-line IP Collaboratory course.

Methodology

Students, faculty and staff from six professions; medicine, public health, dentistry, occupational therapy, social work, and nursing, partnered with librarians and instructional designers, to develop the IP collaboratory. Using a case-based format as the framework for engagement across professions, discipline specific objectives and activities were seamlessly embedded alongside IPEC competencies.

The case, a pediatric patient with a chromosomal disorder, was presented in modules representing four specific life stages: birth to 5 years, 6 – 12 years, 12 – 17 years, and 17+ years. Family history was presented using an interactive “Family Tree”. Students viewed the case at each life stage and addressed profession-specific questions and activities to guide steps in care planning across the lifespan. Links to librarians provided students with resources to resolve case challenges. Outcomes were evaluated using the IPAS instrument.

Results

Learners rated themselves highly on IPAS pretest with little change between pre and post test results. Student discussions suggested IPEC competencies for roles and responsibilities and teamwork, communications were demonstrated. Qualitative data provided rich information for program improvement including identifying a diagnosis that incorporated all disciplines; sequencing discussion boards for students to develop discipline-specific plans prior to presenting information to the IP team; and moderating IP discussion boards.

Conclusion

Partnering with students for course development provided valuable insight into logistical challenges and learner engagement strategies. Complexity of bringing together students from five different schools across a large urban campus to learn in a virtual team environment can be overcome through IP teamwork.

Reflections/lessons learned/implications

Activities work best when linked to course credit to maximize participation. Shorter course length and frequent deadlines can contribute to sustained engagement. Feedback and closure for each module is needed to standardize starting conditions for new modules. Participants prefer a variety of technologies for group interaction. Students preferred smaller groups with a variety of professions.