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Pivoting Fast to Support Interprofessional Education: Online Team Training

Interprofessional team-based training (IPTT) can contribute to creating a collaborative and practice-ready healthcare workforce. Designed by educators from diverse professions, our IPTT program aims to provide an introductory experience, centered on team-based care planning to improve patient health in the community setting. IPTT provides a clinically relevant opportunity for multiple professions, introducing students to four interprofessional (IP) competency sub-domains, addressing effective IP communication and teamwork, increasing understanding roles and responsibilities, demonstrating shared values, and professional ethics.

Methods: Students from nursing (BSN), medicine, dentistry, optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, laboratory sciences, social work, and public health are placed in IP groups of approximately 10-15 students. Students are assigned pre-event activities, including preparing an elevator pitch to introduce their profession to their team. Groups are broken up into small teams to focus on a patient case designed to address social determinants of health. Trained team facilitators use a video (standardized patient interview) and training guide for the 1.5-hour experience. In the process of developing their plan together, student teams are guided by facilitators to explore professional roles, values, priorities, and most importantly, communicate with students from other professions.

Results: IPTT was implemented over 10 years, serving approximately 900 students in two cohorts each year. COVID-19 forced IPTT faculty to swiftly pivot to online delivery via Zoom, providing an opportunity for nursing students, and other health professions, to obtain clinically focused IP learning experiences. After successfully piloting online delivery over summer 2020 (18 group sessions), online IPTT served 324 learners in Fall 2020. Student and facilitator evaluations revealed significant advantages in online delivery. Greater scheduling flexibility, accessible to “distance” students, convenience, smaller groups, expanded professions, and nursing student engagement across learner levels. The ability to run IPTT ‘on-demand’ balanced initial logistical challenges such as re-training facilitators and adapting to online engagement strategies.

Conclusions: Benefits of Online IPTT outweigh challenges in running large IPE events. IPTT will expand to 550 learners in 40 small groups in Spring 2021, involving 12 professions. Future evaluation will compare outcomes for online cohorts with pre-COVID delivery and explore strategies for sustaining hybrid delivery.

Objectives/learning outcomes for the presentation.

1. Explore the benefits of moving Interprofessional activities online, including how to reach a wider range of learners and improve flexible access to IPE.
2. Explore strategies applied to overcome barriers to IPE for nursing students such as scheduling, team engagement and facilitator training.