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Featured Article

Interprofessional Simulation: A Concept Analysis

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experiential;
high fidelity;
interprofessional;
reflective;
simulation

Abstract: To enhance patient care, the Institute of Medicine made an appeal for learning with an interprofessional focus. The authors analyzed the concept of interprofessional simulation as it pertains to collaborative work within the health care setting. The goal was to operationally define interprofessional simulation and to determine its attributes and characteristics. An improved understanding of the concept will allow health care professionals to understand each others' roles and perspectives and to foster cohesiveness and common goal setting. This cohesiveness may ideally align health care professionals leading to enhanced practice and improvement in patient care.

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In today's global health care environment there is an urgency to provide patient care that is both safe and quality focused. The Institute of Medicine proclaimed a new vision for clinical education concentrating on patient's needs (Kohn, Corrigan, & Donaldson, 2000). That vision proposes an interdisciplinary approach to education for the delivery of patient-centered care (Page, 2004). Improved collaboration and communication among health care professions must be emphasized to reduce health system errors and to realize improved patient outcomes. A health care profession is described as an occupation centered on the mastery of a complex body of knowledge and skills (Cruess, Johnston, & Cruess, 2004).

Well-designed simulations have been used to facilitate improved collaboration and communication among professions (Reese, Jeffries, & Engum, 2010). According to

McGuire-Sessions and Gubrud (2010), augmented safety and improved quality of patient care can be achieved through the incorporation of technology-based team training in the health care setting. However, until recently, simulation within health care has focused on a specific profession rather than involving one or more health care professionals. There appears to be a need to apply simulation in the development and education of students and experienced providers among health care professions.

To foster such an environment, there is a call for learning through simulation with an interprofessional focus. In fact, support for interprofessional learning is expanding among professional health care organizations. In 2009, six national education associations of schools of the health professions and a regulatory agency formed a collaborative to encourage joint efforts that would advance interprofessional learning experiences. The organizations involved include the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the National League for Nurses, the American Nurses Association, the American

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Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, the American Dental Education Association, the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the Joint Commission ([Interprofessional Education Collaborative, 2011](#)). To gain a better understanding of the concept of interprofessional simulation (IS), a

comprehensive literature review was performed and a framework by [Walker and Avant \(2011\)](#) was used to guide the analysis and to connect and clarify the two terms.

A database search for evidence was conducted by entering key words “interprofessional and simulation” in CINAHL, EBSCO, MedlinePlus, and PubMed. Articles that applied directly to the previously mentioned concepts resulted in 770 publications from 1975 to current year. Of this number, there were only 17 publications before 2000.

Key Points

- The Institute of Medicine (IOM) proclaimed a new vision for clinical education that proposes an interprofessional approach to education for the delivery of patient-centered care. In response to the IOM, medicine, nursing, dentistry, allied health, accreditation, and patient safety organizations have adopted requirements within their professional groups to meet this need.
- An operational definition of interprofessional simulation (IS) is provided along with the concept’s attributes and characteristics. Case studies are presented to define IS among health care professionals.
- IS can foster cohesiveness and common goal setting and meet the challenge of improving team performance to enhance patient safety.

within the context of health care.

Current Concept Uses

The term IS is dismantled into components to reveal it as a concept. For the word interprofessional, current concept uses will be identified and additional descriptions will be explored. For the word simulation, current concept uses will be identified and historical aspects will be investigated.

Interprofessional

There are no dictionary or encyclopedia definitions for the word interprofessional. [Baldwin \(1996\)](#) wrote a history of the term interprofessional and noted that before 1975, words that were used to describe collaboration and teamwork included both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. After that time, the word interprofessional has been used more frequently especially when referring to health care practice ([Baldwin, 1996](#)). [Hall and Weaver \(2001\)](#) performed a literature review using the terms interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and interprofessional within the context of health care teams. They determined the term interprofessional is synonymous with the term interdisciplinary and defined the concept as “... a team whose members work together closely and communicate frequently to optimize care for the patient” ([Hall & Weaver, 2001](#), p. 868). The authors indicate that within interprofessional teams, each member contributes an individualized knowledge base and specific skills and functions, keep lines of communication open, and exhibit shared decision making while upholding mutual accountability ([Hall & Weaver, 2001](#)).

Since the words interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary have been used interchangeably with interprofessional, these terms will also be explored. Interdisciplinary, an adjective, is defined as “involving two or more academic, scientific, or artistic disciplines” ([Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 2012](#), p. 652). Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary does not list a definition for multidisciplinary. However, [Olenick, Allen, and Smego \(2010\)](#) indicate that the term multidisciplinary implies no sharing or interaction between specialized branches as contrasted to the word interprofessional, which does involve shared decision making ([Olenick et al., 2010](#)).

Additional Descriptions

The *2014 Magnet® Application Manual* describes interprofessional as involving members of different professions using particular skills and knowledge to work together toward greater patient outcomes ([American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2013](#)). Two journals include the word interprofessional within their titles ([Olenick et al., 2010](#)). The *Journal of Research in Interprofessional Education* was established in 2009 and adopted the Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education definition for interprofessional education. According to their home webpage, interprofessional education occurs when more than one profession learns from each other through collaboration ([JRIPE, 2013](#)). The journal website also states that professionals include those from health organizations, educational agencies, and community contexts. The *Journal of Interprofessional Care* was established in 1986 and does not specifically define interprofessional. The goal of the journal is for members of different professions to understand their own roles and other’s roles and how to eradicate labeling

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