



Featured Article

Interprofessional Education: A Multi-patient, Team-Based Intensive Care Unit Simulation

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KEYWORDS

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Abstract: In this article, we describe a multi-patient, team-based simulation experience in an academic setting. We included participants from clinical laboratory science, respiratory therapy, nursing, and medical residents. This simulation allowed students to function as credentialed professionals, focusing on critical thinking, prioritization, effective communication, and teamwork. In order to fully incorporate all professions, we designed an extended-time simulation in which we strategically planned the sequencing of clinical events in each scenario. Because of the complexity of the scenarios, debriefing progressed through three levels: in-room, whole group, and profession specific. Although designing and implementing such a detailed simulation was challenging, we feel it is essential to prioritize teamwork and communication in the academic setting.

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Delivery of patient-centered care is dependent on a team or network of individuals working together to achieve common patient goals. Such care requires a variety of team

members, including the patient, to have equitable opportunity for input into decision making and communication to produce quality outcomes (World Health Organization, 2011). Patient-centered, team-based care has proven to be an effective, safe approach to care provision. The practice census, a survey of current cardiovascular practices

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conducted by the American College of Cardiology, found that those operating in team-based settings had increased efficiency (63%), improved quality of care (53%), increased patient satisfaction (50%), and increased staff satisfaction (36%). These teams were also more likely to

implement patient education (69%) and internal communications (63%) as part of standard care protocols (Brindis, Rodgers, & Handberg, 2011).

Although the move toward team-based care is on the rise, accelerating implementation of this approach will require that students be introduced to this concept early on through educational programs. The Institute of Medicine makes team-based approaches to health care a priority by encouraging funding for demonstrations of interdisciplinary profes-

sional education in the Health Resource and Services Administration (Interprofessional Education Collaborative Expert Panel, 2011). Our faculty team sought to develop team training activities through the use of simulation. With a wealth of health professions on our campus, we are able to include multiple professions into a variety of educational experiences. Using simulation for promoting collaboration, teamwork, and improving relationships through team training is an explicit goal of our university. The purpose of this article is to describe a team-based simulation experience involving multiple patient scenarios running simultaneously to prepare students from multiple health care professions to work together to enhance the delivery of effective high quality care and to decrease the potential for error in practice.

Use of Team-Based Simulation

One such approach to meeting the need for interprofessional education is through the use of interprofessional simulation. Team-based simulation has been widely used by the military and aviation communities for many years (Salas et al., 2008). Because of its proven success in these areas, this type of training has been applied to patient care and has been shown to improve team skills and employment retention across multiple health care settings (Wayne, Didwania, & Feinglass, 2008). A review of an interprofessional simulation involving nursing students, medical students, and medical residents found that learners perceived simulation-based experiences to be valuable and relevant and that learning in this manner aided in reaching across professional silos

(Baker et al., 2008). In addition, interprofessional simulation in health care education prepares students to more readily enter the clinical setting armed with effective communication and collaboration skills (Robertson & Bandali, 2008; Ulrich & Mancini, 2014).

Institutional Efforts

Recognizing the importance of interprofessional education and in keeping in accordance with Institute of Medicine recommendations, the University of Alabama at Birmingham utilizes interprofessional simulation as a tool to introduce students to team-based care in a controlled environment (Ulrich & Mancini, 2014). At the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the Office of Interprofessional Simulation for Innovative Clinical Practice, a university-wide center that brings together staff, faculty, and students, has been established to ensure that goals for interprofessional education are met. The center is comprised of faculty and staff from multiple disciplines who work collaboratively to plan and implement interprofessional simulation activities.

Some such activities are weekly simulations that involve students from multiple health professions schools. These simulations take place in our partner health care facility and are part of an ongoing endeavor to continue the integration of simulation into respective health profession curricula. These simulation experiences are often brief, which makes it challenging to focus on all the core competencies outlined by Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) (Interprofessional Education Collaborative Expert Panel, 2011). Table 1 summarizes the IPEC competencies.

Because of the time constraints of the brief weekly multiprofessional simulations, a group of interdisciplinary faculty sought to use the IPEC competencies as a framework for the development of a multi-patient, multiprofessional, extended simulated session. This extended simulation session would aid in reinforcing the core competencies for the clinical laboratory science (CLS), medicine, nursing, and respiratory therapy students that participated in the weekly interprofessional simulations. These competencies were built into the heart of the extended simulation, which was designed to challenge learners by creating an experience with significant complexity to allow for critical thinking, prioritization, and team-based communication in a critical care setting.

As part of our institutional efforts in team training, we have developed learning activities for a variety of students from multiple professions. In this learning activity with real-time simulation, we were able to include laboratory science students to simulate specimen analysis in a compressed time frame. Involving laboratory students is a novel way to improve collaboration and communication in clinical practice. There are few publications documenting the involvement of the clinical laboratory in interprofessional

Key Points

- Simulated complex clinical situations improve team communication.
- Creating a realistic intensive care unit simulation offers a safe environment to rehearse team clinical decision making.
- Strategies are needed to support development of complex interprofessional simulated events.

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