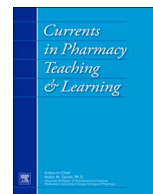




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IPE Reports

Successes, challenges, and impact of a large-cohort preclinical interprofessional curriculum: A four-year reflection

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Interprofessional education
Curricular development
Interprofessional competencies
Pharmacy standards

ABSTRACT

Background: Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standards 2016 established a new standard on interprofessional education (IPE) to place specific emphasis on developing interprofessional competence among pharmacy graduates.

Interprofessional education activity: Interprofessional Collaboration And Team Skills (iCATS) serves as the core interprofessional curriculum for nearly 700 first-year students in seven participating health professional programs. The curriculum was developed around the four Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Competencies to develop foundational interprofessional knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Pharmacy students build preliminary competence in interprofessional roles and responsibilities, team dynamics, values and ethics, communication, and conflict resolution (ACPE Standard 11.1) and have an opportunity to learn about, from, and with other interprofessional students (ACPE Standard 11.2).

Discussion: Refinement of the iCATS curriculum has been an iterative process over the past four years. For iCATS 2016–2017, all Interprofessional Collaborative Competency Attainment Scale (ICCAS) evaluation items indicated significant changes in pre- and posttest indicating targeted IPEC Competencies were addressed through the iCATS curriculum.

Implications: The 2016–2017 revision of iCATS resulted in the most effective iteration of this core interprofessional curriculum to date. Clearer course objectives, a compressed schedule, employment of a variety of teaching/learning methods, and greater schedule cooperation among the colleges have contributed to the success and delivery of an IPE curriculum. Additionally, iCATS provides a unique opportunity for pharmacy students to interact with health professions students from six other programs while making significant progress toward competence in ACPE Standards 11.1 and 11.2 on interprofessional education (IPE).

Background

Widely accepted as the foundation of interprofessional practice and team based care, interprofessional education (IPE) serves as a catalyst in the evolution from fragmented health care delivery models to more integrated systems¹ that pursue the Triple Aim of better care for individuals, better health for populations, and lower per capita costs.² The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Standards 2016³ formalize the commitment to IPE in Standard 11 through inclusion of interprofessional team dynamics, team education, and team practice, elements that are underpinned by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice.⁴ Consistent with the tenets of IPE as established by the World Health

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2018.01.003>

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Organization,⁵ Standards 2016 promote pharmacy student opportunity to learn about, from, and with other members of the inter-professional team through specific interprofessional educational activities within both the didactic and experiential components of the curriculum.³

Institution background

Founded in 1865 as the Commonwealth's flagship institution, the University of Kentucky (UK) is an accredited, public, land grant, research institution that hosts 16 colleges and includes twelve health professions education programs, specifically, clinical laboratory sciences, dentistry, dietetics, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant studies, public health, social work, and speech/language pathology. Further, UK is one of only eight universities in the country with the full range of undergraduate, graduate, professional, and medical programs on one contiguous campus.⁶

Integral to high quality health professions education programs, the UK also has an academic medical enterprise on its main campus. UK HealthCare[®] continues to make strides in its quest of becoming one of the premier academic medical centers in the country. Further, UK HealthCare[®] inculcated its stance on collaborative health care and commitment to interprofessional student learning in its most recent strategic plan.⁷ This culture of patient-centered, interdisciplinary, and collaborative care is consistent with that of UK's health professions academic programs.

In the early 2000s, faculty from various interprofessional programs began grassroots IPE initiatives. In 2010, UK formalized its commitment to IPE by establishing an IPE center with a dedicated faculty director and staff support, co-funded by the provost and UK HealthCare[®], with a mission to collaborate with faculty to facilitate the development, validation, dissemination, and promotion of IPE.⁸ The Center for Interprofessional Health Education ("the Center") manages a broad portfolio of curricular and co-curricular IPE offerings, reports directly to the provost, and is governed by the deans of the eight involved colleges.

Interprofessional education activity

Description of activity and learning objectives

The acquisition of collaborative competencies is a developmental process throughout the training of a health care professional. Accordingly, the Center in conjunction with faculty from the involved programs developed Interprofessional Collaboration And Team Skills (iCATS) as the core interprofessional curriculum for first-year students in the seven participating health professional programs. The iCATS curriculum affords students the baseline knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to participate in intermediate and advanced interprofessional curricula, including advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs). The iCATS curriculum is based on a social-constructivist model of learning where students interact to organically develop an interprofessional worldview.⁹ As demonstrated in [Table 1](#), it was developed intentionally around the four core IPEC Competencies and provides an opportunity for students to learn about, from, and with other interprofessional learners. The iCATS curriculum is a graduation requirement and is used by the college of pharmacy as the foundational element building preliminary competence in interprofessional roles and responsibilities, team dynamics, values and ethics, communication, and conflict resolution (ACPE Standards 11.1 and 11.2).³ From the perspective of the official academic record, the iCATS curriculum is embedded in an existing first-year course within each of the respective programs.

First-year professional students participate in iCATS as part of either a course or graduation requirement. These students, nearly 700 each year, are placed into interprofessional iCATS teams of 10 students and one faculty facilitator. Faculty facilitators either self-selected or are nominated by associate deans for academic affairs for their respective college. These faculty members serve as "IPE champions" for their program and are often involved in a variety of campus IPE offerings. Currently, support and service to IPE offerings is not consistently documented in faculty distribution of efforts. Teams meet six times during the academic year for didactic IPE content and active learning opportunities culminating in a standardized patient simulation. iCATS is managed via an online learning management system to provide core information such as schedule of events, required and supplemental resources, online attendance recording, and an online forum for team communication. Additionally, the Center provides live iCATS facilitator training prior to the launch of the curriculum each academic year.

Assessment/evaluation strategy

The iCATS curriculum was constructed specifically to serve health professions learners in their preclinical years, thus, assessment focuses on shifts in attitudes toward IPE and knowledge of other professions. A mixed-method approach was implemented for student learning assessment and program evaluation, including a combination of Likert-type qualitative items and qualitative elements such as open response items and structured discussion. Ethics approval was received from the university's Institutional Review Board.

The Attitudes Toward Health Care Teams Scale (ATHCTS) was employed in the early years of iCATS as a means of pre- and post-evaluation of the experience.¹⁰ This validated and popular instrument is comprised of two subscales, Physician Centrality and Quality of Care, and uses a Likert-type five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).¹⁰

To mitigate learners overrating their interprofessional competencies due to response or social desirability and/or the Hawthorne effect,¹¹ the Interprofessional Collaborative Competency Attainment Scale¹² (ICCAS) was introduced in 2016 in place of the ATHCTS. The ICCAS retrospective pre-/post- design allows for a more effective measure of students' perspective on the development of their interprofessional competencies.¹³

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