



Contemporary Issues

Interprofessional education workshops in the workplace for pre-registration learners: Aligning to National Standards



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ABSTRACT

The inclusion of formal interprofessional education activities within clinical placements aligns with the national agenda in Australia to increase the focus on collaborative practice. However, the challenge remains for health services to determine how to achieve this goal. The education team at one health service elected to align new interprofessional education initiatives to the National Standards for Quality in Healthcare, to increase student focus on the complex domains of practice that require collaborative practice. An interprofessional falls prevention workshop was created for students on clinical placement. In the pilot phase, the 2 h workshops ran four times across three months. Simultaneously, a second group of students were invited to complete an online falls prevention module. Knowledge gains from the two interventions were compared using a Mann Whitney test and qualitative data was thematically coded. There was no significant difference in fall prevention knowledge between the two interventions. Thematic analysis illustrated workshops promoted an increased understanding of others roles, person-centred care, interprofessional communication and collaboration. This pilot study has demonstrated that 2 h interprofessional educational workshops are a feasible, replicable and useful addition to profession-specific clinical placements. The interprofessional workshop offered the opportunity for students of different professions to come together, practice interprofessional communication, explore the roles and responsibilities of others and collaborate in the theoretical management of a clinical case.

1. Background

Pre-registration clinical education traditionally occurs in profession specific silos despite the broad aspiration to prepare the future health workforce for collaborative practice (Frenk et al., 2010). In order to be able to work collaboratively, clinicians need to recognise the roles of other professions, develop teamwork skills and communicate effectively across professions. Interprofessional education (IPE) has been proposed as one model of teaching collaborative practice and is generally well received by learners and enables the knowledge and skills necessary for collaborative working to be learnt (Hammick et al., 2007). The inclusion of formal IPE activities within clinical education placements aligns with national and state expectations to improve education in collaborative practice. Several professions now require evidence of interprofessional learning within their curriculum for accreditation (Australian Medical Council, 2012; Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council, 2012). However, the challenge remains for health services to determine 'how' best to implement IPE opportunities in to usual clinical placements.

A range of formal IPE opportunities for pre-registration students in the workplace have been investigated including student led wards, student teams engaging with a real patient through interview, student teams working through a case study and structured workshops (Kent et al., 2017). Student led wards commonly co-locate senior medical, nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy students for a two-week period, however this model is unable to cater for the vast number of students representing a wide range of professions across large health services. More reproducible at scale are interprofessional case-based activities, which when combined with meaningful interaction and discussion in small interprofessional groups are associated with learners acquiring knowledge of the roles of other professions and teamwork skills (Kent et al., 2017).

In order to simultaneously address both core clinical content and interprofessional competencies required of clinical placements, an interprofessional workshop based on a real clinical case was investigated. Multiple clinical domains of practice require a collaborative approach to patient care. In Australia, the National Standards for Health Care in Australia detail ten standards against which the quality of health services is measured (Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, 2012). The education team elected to align all new IPE initiatives to the National Standards to increase focus on these complex domains of practice and maximise applicability across professional groups. The first education workshop investigated was based on National Standard 10: Preventing Falls and Harms from Falls.

IPE Workshop	Online Module
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modified 'Talking walls' activity • Case based discussion • Resources referenced • Multiple choice knowledge test • Reflection • Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video • Reading material • Resources made available • Multiple choice knowledge test • Evaluation

Fig. 1. Comparison of content between interprofessional workshop and online module.

2. Method

2.1. Setting

A large network of public health services with both acute and subacute sites in Victoria, Australia that provides clinical education to medicine, nursing, pharmacy and allied health students.

2.2. Educational Content

A falls prevention workshop was created for pre-registration students on clinical placement across the public health sites. In the first instance, 2 h workshops were created and run four times across three months when the clinical placements of students from multiple professions aligned.

The clinical case created for study was derived from a recent falls incident with relevance to multiple professions and made explicit links to the hospital policy, procedure and resources. The lesson plan, workshop resource pack and ten item multiple choice quiz were drafted and distributed to educators representing each of the relevant professions for input and feedback. The learning outcomes targeted in the session included role understanding, interprofessional communication and collaboration with reference to fall prevention, assessment and management. Each session was facilitated by two educators, typically from different professions.

The content of the interprofessional workshop, and comparison between the existing online falls module is summarised in Fig. 1. A focus on interactivity and discussion was facilitated in the workshops by creating 3–4 small interprofessional groups within each session, along with prompt questions for the groups to discuss and present regarding the clinical case. Small group prompt questions included: What professions would need to be involved in the assessment of this patient on admission to hospital? Could this fall in hospital have been prevented? How?

2.3. Ethics

The educational activity and evaluation was conducted as a quality improvement activity, after review by the Human Research and Ethics department. All participants were provided with a Participant Information and Consent form and provided written consent.

2.4. Design

In the evaluation of the effectiveness of new educational interventions, it is prudent to evaluate knowledge gains (Level 2b modified Kirkpatrick), in addition to student perceptions (Level 1 modified Kirkpatrick) to ascertain if differences between the two programs extend beyond student satisfaction (Oandasan and Reeves, 2005). A quasi experimental study was therefore conducted to compare knowledge outcomes following the interprofessional workshop compared to self-directed online learning.

The interprofessional education workshop was conducted with pre-registration students in Semester 2, 2016. Simultaneously, a second group of students were invited to complete an online falls prevention module. Upon completion of the workshop or the online module, students completed a ten item multiple choice quiz (MCQ) and an evaluation of the educational experience. Six of the ten multiple choice questions tested falls prevention knowledge. Four questions tested the participants understanding of the roles various professions play in falls prevention. Knowledge gains from the two interventions were compared using a Mann Whitney test.

Evaluation feedback on the educational experience was collected using a one page quantitative and qualitative evaluation form. The free text section was thematically coded using content analysis, aligned to the stated learning outcomes.

2.5. Participants

Students from medicine, nursing, nutrition and dietetics, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, social work and allied health assistants on clinical placement were invited to participate in the interprofessional workshop. Invitations were based on those opportunistically at the same clinical site as the workshop venue at pre-determined dates.

Students invited to complete the online module were on placement at the same time as the workshops but at other sites across the organisation. An email invitation for participation was made to students via profession specific student coordinators.

3. Results

3.1. Knowledge

A total of 46 students from dietetics, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, social work and allied health assistants attended an interprofessional workshop and 43 completed the evaluation; seven students completed the online falls prevention module.

The median score for each of the ten item MCQ showed no significant differences between groups (Z -Score is -1.10 , p -value 0.27). On total

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