



Interprofessional Collaboration

One (1.0) Contact Hour

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Acknowledgements

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Purpose and Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the nurse will be able to:

The purpose of this one contact hour continuing education course for nurses is to present information about interprofessional collaboration and its significance in the healthcare setting, and to define the role of the nurse in improving interprofessional collaboration in the healthcare setting.

- Define interprofessional collaboration.
- Describe the role that interprofessional collaboration plays in delivering safe patient and family centered care.
- Identify the purpose of interprofessional collaboration.
- List the four competencies of interprofessional collaboration.
- Discuss how the nurse may help improve the healthcare organization's adoption of an interprofessional collaboration approach in the delivery of care.

What is Interprofessional Collaboration?

Interprofessional collaboration has been defined by many. However, most authorities would accept the definition of interprofessional collaboration to be when: "Multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds work together with patients, families, caregivers, and communities to deliver the highest quality of care" (WHO, 2010).

Loosely defined, interprofessional collaboration is a partnership that starts with the patient and includes all involved healthcare providers working together to deliver patient and family centered care.

The term "interprofessional" is becoming one of the most widely used terms in conjunction with "collaboration" in the healthcare vernacular and is also emerging in the literature as a hot topic of focus for healthcare researchers. The term "interprofessional" is the updated version of older terms such as, interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary, and trans-disciplinary.

Did you know?

An example of interprofessional collaboration would be a doctor, nurse, physical therapist, occupational therapist, and pharmacist working together to carry out an individualized plan of care in order to improve a patient's health status.

Interprofessional Collaboration: Not a New Concept

Lowell T. Coggeshall was a physician who began his career in 1928 and championed for advancement of medical progress through education. In 1965, Coggeshall suggested, "the concept of medicine as a single discipline concerned with only the restoration of individual health from the diseased state should be replaced by the concept of health professions working in concert to maintain and increase the health of society as well as the individual."

In 1970, Jerome P. Lysaught suggested advancing the practice of nurses by educating nurses at universities and increasing the number of graduate programs. The historical report titled, The Lysaught Report, released by the national commission for the Study of Nursing and Nursing education, also

recommended nurses and physicians work together to improve patient care.

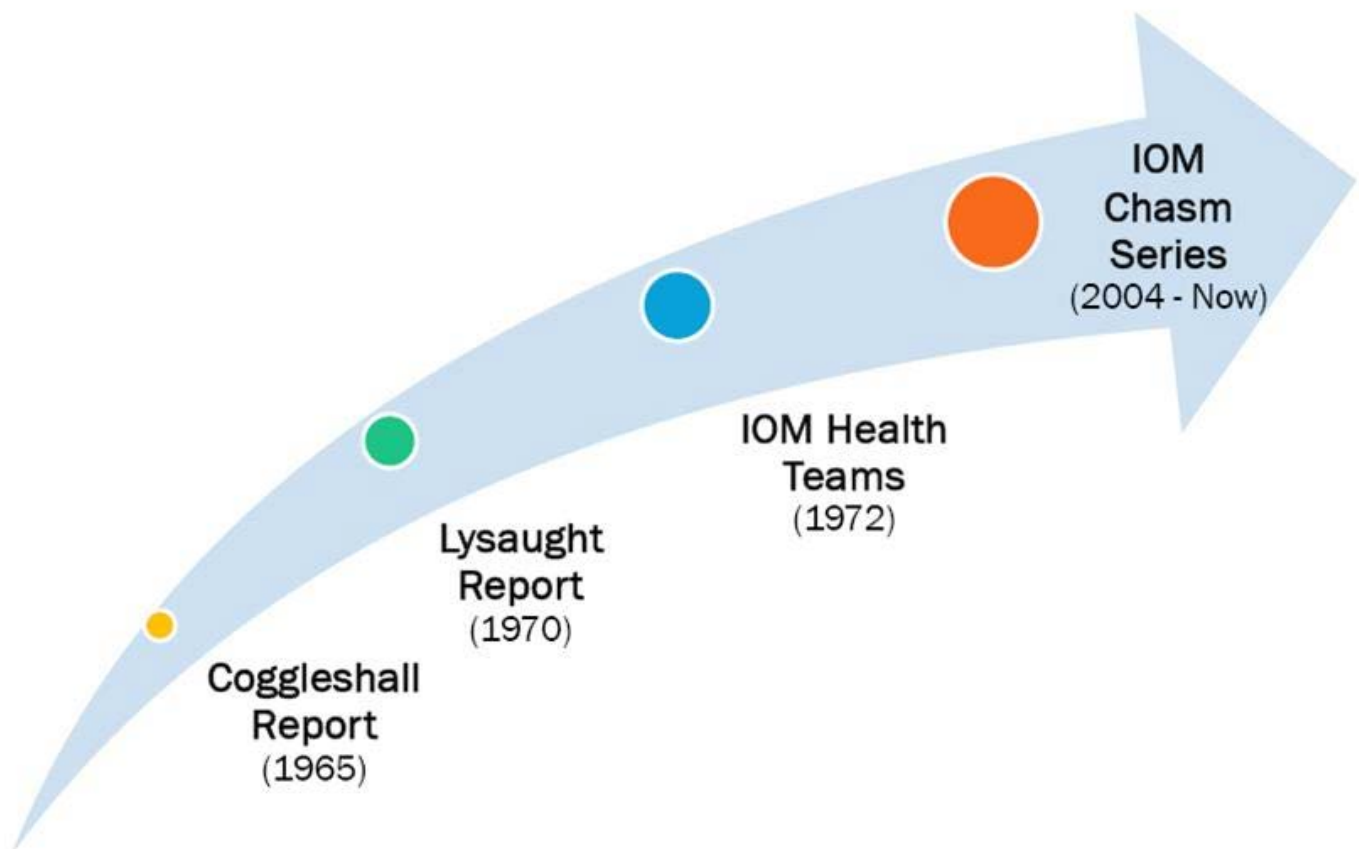
In 1972, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommended the advancement of health teams, and by 2000 the IOM Crossing the Quality Chasm series highlights the implications of NOT taking on the challenges to successfully deliver high quality and safe care to patients.

Test Yourself

The term, interprofessional collaboration, is new but the concept has been documented as early as:

- a. 1985
- b. 1928 - Correct!
- c. 1960
- d. 2000

History and Timeline of Interprofessional Collaboration



Events that Preceded Interprofessional Collaboration

Historically, widespread patient errors in US hospitals have been associated with substantial preventable morbidity and mortality. Errors identified in the patient care setting vary in severity and range in complexity from simple medication errors to fatal compromises in patient safety.

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In addition, major quality issues of traditional care delivery methods have been identified, calling for much needed change to the present approach. The breakdown or deficiencies in communication among healthcare professionals, particularly between nurses and doctors, can directly contribute to the destabilization of the environment in which care is provided, and negatively impacts the patient whom care is centered around.

Poor communication between health professionals is not only associated with a rise in mortality but with increase length of hospital stay and higher hospital readmission rates.

The groundbreaking Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, *To Err is Human*, supports the need for healthcare professionals to focus on communication and the facilitation of effective communication and for professional societies to set standards and communicate to members the importance of securing the safety of patients.

The tradition of doctor-centric healthcare environments is being replaced. Gone are the days when one person writes an order, and another person follows it. Everyone's input (patient, family, and all persons involved in the patient's care) is important and should be assessed objectively. By doing so, the patient benefits.

Healthcare systems and experts agree that risk reduction strategies must be employed per the Joint Commission's recommendations to reduce the occurrence of sentinel events.

A Closer Look at Interprofessional Collaboration

A review of the literature reveals certain concepts which are mentioned repeatedly in the various definitions of interprofessional collaboration. Among the most common were: sharing, partnership, interdependency and power (D'Amour, Ferrada-Videla, Rodriguez, & Beaulieu, 2005).

Researchers (D'Amour et al., 2005) also affirm that interprofessional collaboration is a dynamic process, and that it is improbable that by simply bringing healthcare professionals together, collaboration will occur. Rather, trust must be established and an appreciation of each others' roles must be gained in order for effective collaboration to take place.

Health professionals must recognize their own individual scope of practice and skill set AND have an awareness of and appreciation for other health professionals' capacity to contribute to the delivery of care to patients in order to achieve optimal health outcomes. Interprofessional collaboration is an updated version to the traditional team approach to healthcare.

Test Yourself

A condition of established trust and respect of other health professionals contributions must be met in order for interprofessional collaboration to take place.

- a. True - Correct!
- b. False

Achieving Goals with Interprofessional Collaboration

There are several goals that may be achieved through interprofessional collaboration. **Interprofessional collaboration is considered to be the most critical instrument in reducing patient care errors.** It is widely accepted that interprofessional collaboration may improve communication between all health

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professionals. Another goal is to coordinate care among health professionals so that inefficiencies in healthcare such as delays in (or lack of) treatment, redundancies in care, or inappropriate use of services may be eliminated. Another goal is to reduce overall healthcare costs. The employment of interprofessional collaboration methods may help to build a safer and better patient-centered and community/population-oriented US healthcare system.

Test Yourself

Goals that may be achieved with interprofessional collaboration include:

- a. Lower healthcare costs
- b. Reduced patient errors
- c. Improved communication
- d. All of the above - Correct!

Paving The Way For Interprofessional Collaboration

The seminal IOM report, *To Err is Human* (1999) attempted to quantify the number of needless deaths due to errors and poor quality care.

In 2003, TJC reported that communication failures among team members are a contributory factor in 60% of sentinel events. In 2005, communication failures were the leading root cause of all sentinel events (Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. Joint Commission Perspectives, 2006).

Did you know?

This report has been widely credited with launching efforts to study and improve safety in healthcare.

National Organizations Lead the Movement

The groundbreaking Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, [*The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health \(2010\)*](#), was a call for a transformed healthcare system in which “interprofessional collaboration and coordination are the norm.” The report positions nurses strategically at the frontline of the movement to coordinate the improvement of patient-centered care.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), notes that despite decades of health reform focused on improving patient safety and rising healthcare costs, the majority of healthcare organizations remain entrenched in traditional ways of operation. Among these methods, is what is described as “siloe care,” in which health professionals miss the opportunity to improve efficiency and healthcare delivery effectiveness by failing to collaborate sufficiently.

The American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association, asserts with their most recent Magnet® Application Report (2013), that nurses should demonstrate their involvement in interprofessional collaborative practice within the care delivery system.

Time For Action

National legislation spurs changes in healthcare and the impact felt by the most recent law will be

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significant. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) maintains that interprofessional collaboration is crucial in order to ensure patient-centered care, thereby improving the quality of healthcare delivery.

This piece of legislation urges healthcare organizations to adopt a climate where teamwork and collaborative decision-making is the standard by which care is delivered across the care continuum.

The Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS) is changing reimbursement criteria, shifting their focus and dollars towards accountable care organizations (ACO's), and establishing standards for meaningful use of our electronic medical records (EMR). These factors combined, dictate the necessity to transform the way we deliver care, if we want to operate sustainable healthcare systems. Creating viable healthcare organizations means using the most efficient methods of communication while providing patient care.

In summary, **interprofessional collaboration is believed by many, to be the key to unlock health reform so that meaningful healthcare transformation may occur.**

How Will Healthcare Organizations Achieve Interprofessional Collaboration?

Central to these changes in healthcare lies the question: How will healthcare systems utilize the strengths of each healthcare member AND keep the communication and collaboration flowing throughout the treatment process?

A collaborative team approach may just be the help needed to meet the needs of a growing patient population with increasing health needs.

Professional associations, healthcare organizations, and academic institutes are in the creation phase of competencies, certificate programs, pre and post licensure programs and other formal instruction formats to educate both current and future health professionals on interprofessional collaboration.

A few definitions of interprofessional collaboration education exist, and one prevalent in the literature asserts interprofessional collaboration education is when, "students of two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes" (WHO, 2010).

Test Yourself

What is the definition of "interprofessional collaboration education"?

- a. Students of two or more professions learn through traditional lecture instruction, about interprofessional collaboration.
- b. Students of the same profession teaching each other about interprofessional collaboration.
- c. Teachers of two or more professions educating students outside their profession about interprofessional collaboration.
- d. Students of two or more professions learning about, from, and with each other to facilitate effective interprofessional collaboration. - Correct!

A Summit of Professional Groups

In 2011, a breakthrough report (entitled Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice) was sponsored by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative. This report established the

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framework for interprofessional collaboration competency education for health professionals to provide 'team-based care.' The report highlights the need for integrated healthcare and higher education transformation.

This groundbreaking report summarizes the conceptual outline for interprofessional collaborative education for each of the educational disciplines.

The six professional education organizations include:

- The American Association of Colleges of Nurses
- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
- Association of Schools of Public Health
- American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
- American Dental Education Association
- Association of American Medical Colleges

These experts have established four core competencies to help shape the education curriculum at their respective organizations to educate present and future health professionals.

Test Yourself

The landmark report published in 2011, is significant because:

- a. It establishes framework for interprofessional collaboration competency education. - Correct!
- b. Encourages all educational institutions to adopt the same competencies for interprofessional collaboration.
- c. It supports the adoption of older guidelines of interdisciplinary care.
- d. Reported on a single professional educational organization's position on interprofessional collaboration education.

The Interprofessional Education Collaboration (IPEC) Report

The report highlights an international widespread movement to engage health professional students in interactive learning with those outside their professions as a usual part of their education.

The goal of this interprofessional collaborative education movement towards team-based care is to build "a safer and better patient-centered and community/population oriented U.S. healthcare system" (Interprofessional Education Collaborative Expert Panel, 2011).

The report draws attention to the IOM's original assertion in 1972, which stated that cooperation between health professions would improve care, yet the existing educational system was not equipped to prepare health professionals for teamwork.

While errors in patient care are recognized as a catalyst for healthcare transformation, the report cites the passage of the Recovery and Investment Act (2009) and the Patient Protection and Affordable care Act (2010) as cause for the advancement of interprofessional collaboration, in order to meet the needs of patients across all healthcare settings.

IPEC Report

The report also recognizes that health profession schools carry the chief responsibility in developing

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core competencies to educate health professionals on interprofessional education.

While many health profession education programs may have some interprofessional collaborative education built into their curricula, there is a lack of standardization across health professions as well as a lack of outcomes-based competency expectations that are measurable.

A central goal of the expert panel was to establish these standards with measures in hopes that the presented standards may serve as stepping stones for future health education programs.

Purpose of Core Competencies

The purpose of the competencies defined for interprofessional collaborative education and the associated training modules address how health professionals can adopt standardized interprofessional collaborative skills to successfully implement interprofessional collaborative patient-centered care.

Did you know?

Currently, the most common method of demonstrating continued competence for licensure renewal is continuing education (NCSBN, 2005). By completing this module, you will have demonstrated competency with interprofessional collaboration.

The Four Domains

With careful research of the literature, the experts make the distinction that while the IOM's core competencies (2003) include "work in interdisciplinary team" (communication, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration in teamwork), the interprofessional competencies that support this process were not clearly described."

The four interprofessional collaborative (competency) domains that have been established by the expert panel are:

(Click each number below)

- 1. Values/Ethics for Interprofessional Practice**
- 2. Roles/Responsibilities**
- 3. Interprofessional Communication**
- 4. Teams and Teamwork**

Values/Ethics Domain

This first domain, values and ethics, relate to a patient centeredness approach and a community/population orientation in mind.

The competency statement states that: "nurses should work with individuals of other professions to maintain a climate of mutual respect and shared values."

This competency represents the morals of patient care delivery and the obligation of health professionals to honor the rights of the patient and the ethical construct of team-based care.

Roles/Responsibilities Domain

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This second domain maintains that an understanding of how professional roles and responsibilities complement each other in patient-centered and community/population oriented care, is essential to interprofessional collaboration.

Collaborative practice hinges on each profession knowing and using the others' expertise and capabilities in a patient-centered way.

Additionally, clearly defined professional boundaries and scope of practice will enable health professionals to easily communicate their expertise and responsibilities to professionals of other disciplines.

Interprofessional Communication Domain

The third domain, communication, is accepted as a core aspect of interprofessional collaborative practice. A readiness to work together needs to be communicated as condition for successful interprofessional collaboration to take place.

A common language for communication can help professionals overcome the inherent barriers that may be present among the various professions. Examples of widely used communication tools include [TeamSTEPPS](#) and the communication format [SBAR](#).

As cited by the experts of this report, ..."team-related communications exploit opportunities that influence team interactions, organization, and functioning".

Included in this core competency is the increased need for health professionals to be literate with informatics and proficient with the use of communication technologies.

Situation Background Assessment Recommendation (SBAR) is a standardized way of communicating. It promotes patient safety because it helps individuals communicate with each other with a shared set of expectations. Staff and physicians can use SBAR to share patient information in a concise and structured format. SBAR stands for:

- Situation**
- Background**
- Assessment**
- Recommendation**

SBAR was originally developed by the US Navy as a communication technique that could be used on nuclear submarines, and was introduced into healthcare settings in the late 1990s. Since then, SBAR has been adopted by hospitals around the world as a simple but effective way to standardize communication between care givers.

TeamSTEPPS is a teamwork system developed by the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), to improve collaboration and communication relating to patient safety. It is an evidence-based framework to optimize team performance across the healthcare delivery system. TeamSTEPPS is comprised of four teachable-learnable skills: Leadership, Situation Monitoring, Mutual Support, and Communication.

Teams and Teamwork Domain

This fourth domain, teams and teamwork, emphasizes developing shared problem solving and shared decision making that reflects the interdependence among the team members, while providing care more efficiently.

Along with this shared decision making, some professional autonomy may need to be relinquished in order to achieve better patient outcomes.

Quality improvement tools may help to foster teamwork behaviors. Additionally, leadership practices should encourage team-building and shared decision-making.

Competencies, Learning Objectives and Activities

Educational programs have established behavioral learning objectives which are linked to learning activities. These learning objectives will be achieved by the end of pre-licensure or pre-certification education.

Current learning objectives and the associated learning activities offered by educational programs, are focused primarily on exposing learners from other professions and lack explicit instruction on how to achieve interprofessional competency.

A need for organizational change across educational programs is highlighted in the report as well as the need to bridge the gap that exists between interprofessional collaboration education and current practice. Across the disciplines, experts agree that there is no consensus on the best way to engage students and assist them in gaining competency in interprofessional collaboration, but agree that the best way to reach consensus is to continue to explore these concepts collaboratively.

The report features examples of state programs that have interprofessional competency programs that include models of actual hands-on, team-based patient-centered care with the patient as a mentor, models using simulation, and models of service learning projects which provide care to underserved patients.

While there are many interprofessional competency programs, it is important to note that each program utilizes a wide array of activities to help students achieve competency goals.

Test Yourself

What does the summit report about interprofessional collaboration education competencies?

- a. That exposing learners to interprofessional collaboration is sufficient for demonstrating competency.
- b. That across disciplines, there is a consensus on the best approach to teach interprofessional collaboration.
- c. That explicit instruction on how to achieve interprofessional competency is not necessary to help professionals meet their learning objectives.
- d. There is a need for change across educational programs to bridge the gap between interprofessional collaboration education and current practice. - Correct!

Challenges of Interprofessional Competencies

Current challenges to the adoption of competency programs center on barriers preventing students from learning together and working together during their respective educations.

This barrier highlights the need for education programs to build curricula to support interprofessional collaboration that is inclusive of multiple professions, where the blending of professional cultures may be achieved and the skills and knowledge unique to each profession may be shared.

While challenges exist for interprofessional collaboration, the report highlights the fact that competencies are best learned over time, with specific clinical and non-clinical methods, based upon specific healthcare goals.

The Nurse's Role in Interprofessional Collaboration

Nurses, while developing their own professional identity, also need to be mindful of other health professional roles and the impact of the interprofessional component on the ever-changing culture of healthcare. **Nurses and other health professionals must recognize the individual contributions of each professional involved in the direct care of patients.**

Nurses want involvement in the decision-making process beyond executing orders, but don't always know how to assert themselves. Nurses intend to have more autonomy in patient care, but have difficulty applying it in practice. To address this issue, **nurses should use communication tools as an effective communication aid.** Other health providers may not know what nurses need in order to perform their jobs, communication tools may help facilitate thorough communication.

Another action nurses can take is to **engage in continuing education opportunities to assure team-based competencies.** It is through education, that interprofessional collaboration skills may be acquired and communication may be enhanced, and patient outcomes improved.

Conclusion

Interprofessional collaboration is when health professionals from different professions work together to provide patient-centered care. Poor communication has been cited in the literature as the leading root cause of patient errors in the US healthcare system. In order for interprofessional collaboration to take place all health professionals need to be aware of the contributions that each profession brings to the care arena; maintain a mutual respect for each professional's skill set; and make an earnest attempt to communicate effectively; and seek out continuing educational training opportunities to improve interprofessional collaboration.

Nurses play an integral role in adopting effective modes of communication with professionals of other disciplines. Nurses on the frontline and those with leadership roles are positioned to build and maintain professional partnerships that efficient and safe patient care may flow from.

This global initiative translates to a considerable change in practice. That is to say this change will not occur overnight, but instead over time. With diligence of all health professionals and a commitment of healthcare leaders, collaboration will take place and patient outcomes will be improved across the spectrum of care.

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