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Interprofessional Education (IPE)

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Definition: "When students from two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes." (WHO, 2010)

IPE is an educational technique. IPE allows learners to gain competency in interprofessional communication and team-based care by participating in collaborative educational sessions. By definition, these sessions must include learners from more than one discipline (i.e. medicine, nursing, pharmacy, social work, therapy, etc.), but the content and format of the session may vary by setting and level of learners present. Due to logistics, IPE is most frequently done in undergraduate settings, but can be applied to all levels, including continuing education.

The Institute of Medicine and the World Health Organization (among other groups) have encouraged IPE as a way to prepare the medical work force for the collaborative, patient-centered care requisite for healthcare quality and safety.

The Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) has developed 4 domains for IPE. Each domain contains multiple sub-competencies:

1) Values and Ethics of Interprofessional Practice: Learners must be able to "work with individuals of other professions to maintain a climate of mutual respect and shared values."

2) Roles and Responsibilities: Learners must be able to "use the knowledge of one's own role and those of other professions to appropriately assess and address the healthcare needs of the patients and populations served."

3) Interprofessional Communication: Learners must be able to "communicate with patients, families, communities, and other health professionals in a responsive and responsible manner that supports a team approach to the maintenance of health and the treatment of disease."

4) Teams and Teamwork: Learners must be able to "apply relationship-building values and the principles of team dynamics to perform effectively in different team roles to plan and deliver patient-/population-centered care that is safe, timely, efficient, effective, and equitable."

Opportunities to integrate IPE into daily clinical teaching:

- **IDT rounds** (e.g. identify roles/responsibilities/training of other disciplines to learners; model good interprofessional communication skills; observe learners practice their team practice skills and provide feedback)
- **Case studies/clinical presentations** (e.g actively encourage the participation of other disciplines on bedside rounds)
- **Quality improvement initiatives** (e.g. invite learners to participate in QI initiatives that are going on in your department; involve learners in systems analysis and root cause analyses)

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