Foundations of Interprofessional Collaborative Practice  Sharon Lanning

Learning About, From and With One Another

Traditionally, beginning level health science students learned within the silo of their own professional program and only began to interact with other health professions during clinical rotations. Even in the clinical environment, the students had little formal introduction to other health professions and often approached these interactions awkwardly and with uncertainty. At VCU, we believe these career-long professional relationships should have a much stronger foundation.

This fall semester marked the inaugural course offering of IPEC 501 Foundation of Interprofessional Collaborative Practice course. During this one-credit course, just over 500 beginning level students from seven health science programs learned about, from and with one another to improve future interprofessional practice. Students included learners from the programs of dental hygiene, dentistry, genetic counseling, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, and physical therapy.

Working in an interprofessional team of 5-6 people in the McGlothlin Medical Education Center Learning Studios, the students explored the conceptual basis of interprofessional collaborative practice. The teams engaged in specific learning activities aimed to enhance their knowledge about the healthcare system and the typical practice of health professionals while refining skills for collaboration.

Newly acquired team-based skills were put to the test during the course’s final learning activity — a video-essay demonstrating a barrier and solution towards interprofessional healthcare. Student teams tackled the complexity of the healthcare system and described ways to mitigate or eliminate their identified barrier.

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Spotlight on Carole Ivey

Carole Ivey is an Assistant Professor with the Department of Occupational Therapy in the School of Allied Health Professions. Carole received her bachelor's and master's degrees in occupational therapy and her PhD in Special Education and Disability Policy at VCU. She worked for 15 years as an occupational therapist in public and private schools, early intervention, outpatient therapy, and private practice. As an assistant professor, she is translating this work to courses she teaches on pediatric occupational therapy evaluation and intervention, interprofessional teamwork, and clinical reasoning. Carole’s dissertation on interprofessional teamwork pedagogy and her experience teaching an interprofessional teamwork class for Virginia’s Leadership Education in Neu- rodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) program made her a good fit as part of the core team developing the new Foundations of Interprofessional Education course. Carole’s current research is on evaluation of praxis in young children, occupational therapy’s role in a primary care setting, and development of students’ therapeutic use-of-self over the course of their program. While these areas may seem diverse, her research, teaching, and community engaged research all have a core focus related to interprofessional collaboration and teamwork including being a faculty leader for both IPEC 501 and continuing education activities.

Student Perspectives

What did you like most about IPEC 501? I really like that I’m learning about how different healthcare professions operate, in terms of their scopes of practice. Paiyaum Bibizadhem (Dentistry) • Learning about the different health professionals and about my team members and their enthusiasm for their professions. Tania Yavari (Genetic Counseling) • It was an exciting opportunity to meet different health-professional students, and learn their different backgrounds/cultures, by working on different projects and gather their ideas. Hae Young Choi (Pharmacy).

How do you see IPEC 501 shaping your future practice? The knowledge I gained from my peers on the different roles and responsibilities of various medical professionals will go a long way in enhancing my success as a nurse. Caroline Corvin (Nursing) • As part of the teamwork process, I realized how each professional contributes to the care of a patient and how collaborating together will result in the best outcome for the patient. Alexander Wiseman (Pharmacy).

Faculty Perspectives

What did you like most about participating in the Foundations of Interprofessional Collaborative Practice (IPEC 501) course? I enjoyed working with students and educators from other disciplines. Being able to interact with student groups and facilitate learning “with” them as opposed to being a content expert was refreshing as an educator. Michelle McGregor, RDH, BS, MEd (Dental Hygiene) • It gave me enjoyable exposure to faculty and students from a variety of programs with an emphasis on our common interests and concerns rather than our differences. For more than 20 years I have taught the students in our program in the building and classrooms allocated to our department and frequently over the course of those years I realized that we had closer connections between programs and schools on this campus. I am just so happy that it has finally happened and I hope that it continues to grow! Dianne Simons, PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA (Occupational Therapy).

What did you like from participating in the Foundations of Interprofessional Collaborative Practice course? I learned new information about other professions and picked up on some ways that other disciplines handle situations that broadened my view. Shawnie Soper, PT, DPT, MBA (Physical Therapy) • My awareness was heightened during this course, and I feel like I have a better sense of what I know and, perhaps more importantly, don’t know - about interprofessional collaboration. The unexpected take-aways that have me centered around small group management and team dynamics. I saw the importance of connecting with each group individually, and that’s something that I will carry forward with me into the classroom. Emily Peron, PharmD, MS, BCPS, FASCP (Pharmacy).

Faculty Development

Charles Alexander

The beginning of every fall season marks the launch of the Virginia Geriatric Education Center's (VGE C) Faculty Development Program, a 16-month case-themed experience grounded in evidence-based practices. The program brings faculty, representing numerous disciplines, together to develop the next-generation of geriatrics curriculum. An interprofessional group of faculty from Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Virginia, and Eastern Virginia Medical School develop the curriculum, deliver presentations, and conduct evaluations of all sessions for the participating faculty learners. At monthly meetings, these faculty learners participate in discussion and analysis designed to increase knowledge and competency in geriatrics and clinical care skills. Fifty-seven health care professionals have successfully completed the 160-hour program in its first four years. The sixteen faculty learners enrolled this year represent a variety of disciplines, including medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy, public health, and clinical exercise physiology. They are working through a rigorous 200-hour curriculum designed around a capstone project catered for their own institution. New this year is a 40-hour interprofessional experience at the Richmond Health and Wellness Program (RHWP) which will allow translation of learning from the “classroom” to the clinical setting within a team-based model of care delivery. Faculty learners will experience the education and clinic model used at RHWP and see how this approach could apply to their own practice environment.

Charles Alexander, M.A. is the Lead Education Coordinator in the Division of Geriatric Medicine.
Director’s Message

The winter holidays are a time of coming together. Many of us will come together with people we see infrequently to enjoy each other’s company and share about our lives. And, though we often have a deep connection with these people through family or tradition, there’s sometimes a few moments of uncertainty. Many of these people we haven’t seen over the preceding year, and the unfamiliarity can make us hesitant. We see this same hesitancy in healthcare.

To care for our patients and their families, we hope to instantly form the coordinated and comprehensive teams that meet the needs of the people we serve. That’s challenging. Each patient has different needs so every patient’s team is novel. And, that leads to uncertainty, interpersonal hesitancy, and, sometimes, errors and inefficiencies.

In this issue of The Common Thread, we described our efforts to help our most junior health professional students become better at forming these teams. The students learned about approaches to collaboration and had numerous opportunities to practice collaboration. Our hope is that these students will navigate the challenges and uncertainties of forming teams more deftly and provide better care to their patients. And, maybe this course will also provide them an ice-breaking topic of conversation at that holiday feast.

Alan Dow, MD, MSHA is the Assistant Vice President for Health Sciences for Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Care, and Professor of Internal Medicine in the VCU School of Medicine.

Save the Date

The changing healthcare environment requires frontline innovation from healthcare providers to improve the health of the population, decrease the cost of care, and enhance the patient experience.

The Fourth Annual Emswiller Interprofessional Symposium will take place on Saturday, February 6, 2016 from 8:30am - 3:00pm at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Henrico, VA.

Space is limited. Register now at: go.vcu.edu/ipeconference.

4th Annual Emswiller Interprofessional Symposium

“Leading Interprofessional Innovations in a Changing World”
Saturday, February 6, 2016 • Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Henrico, Virginia

Symposium Objectives
At the conclusion of the Symposium, attendees will be able to:
• describe the changes in the practice environment supportive of increased interprofessional practice;
• summarize evidence-supported innovations in interprofessional practice; and
• identify educational approaches to develop a workforce prepared for interprofessional practice.

Keynote Speaker
Christine A. Arenson, MD
Associate Professor and Co-Director,
Senior Adult Oncology Center
Thomas Jefferson University

Information & registration: go.vcu.edu/ipeconference