

Tricks and Tips for Fieldwork Education: Inter-professional learning in the clinical setting



Does this cartoon resonate with you?

Interprofessional education (IPE) is increasingly important in health professional education. It is an educational approach that helps to prepare the future health and human service workforce for interprofessional collaboration. Working together more effectively across professions and inclusion of the patient/client/family at the centre of care are both critical for mitigating health human resource shortages and for improving patient safety.

Inter-professional learning is something we are paying great attention to in the Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy. We are doing our best to try to find common learning opportunities so that our future health and human service providers have learned with, from and about each other (definition of Inter-professional education, CAIPE, 2002), prior to graduation. One of the most natural settings for this type of learning to occur is in the practice setting. There are a number of facilities that have taken on the IPE challenge and have provided IP learning opportunities in their facilities when many of the students are on practicum's. One example is at Providence Health Care. In the months of November and May, they gather as many students together from all the Providence sites for a 2 day IPE learning activity. They are using a case based approach to put groups of students together with a facilitator from Providence Health, to guide student learning and discovery about the best care for the patient and to learn about each others roles and contributions to the case. The students are released from their discipline specific preceptors during these sessions. The anecdotal report is that the students are learning in a meaningful way about the role each discipline plays and how they could better interact with one another. At GF Strong, students who are placed there also have the opportunity to get together to learn, with, from and about each other. Some of the activities include shadowing each other, getting together to discuss roles using a case based approach and participating in some team building exercises. At Royal Columbian we have identified and provided some training to 2 individuals who have become, for lack of a better word, IPE coaches. Students from PT, OT, Nursing and SLP, as well as being involved in the usual profession-specific activities, had the opportunity to be involved in Interprofessional Activities such as IP case studies, shadowing, a team visit to a Rehab Facility, Interprofessional rounds, and discussion. IP activities were aimed at fulfilling the BC Interprofessional competencies and were facilitated by the 2 "interprofessional coaches." Last but not least we have successfully placed an OT and an OTA student together with one supervisor where the students were not only focussing on their discipline specific skills and training but they were also attending to some inter-professional competencies. For more information on how you can provide inter-professional learning opportunities for students from a variety of disciplines or to view the BC Inter-professional Competencies that have been developed, please either call Donna or go to www.chd.ubc.ca/competency to view the competency framework.