Faculty Attitudes Toward Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Teamwork

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Introduction

• Interprofessional education (IPE): When students from two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes (WHO, 2010)
• Interprofessional teamwork: The levels of cooperation, coordination and collaboration characterizing the relationships between professions in delivering patient-centered care (IPEC, 2011)

Accrediting bodies across the health professions require IPE (Zorek & Raehl, 2013) and core competencies for interprofessional collaborative practice were developed by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative Expert Panel (IPEC, 2011).

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to assess faculty attitudes toward IPE and teamwork at an academic health science center (HSC) through three (3) specific research questions:

RQ1. What linear combination of independent variables predicts HSC faculty attitudes towards interprofessional learning in the healthcare setting?

RQ2. What linear combination of independent variables predicts HSC faculty attitudes towards interprofessional health care teams?

RQ3. What linear combination of independent variables predicts HSC faculty attitudes towards IPE?

Methods

• Institution Review Board approval
• Online survey sent to 537 faculty members affiliated with 5 components at one HSC
• Demographics collected and three (3) instruments used; one for each research question with permission from Curran, Sharpe, and Forristall (2007)

Results

Demographics of Faculty Respondents:

- 108 surveys returned; 20% return rate
- Data met parametric statistical test assumptions
- A priori a level set at .05
- Three (3) stepwise multiple regression analyses was conducted to evaluate each of the research questions

Figure: Bar charts showing the demographic distribution of faculty respondents.

RQ1: Predictors of HSC Faculty Attitudes Towards Interprofessional Learning in the Healthcare Setting

• Age shows a negative association suggesting that older faculty have lower attitudes towards interprofessional learning in the healthcare setting
• Little difference between affiliation and IPE experience

RQ2: Predictors of HSC Faculty Attitudes Towards IPE

• Age shows a negative association suggesting that older faculty have lower attitudes towards interprofessional teamwork at an academic health science center

Implications

While healthcare delivery is not a collection of individual efforts, most healthcare professionals are educated in silos. Team-based collaborative care is essential in today’s healthcare environment. It is logical that interprofessional training should occur during the education of healthcare professionals.

It is irrational to maintain that faculty can begin teaching IPE course without preparation (Anderson, Cox & Thorpe, 2009). Consideration of the attitudes of faculty toward IPE and teamwork is a logical place to start as faculty attitudes are an important factor to the success of IPE initiatives. Faculty development aimed at changing attitudes and increasing understanding of IPE and teamwork are critical. Results of this study will serve as an underpinning to leverage strengths and evaluate weakness in initiating IPE.

The findings from this survey have implications for IPE within academic health science centers and strategies to promote faculty development initiatives.

References