

Protocol for “The Partnered Learning Project”

General description

The 'Partnered Learning Project' is a multi-leveled curriculum designed to seamlessly develop interprofessional collaboration (IPC) in both pre-licensure trainees and health care providers. Two participant groups will be involved in this educational research project: practicing health professionals who work in team settings (including physicians, nurses, social workers, pharmacists and physical therapists) and pre-licensure trainees from 4-7 health professional departments/faculties at UofT and other provincial institutions (medicine, nursing, social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology and pharmacy).

Healthcare professionals will participate in a 4-hour 'team training' curriculum based on existing educational tools in the team training domain. Entire teams consisting of 8-12 individuals will be recruited for participation. The training, which team members will attend together, will include reflective discussions in an appreciative inquiry framework, simulated team situations, and role play, and will be facilitated by trained educators. The team training curriculum will be piloted in one SickKids team. Based on this pilot experience, the curriculum will be revised and implemented in two additional SickKids teams, and teams in two additional institutions: the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. The collaborative patterns of teams will be explored using observational research methods. Attitudes towards interprofessional collaboration and education will be assessed using validated survey instruments.

Student placement participants will spend time working with a healthcare team that has received team training instruction, and an interprofessional facilitator will meet with trainees weekly for structured discussion of their interprofessional placement experience. The placement itself is an educational, rather than a research activity which trainees self-select for; therefore consent is not required for participation in the placement. Consent will be obtained, however, for participation in the research and evaluation of the placement experience. The outcome of the educational experience will be assessed using validated survey instruments (interprofessional attitude survey), semi-structured interviews with trainees, and an analysis of trainees' end-of-placement assignments.

The following table sets out chronologically the steps involved in operationalizing this project, as well as the ethical issues to be addressed at each step.

Protocol Steps	Ethical considerations
Pilot of team training curriculum for a single clinical team at HSC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> curriculum will happen outside of regular clinical activities Team member time may be reimbursed/bought out for the session 	Recruitment and informed consent of 12 team members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact by research team member; information session (e.g. at business meeting or lunch rounds), information & consent forms distributed for return to central location; email or in-person follow-up if necessary to determine participation decision
Selection of teams to receive team training curriculum	Initial contact with leaders on potential teams by project team leaders has already occurred prior to grant submission. Recruitment will involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information session for team will be offered (e.g. at business meeting or lunch rounds), Information & consent forms distributed for return to central location; Email or in-person follow-up if necessary to determine participation decision <p>The identity of team members who do not wish to participate will remain confidential, as much as possible in a team setting where other team members will know who attends the curriculum and who does not. However, these teams are larger than the 12 people we intend to train, so some anonymity is afforded by virtue of the team's size and its rotating membership due to physician rotations, etc.</p>

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<p>Explorations of team collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations • Staff interviews • Attitudinal survey 	<p>Observations of team collaborative practices Trained observers/interviewers will collect data regarding the collaborative practices and perceptions of collaboration of team members who have agreed to participate in the team training curriculum. Observation sessions will last from 2-3 hours and will take place 2-3 times/week in the month preceding the team training and in the 2 months following the training. Observers will not interrupt the team's work; they will be trained to observe in a respectful and unobtrusive manner while being appropriately responsive to overtures by team members (e.g., responding to questions about the observations; attending to offered explanations about what a team member is doing).</p> <p>Because we are interested in collaborative group processes and not individual performance, observation fieldnotes will record information by professional role only (e.g., "Nurse discusses patient's status with the physician.").</p> <p>Because observations will take place in a public setting, there will be individuals present (both patients/families and other health professionals) who are not the study participants. Information sheets will be posted in the setting of observations (clinical wards) to inform these other individuals of the study and to offer them a means of inquiring about the study if they have questions. As in our past observation work, no identifying information will be collected regarding such individuals present in the observational setting. Observers will remain in public domains where multiple professionals are at work; they will not observe in individual patient rooms.</p> <p>Staff interviews Team members will be interviewed about their experience of participating both as a learner in the team-training initiative and as a learning partner in student placement initiative, in order to understand the strengths and challenges of our partnered curriculum. Interviews will be 15-30 minutes in length, and will be audiorecorded and transcribed. Participants will be assigned identification codes. Only the project team will have access to the anonymized transcripts for analysis purposes. Sample questions include: How does your team work together? Can you characterize a strong aspect of collaboration in your team? A recurrent challenge to collaboration? What was it like for you to have a trainee shadowing you who was focused on interprofessional collaboration? What would have helped you to mentor them more effectively in this area?</p> <p>Administration of attitudinal surveys Practicing team members' <i>perceptions of and attitudes towards their collaborative processes</i> will be assessed twice, one before and once after the training using a validated tool. Analysis of co-variance will assess change on continuous outcomes.</p>
<p>Evaluations of Pre-Licensure IPE placements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude surveys • Observations • Analysis of final project 	<p>Potential teams of students will be approached by a research assistant (RA) during the introductory placement tutorial to provide information and an opportunity to participate in the research project. Details will be outlined concerning their involvement and the RA will be able to respond to any questions or concerns. Information and consent forms will be distributed at the same meeting, with instructions to deposit completed forms (for both participants and nonparticipants) in a location to be determined in discussion with the IPE facilitators.</p> <p>Three forms of data will be collected to evaluate the placement.</p> <p>Attitude survey We will assess <i>change in attitudes towards interprofessional learning</i> by administering the Interprofessional Education Perception Scale (Luecht et al, 1990). This validated instrument will be administered twice; once at the beginning and once at the end of the placement experience.</p>

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<p>Evaluations of Pre-Licensure IPE placements ...<i>cont'd.</i></p>	<p>Observations During the course of the observations of teamwork in the post-team training phase, placement students will be present periodically (1 morning a week for 4-5 weeks) on the unit as they shadow a team member and/or work with patients on the team's unit. When the observer is present at the same time as the student, the observer will be interested in documenting the nature of the interactions between the student and the team member supporting their learning at that time. Thus, while this opportunity is likely to be infrequent, pre-licensure students will be informed and recruited to participate in such observations.</p> <p>Analysis of student project Students' final placement project will involve their effort to explore, from multiple professional perspectives, an issue of relevance to the team they're placed with. The completion of this project is part of the placement itself; however, projects of consented students will be collected following the placement, and analysed for evidence of knowledge and critical reflection regarding collaborative issues.</p>
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