**Guide to facilitating interprofessional education**

**What is Interprofessional Education (IPE)?**

Interprofessional Education (IPE) refers to when students from two or more professions learn with, from & about each other to improve collaboration, quality of care & services.

**What is an IPE Facilitator?**

An IPE facilitator *guides* the learning among students to promote reflection & discovery, construct shared meaning & aid interaction between the professions.

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**Preparation for facilitation**

- **Prior experience**
  - with patient centred care.
- **Knowledge**
  - of what makes good team culture & positive group dynamics.
- **Willingness**
  - to facilitate & support debriefing conversations. The facilitator role is to ‘guide’, not be the ‘expert.’
- **Review**
  - IPE definition, learning outcomes, & expected learner level.
- **Reflect**
  - on own professional biases & assumptions.

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**While facilitating**

- **Provide structure & ground rules:**
  - Set expectations for a safe environment by modelling interactions that are respectful & inclusive.
- **Link**
  - theory to practice & evidence for IPE.
- **Focus**
  - on the patient.
- **Model**
  - valuing of interprofessional collaboration & acceptance of diverse points of view.
- **Ask questions**
  - to direct discussion so students can explore role similarities & differences.
- **Stimulate**
  - critical thinking & problem-solving.
- **Notice and highlight**
  - ‘learning moments.’

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**Reflecting afterwards**

- **Step back**
  - Notice if you have allowed time for students to engage with each other & explore different professional roles & responsibilities.
  - What did students/facilitator say & do?
  - How were students encouraged to resolve issues within their teams?
  - What strategies did you use to give students autonomy?
  - How did you flexibly guide student learning?

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**Troubleshooting:**

- Engage with issues of power, conflict & hierarchy.
- Vary methods to enhance engagement.
- Seek advice from colleagues about how they have managed challenges.

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**Does the activity build student capacity in:**

- Self-awareness/reflexivity?
- Collaborative communication?
- Understanding roles?
- Building team relationships & trust?
- Focussing on the patient, rather than on individual professions?

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**Facilitator attributes:**

- Empathy, enthusiasm & a sense of humour.
- Able to accommodate group’s differences & encourage student autonomy.
- Comfort with ambiguity.
- Able to positively engage with conflict through discussion.

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