

Inter professional education of pharmacy and medical students: Is it an answer to improve the professional collaboration between pharmacist and doctor?

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Pharmacist is part of health professional team. They are responsible in ensuring positive outcomes for patients that improve quality of life; and therefore, pharmacist must take a role in monitoring drug therapy and make recommendations as necessary. However, poor professional communication between pharmacist and doctor currently remains a major problem. Therefore, it is urgent to early introduce Pharmacy students in working together with students from other health disciplines. Through this early collaboration the students develop not only their competencies of knowledge (of drug and disease), but also their acceptance by other health professionals. Inter Professional Education (IPE) provides an opportunity to train students from a range of health disciplines to work together during their studentship.

Pharmacy Faculty Universitas Sanata Dharma (USD) has initiated IPE for Pharmacotherapy subject. We made collaboration with Faculty of Medicine Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana (UKDW). A team teaching involved lecturers from both USD and UKDW. The team set up details of the IPE including preparing cases, scheduling, and managing resources. The IPE was conducted for the Year-3 students. They already studied basic Pharmacotherapy in Year-2. The class normally has 150 to 160 students. The class divided into groups. Each group was supervised by one pharmacist and one medical doctor from USD and UKDW, respectively. One pharmacy student was paired with one medical student. The pair of students was faced a case involving a trained simulated patient. The Pharmacy student acted as a pharmacist and so the Medical student as a doctor. They worked at a room set up as a ward in hospital. The process was observed and assessed by the supervisors. Feedbacks were given by the supervisors at the end of the process.

From the Faculty's view, there were some challenges in conducting the IPE, for instance, scheduling because of a big number of students and budgeting allocated for the hired simulated patients and the hired supervisors due to human resources limitation in the Faculties. From the students' views the valuable experiences are learning how to communicate effectively with doctor and understand each other's role. Communication with simulated patient is another excited learning experience for the students. The pharmacy students believed it is imperative to have sufficient pharmacotherapy knowledge and communication skill to make appropriate relationship with doctor.

In conclusion, the IPE is challenging, but promising in improving student's attitude to interact in appropriate manner in health care team and to understand each other's role. We do believe that this experience would be important for their future professional collaboration between pharmacist and doctor.