

Breaking Bad News: Confronting Interdisciplinary Bias

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this inter-professional educational (IPE) intervention was to increase awareness of inter-professional bias and improve communication related to patient safety among three disciplines

METHOD

A purposive sample of nursing, medicine, and pharmacy students (N=82) was recruited from 3 institutions located in an urban, US medical center to participate in a patient safety (heparin medication error) scenario simulation.

FOUR PHASES

The IPE phases were:

- 1) icebreaker session;
- 2) description of scenario, roles of providers, and development of plan for the encounter;
- 3) simulated encounter with a standardized patient (SP) family member, either angry or sad; and
- 4) debriefing session during which data was collected.

SCENARIO

- Heparin order 10x the usual dose
- Physician Ordered
- Pharmacist Dispensed
- Nurse Administered
- Communication
 - Ineffective
- Standardized Patient (SP) Family Member
 - Angry or Sad

FOCUS GROUP

- The Focus Groups
 - Students (n=15)
 - Faculty Facilitators (n=3)
- Topics of Discussion
 - Experience of the planning session
 - Experience of the encounter
 - Roles of and interactions with different disciplines
 - Stereotypical or controversial statements
 - Written feedback from the SP Family Member
 - *Respected each other*
 - *Nurse & pharmacist usually quiet*
 - *Nurse most empathic*

THEMES

- Perception of Professions
 - “I didn’t know nurses could refuse to give a medication”
- Leader of the Pack
 - “I will take charge; I’m the one the family wants to hear from”
- Who was at Fault?
 - ‘... but I ordered it’
 - ‘... but I dispensed it’
 - ‘... but I gave it’
- Fear of the Lawsuit
 - “It’s not good to tell them everything”

OUTCOMES

- Acknowledged biases
- Improved understanding of multidisciplinary knowledge and roles in patient care
- Recognized need for better communication and respect among disciplines to improve patient outcomes

