

# Health professionals' understanding of interprofessional education and collaborative practice (IPECP): A Queensland survey

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**Background:** This study aimed to investigate health professionals' understanding of interprofessional education (IPE) and collaborative practice (CP), and measure readiness to facilitate IPE.

**Interprofessional education** "Occurs when students from two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes"<sup>1</sup>

**Collaborative Practice** "Occurs when multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds provide comprehensive health services by working with patients, their families, carers and communities to deliver the highest quality of care across settings."<sup>1</sup>

**Methods:** Drs, nurses and AHPs in two regional health services in Queensland were invited to complete an online survey.

**Results:** 235 questionnaires were returned. Allied health (AH) professionals had the greatest understanding of interprofessional practice (IPP) terminology and nurses the least. Only 6% of staff had undertaken training in IPE.

**Predictors of a high knowledge of IPP score were:** Claiming to understand the difference between multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary teams ( $\beta$ .189,  $p$ =.001); perceived ability to explain IPE to a colleague ( $\beta$ .196,  $p$ =.001); and, being an AH clinician ( $\beta$ .312,  $p$ >.001). Being a nurse was not ( $\beta$ -.092,  $p$ =.293).

Variable	Test statistic (DF)	P-value (two-tailed)
Correlation between knowledge of IPP terminology score and years in profession	$r=-.190$	.003
Difference in knowledge of IPP terminology score between those who had received IPE&CP training and those who hadn't	$U=892$	.011
Correlation between ability to explain IPE terminology correctly and having received IPE/IPL training	$X^2=16.869(2)$	>.001
Correlation between view that IPE&CP improves patient outcomes and having received IPE/IPL training	$X^2=17.757(4)$	.001
Correlation between having undertaken training in IPE/IPL and confidence in facilitating IPE with 1. students and 2. other staff	$X^2=19.256(8)$ $X^2=18.960(8)$	.017 .019

More recently qualified respondents had greater understanding of the functions of different types of team ( $r=-0.190$ ,  $p$ =.003).

**Discussion:** This study has revealed the areas for improvement to enhance IPECP in two Queensland regional health services. This information will be used in developing targeted interventions including state-wide training.

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Reference: 1. Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education & Collaborative Practice WHO, 2010