

A comparative review of the pre-registration IPL programme interprofessional curriculum

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Background

The Pre-registration Interprofessional Learning (IPL) programme has eight pathways and prepares approximately 750 students a year for professional practice in health and social care. It became due for review and revalidation between 2007-9. The aim of the RIT project was to develop a new interprofessional curriculum and associated competence framework as part of the revalidation process.

It was intended subsequently to use it in a comparative review at two institutions – CCCU and the University of Derby. The undertaking of a similar review by Derby would provide the opportunity for cross-institutional collaboration and strengthen the credibility of the findings.

The present interprofessional curriculum and associated competence framework within the IPL Programme was derived from a documentary analysis of subject benchmarks (QAA, 2002) and tested within the Department of Health funded project *Modernising Allied Health Professions Education* undertaken by CCCU. These were evaluated in another RIT project, Learning and Teaching for Collaborative Practice, with equivocal outcomes.

There have been a number of more recent, national initiatives to further elucidate the concept and develop interprofessional competences. These include: national occupational standards (NOS), the *Creating an Interprofessional Workforce (CIPW) Framework (2007)* and the *Interprofessional Capability Framework (2004)*. It was therefore timely to review current published work and develop a robust framework to use in the academic review of the IPL curriculum.

Approach/methodology

A qualitative methodology was employed in two phases:

Phase one comprised an extensive documentary search and analysis of published interprofessional competence frameworks in the UK, Europe and North America with the purpose of developing an inclusive framework for review and development of the 2004 CCCU interprofessional curriculum.

Statements that referred to interprofessional working and collaboration, professional attitudes, behaviours towards others and team working, were drawn out and re-framed in the light of the values represented.

Phase two explored the newly developed framework using open questions in a focus group comprising the CCCU curriculum development group (n=17). This enabled identification of questions for individual interviews with seven group members, conducted by Isabel Jones.

Outcomes

Phase One: The documentary analysis brought the concept of collaborative potential to the fore and the researchers decided to modify the initial approach. A collaborative potential curriculum framework was developed that consisted of four aspects representing an incremental approach to becoming collaborative in practice. Each of the four - Professionalism in Practice, Reciprocity in Practice, Relational Practice and Collaborative Practice - comprises a number of learning outcomes.

Phase Two: The focus group confirmed that the decision to step back from collaborative practice to collaborative potential was welcomed by the CCCU curriculum development group. Individual responses highlighted benefits and barriers to successful implementation.

Overall, the framework was perceived as contributing to the ideal of making interprofessional learning meaningful for students and promoting their personal and professional development as collaborative practitioners.

The process employed assisted with ownership by the curriculum development group. The collaborative potential curriculum framework has been successfully embedded within three modules of the 2009 Pre-registration IPL Programme.

Students study one module per year of their undergraduate programme. The learning outcomes support their potential to become effective collaborative practitioners. The first two modules will be delivered and evaluated in 2009/2010.

Staff from all Faculty departments and professional teams have the opportunity to be involved in module delivery. This is challenging to organise but supports staff's own interprofessional development.

The ethos and mode of delivery (peer action learning) models that of the Year 3 Collaborative Practice module in the outgoing curriculum, which has been very positively evaluated by staff and students.

The findings have been presented at a number of national and international conferences including *All Together Better Health IV* in Stockholm June 2008.

Advice for others

The biggest challenge is to create ownership of what is proposed beyond the enthusiasts who are involved in the project.

Reflections and any future plans

The comparative element of the project is planned for 2010 at the University of Derby with funding obtained from their Teaching Inspired by Research fund.

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