Building Clinical Education Capacity with Interprofessional Clinical Learning Units across the Continuum of Care (IPCLU Project)

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Overview

Building Clinical Education Capacity with Interprofessional Clinical Learning Units across the Continuum of Care is a collaborative project led by the University of Alberta and Alberta Health Services. This project is aimed at designing and implementing Interprofessional Clinical Learning Units (IPCLUs) in three different patient care contexts. Direct care IPCLUs will endeavour to enhance clinical education capacity by drawing on the expertise of both academic faculty and patient care team members across health care professions.

What is an Interprofessional Clinical Learning Unit (IPCLU)?

A Clinical Learning Unit (CLU):
- is a collaborative model of clinical teaching and learning developed on an existing patient care unit.
- incorporates strategies that steadily build the capacity of both experienced and newer faculty and patient care team members.
- contributes to the clinical education of students and the patient care team.
- strives to create a positive practice environment for students, faculty and patient care team members.

An Interprofessional CLU has the added depth of collaborative teaching and learning across professions as well as between faculty, patient care team members and students.

Which disciplines are involved?

The IPCLU Project focuses on patient care team members, faculty and students from Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, Social Work, Dietetics, Respiratory Therapy, Kinesiology, Recreation Therapy, Clinical Psychology, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Dentistry and Dental Hygiene (and other disciplines if identified).

How are the IPCLUs developed and implemented?

At each site, a Working Group composed of interprofessional patient care team members and faculty, with the support of the Steering Committee and Research Team, will develop and implement a unit specific collaborative clinical teaching and learning model based on:
- patient care team member, faculty and student perceptions of clinical teaching and learning on the unit,
- a review of existing grey and published literature,
- discussions with key stakeholders, and
- the patient care and staff needs at the clinical site.

Each unit specific model will incorporate broader learning objectives and student needs with unit specific resources and initiatives. The process of developing and implementing unit specific IPCLU models will inform future interprofessional clinical education.

How will the IPCLUs be evaluated?

- March – May 2009: Surveys and interviews conducted to elicit perceptions of interprofessional clinical teaching and learning from students, faculty and patient care team members on the units.
- June – December 2009: Development and implementation of IPCLU models on each of the study units.
- January – March 2010: Surveys and interviews conducted to elicit perceptions of interprofessional clinical teaching and learning post-IPCLU implementation from students, faculty and patient care team members on the units.
- May 2010: Focus groups conducted with project participants to gain an understanding of facilitators and barriers to IPCLU implementation and gather feedback on initial research findings.

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