

Interprofessional education – medical and healthcare professionals working in conjunction to treat patients – provides benefits for both the patients and the professionals. Several benefits arise from such education.

1. It Empowers Team Members

Until the rise of interprofessional collaboration, and even now in some medical environments, the doctor was viewed as the “quarterback” of patient care. The doctor made most major decisions about how a patient was treated and cared for. With an increased emphasis on interprofessional collaboration, other members of a patient’s medical team, such as nurses, radiologists, EMTs, social workers and professionals from any number of other disciplines, are empowered to make recommendations about patient care.

2. It Closes Communication Gaps

When all medical and healthcare professionals are working together, a more communicative environment develops. Before interprofessional collaboration practices were adopted, medical professionals would simply look at a patient’s chart to review treatments and patient history. Working independently could lead to missed symptoms or miscommunication about patient needs. With increased collaboration, medical professionals are interacting on a personal level, sharing ideas about patient treatment and working together to maintain continuity of care.

3. It Enables Comprehensive Patient Care

When team members from different disciplines work jointly, it’s easier to form a more comprehensive view of patient care. Think of each medical professional as holding a piece to the puzzle. Bringing all these pieces together enables a better understanding of the patient’s needs.

4. It Minimizes Readmission Rates

With better care and the closure of communication gaps, patient outcomes are better. Interprofessional collaboration combats ongoing patient care problems such as misdiagnosis. When a patient is misdiagnosed, he or she will probably be back in the hospital soon, at a high cost both to the patient and the medical facility. By increasing collaboration, patients are treated effectively the first time.

5. It Promotes a Team Mentality

Patients aren’t the only ones who benefit from interprofessional collaboration. Working independently puts pressure on medical professionals. By working together, medical professionals support each other, breaking down the silos of different disciplines. This team mentality raises morale and encourages camaraderie.

6. It Promotes Patient-Centered Care

Ultimately, the goal of all medical and healthcare professionals should be the same: to provide patients with the best care possible. This is easier to achieve with interprofessional collaboration. Instead of having individuals take turns caring for them, patients have a team on their side from the start, working together to provide care that has lasting results.

Interprofessional collaboration starts with interprofessional education. When medical and healthcare students receive training on how to work effectively as a team across disciplines, they're primed to collaborate this way in the workplace. Consider options on how to give your future medical professionals the collaborative training they need to care for patients as a team.