

Interprofessional learning in primary health care: A case study exploring interprofessional learning by health professionals

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Introduction: The aim of the research, based on health professional's experiences, is to better inform the inclusion of interprofessional learning opportunities in the development, or improvement, of collaborative care teams.

Objectives: The study explores the learning experiences of five diverse health professionals working within collaborative care, to gain a deeper understanding of how interprofessional learning occurs and what enables learning in practice.

Methods: A critical incident framework was utilized in semi-structured interviews to explore health professional's experiences working within collaborative care team.

Results: Through thematic analysis interprofessional learning was coined as: collaborative, continuous, and reflective in nature. The enablers identified are supportive time and space, trusting relationships, and shared values among team members.

Conclusions: Interprofessional learning is complex. It is embedded not only in contextual factors but also intertwined within layers of professional values, culture, diversity and social interactions. When this learning occurs within a group it becomes shared and collective within practice. The participant's voices led the study to the primary findings that interprofessional learning is collective and continuous within practice, and occurs when reflective opportunities are presented. An enabler to interprofessional learning is when a culture of collaboration and learning is supported through engaged leadership. A culture that allows supportive time and space to collaborate among the team, one that supports trusting relationships and shared values.

Significance: The prevalence of dietitians working within interprofessional teams is increasing as the model of healthcare delivery in Canada shifts towards a collaborative approach. The results of this study will provide a greater understanding of the complexity of working within a team and align lifelong learning with effective collaborative practice. At a leadership level, the results of this study will lend more successful planning of interprofessional learning opportunities to better support the delivery model of patients.