



## **University of Toronto Interprofessional Education Curriculum/Program**

The University of Toronto (UT), building on its rich history of interprofessional education (IPE), developed an IPE curriculum for eleven of its health science professional programs (i.e., dentistry, medical radiation sciences, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physician assistant, physical education and health, physical therapy, social work and speech-language pathology) that will be integrated within the uniprofessional curricula of each faculty/department. This curriculum/program became requisite for the incoming and subsequent cohorts of students in eight of these programs (i.e., dentistry, medical radiation sciences, medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physical therapy and speech-language pathology) beginning in the 2009 -2010 academic year. This competency-based, longitudinal curriculum/program has five main components: 1) core competencies, 2) learning activities 3) assessment, 4) evaluation and 5) faculty leadership. Approximately 1250 UT students per year will be impacted by this curriculum/program.

### ***IPE Core Competencies***

Identifying core competencies was an essential foundational step for developing the competency-based IPE curriculum/program at UT. A working group was formed to develop these competencies along with a competency framework. The process involved exploring and examining relevant literature, models and resources and then brainstorming to create a UT model and specific interprofessional core competencies.

The framework encompasses a learning continuum for the development of IPE moving towards the goal of interprofessional collaborative care. The model includes foundational values and an entry-to-practice focus that sits within a larger educational and professional context, along with specific competencies that reflect a hierarchy of constructs. The educational and professional continuum of an individual's development and experiences evolves from pre-health science programs to UT health professional programs to post-graduation for the optimization of discovery or new knowledge, health human resources and client/patient/ family care. Three IPE constructs provide key building blocks and include values and ethics, communication and collaboration. Specific core competencies for each construct have been developed across the interprofessional continuum of exposure (introduction and pre-placement level), immersion (interprofessional placement level) and competence (entry-to-practice level). This represents the student's development over time in their interprofessional knowledge, skills/behaviours and attitudes. Formal and informal learning, including reflection, will be utilized to achieve these competencies that will be assessed utilizing a variety of methods.

Through the IPE curriculum/program, it is believed that UT graduates will be well-prepared to enter collaborative practice interprofessional partnerships for the optimization of client/patient health outcomes and to become future interprofessional practice leaders.



## ***Learning Activities***

In the IPE curriculum/program, learners are required to participate in four core IPE learning activities and a specific number of elective IPE learning activities in order to cover the core competencies and become competent collaborators when they enter practice. These learning activities are a combination of previously-existing IPE sessions and newly created ones.

### **Core Learning Activities**

The four core learning activities include:

- **Year 1 – Teamwork: Your Future in Health Care**  
This introductory IPE session at the exposure level brings all first-year health science students together at one time to begin their interprofessional learning journey as a foundation for collaborative practice. The session involves students learning about, from and with each other through a program presenting a client/patient perspective, faculty skits highlighting less than ideal and good team functioning and a community health care team view.
- **Conflict in Interprofessional Life**  
This session was developed for more advanced health professional students and focuses on IPE competencies at the immersion level. It is designed to reinforce the message that conflict is a natural part of working life and that it is a professional responsibility to handle it effectively. The ability to deal with conflict is necessary for effective and efficient interprofessional collaboration in delivering best quality patient/client care.
- **Case-Based: Pain or Palliative Care**  
Interprofessional groups of students learn about interprofessional collaboration in a pain and/or palliative care case that also focuses on competencies at the immersion level.
- **IPE Component in a Clinical Placement**  
This session occurs at one or more clinical sites in already existing clinical placements and focuses on the competence level. Two models for the IPE component in a clinical placement are utilized - structured or flexible – one of which must be completed over the course of the student’s educational program.

The structured model includes four elements: 1) common clinical area - students placed on the same team at a site where their placements overlap for a four-week period; 2) introductory tutorial – occurs prior to the four-week period; 3) facilitated patient/client/family- themed tutorials - occur each week in an area of interest to the students; and 4) shared presentation – completed by the student team at the end of the placement.

The flexible model includes three clinical learning activities that allow students to experience interprofessional learning in an array of clinical settings. Activities focus on, but are not limited to the following:

- Participating in team education;
- Interviewing and shadowing two individuals that may include different professionals or a patient/client/family member and
- Participating in team meetings.

## Elective Learning Activities

Sessions on a range of topics – from bioethics to developmental disabilities to health mentorship – run throughout the academic year so that students may choose those that enable them to cover the core competencies and thus become capable collaborators when they enter practice. The *Points for Interprofessional Education System (PIPEs)* values the differences among these learning activities by utilizing content and process criteria to determine a point total for each session. An international anonymous consensus-building process was conducted to determine these criteria. Learning activities are then assigned to one of three categories: **red**, **orange** or **green**, based on these points totals.

### **Example Elective Learning Activities from 2010 - 2011**

- **Handle With Care**
  - This session involves viewing a video of a live dramatic presentation focusing on the issues facing women with metastatic breast cancer. It is based on two research studies in which breast cancer patients and physicians at the Toronto-Sunnybrook Regional Cancer Centre were interviewed. Facilitated interprofessional small group discussion follows.
- **Dying and Death**
  - This learning activity focuses on developing an appreciation of diversity (in terms of faith, culture, personal and professional values), an understanding of the roles, responsibilities and relationships among the interprofessional team and an understanding of how to communicate and be present with an individual and their family before, during and after death.
- **Case-Based**
  - Clinical teams from a variety of centres present a short overview of a case followed by facilitated discussion in interprofessional small groups with a final large group summary. Examples of cases include: autism spectrum disorder, head and neck cancer, mental health, multiply-challenged pediatric, stroke and workplace safety insurance board.
- **Health Mentorship**
  - This innovative program was initiated with interprofessional groups of students meeting with health mentors – individuals with chronic conditions – three times over a three-month period.
- **Health Care Team Challenge**
  - Interprofessional teams of students compete with each other to come up with the best integrated collaborative management plan for a case that is judged by a panel and audience feedback. The successful team attends the national challenge at the National Health Science Students Association (NaHSSA) Conference to compete with teams from other universities.

### **Assessment**

Global rating scales, based on the IPE core competencies, are being utilized as a pre- and post-self-assessment for students in IPE learning activities across the curriculum/program. Results continue to show this as a simple and effective means of assessing student learning of the IPE core competencies. This data will form an overall competency profile for each student upon graduation.

## ***Evaluation***

A comprehensive evaluation process is being utilized to:

- Document the curriculum/program development and delivery processes and identify key lessons learned;
- Improve the design and implementation of the curriculum;
- Determine the critical success factors for the sustainability of the curriculum and clinical placements;
- Position the curriculum for subsequent sustainability and impact evaluation efforts in the coming years;
- Add to the knowledge base about what works in health care education; and
- Share what has been learned with others.

## ***Faculty Leadership***

The Centre is partnering with the Centre for Faculty Development, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto and St. Michael's Hospital to deliver a variety of faculty development opportunities to academic and clinical faculty. These include:

- ehpic IPE Leadership Course
- IPE Faculty Development Course
- Change Leadership Course
- IPE Facilitation Workshop

## **For more information, contact:**

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