

Interdisciplinary Teaching for Nursing Students: A Key to Understanding Teamwork

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Abstract : One of the most important factors of professional health treatment is teamwork, in which each discipline contributes its expert knowledge, thus ensuring quality and a high standard of care as well as efficient communication (one of the International Patient Safety Goals). However, in most countries, students are educated separately by each health discipline. They are exposed to teamwork only during their clinical experience, which in some cases is short and skill-oriented. In addition, health organizations in most countries are hierarchical and although changes have occurred in the hierarchy of the medical system, there are still disciplines that underrate the unique contributions of other health professionals, thus, young graduates of health professions develop and base their perception of their peers from other disciplines on insufficient knowledge. In order to establish a wide-ranging perception among nursing students as to the contribution of different health professionals to the health of their patients, students at the Clalit Nursing Academy, Rabin Campus (Dina), Israel, participated in an interdisciplinary clinical discussion with students from several different professions, other than nursing, who were completing their clinical experience at Rabin Medical Center in medicine, health psychology, social work, audiology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. The discussion was led by a medical-surgical nursing instructor. Their tutors received in advance, a case report enabling them to prepare the students as to how to present their professional theories and interventions regarding the case. Mutual stimulation and acknowledgment of the unique contribution of each part of the team enriched the nursing students' understanding as to how their own nursing interventions could be integrated into the entire process towards a safe and speedy recovery of the patient.

Keywords : health professions' students, interdisciplinary clinical discussion, nursing education, patient safety

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