

## Welcome



Welcome to our fourth newsletter for the ALTC project titled **“Interprofessional education (IPE): enhancing the teaching of medication safety to nursing, pharmacy and medical students”**.

As we reflect on the ‘Year in Review’ we want to acknowledge the support and collegiality we have encountered from academics, clinicians and students across Australia. We’ve made strong progress but it would not have been possible without your input and advice.

Below we outline what we have achieved in the first year of the project:

### Cross-sectional survey

We conducted a cross-sectional survey to scope the approaches used to teach and assess medication safety, and the current use of IPE in nursing, medicine and pharmacy curricula in Australian and New Zealand universities. The survey was completed by 33 of the 43 (77%) target universities. 80% of the participants indicated that they currently offer IPE, but only 24% of these experiences met the accepted definition of interprofessional education; i.e. “...when two or more professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care”<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Center for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education (CAIPE). (2002). Accessed 14.2.10 from:

<http://www.caipe.org.uk/about-us/defining-ipe/>

Support for this project has been provided by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The views expressed in the project do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council.

Barriers to IPE include timetabling restrictions, inadequate staff training, and the lack of multimedia resources. The results of this study have been submitted for publication to the Journal of Interprofessional Care.

### Focus groups

To better understand graduates’ experiences of IPE and how prepared they felt to work as members of an interprofessional medication team when joining the workforce, focus group sessions were held with recent (within the last 2 years) nursing, midwifery, pharmacy and medical graduates. Nine focus groups (with just over 40 graduates) have been conducted in NSW and Tasmania and additional sessions are planned in Western Australia. Preliminary results suggest that the views held by pharmacy, nursing and medical graduates diverge markedly. There does appear to be agreement however, that neither group has an adequate understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the other members of the team. The concept of the ‘interprofessional team’ is elusive and most feel that they work in parallel rather than collaboratively.

Each of the professional groups believes they have a unique role in maintaining medication safety. However, the ‘person’ (patient) who is the recipient of care is rarely considered to be an integral member of the actual ‘team’. Numerous examples of the impact of poor communication and team work on patient safety were provided by the participants, a finding that is consistent with previous research: *“Inadequate communication ... is the primary issue in the majority of medication errors, adverse reactions, and near-misses”*<sup>2</sup>. Once the results are thoroughly analysed a manuscript will be prepared for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin, D. (2003). Reducing medication errors and increasing patient safety: case studies in clinical pharmacology. *Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* 43(7), 768-83.



### Exploring the effectiveness of using IPE to teach health professional students about medication safety

A systematic review of the effectiveness of IPE in university based health professional programs has been completed and published by the Joanna Briggs Institute, and a modified version has been accepted for publication in the peer reviewed journal *Nurse Education Today* journal:

Lapkin, S., Levett-Jones, T., & Gilligan, C. (2011). The effectiveness of interprofessional education in university-based health professional programs: A systematic review. *Joanna Briggs Institute Library of Systematic Reviews*, 9(46), 1917-1970.

Lapkin, S., Levett-Jones, T., & Gilligan, C. (in press). A systematic review of the effectiveness of interprofessional education in health professional programs.

### Improving students' interprofessional communication and team work skills

A series of teaching and learning multimedia resources are being developed and evaluated. A facilitator and student guide are available on the project website <http://www.ipeforum.com.au/> This work has also been accepted for publication:

Levett-Jones, T. Gilligan, C., Lapkin, S. & Hoffman, K. (in press). Interprofessional education for the quality use of medicines: Designing authentic multimedia learning resources. *Nurse Education Today*.

Multimedia modules that address key learning objectives through different 'patient journeys' are in preparation. The introductory module – "Eileen Poole" is available on the project website and four others are under development. A quasi-experimental study evaluating the effectiveness of these resources is scheduled for March/April 2012. The project website includes a number of other multimedia resources and links, acting as a clearing house where examples of effective IPE can be promoted.

### Reference Group meetings

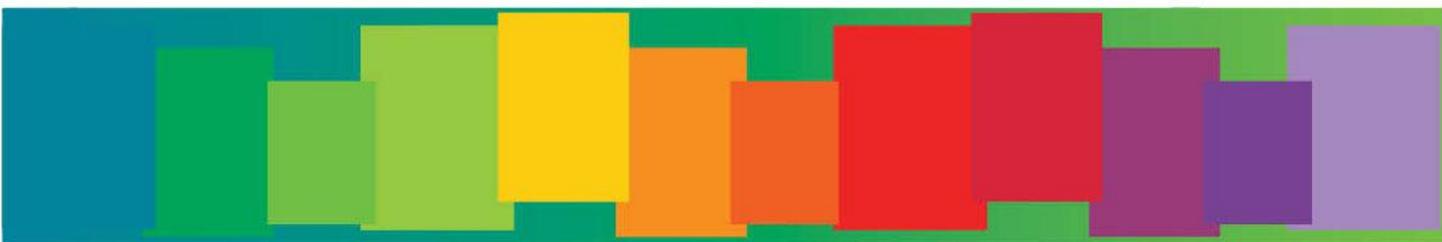


The first reference group meeting was held on 11 February 2011 and the second on the 28th of October 2011. The members of the reference group include:

- Emeritus Professor Tony Smith**, University of Newcastle
- Associate Professor Penny Paliadelis**, University of New England
- Dr Sharon Bourgeois**, University of Canberra
- Professor Rick Iedema**, University of Technology Sydney
- Dr Michelle Koo**, National Prescribing Service
- Mr Daniel Lalor**, Clinical Excellence Commission
- Ms Helen Dowling**, Hunter New England Health
- Emeritus Consultant Edward (Ted) Stewart-Wynne**, Royal Perth Hospital
- Ms Karen Murphy**, ACT Health and AIPPEN Representative
- Mr Warren Anderson**, Community Representative
- Mrs Pauline Dobson**, Clinical Nurse Consultant

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## Dissemination

In addition to publications the project has also been disseminated at five conferences. Abstracts have been submitted for the International Forum on Quality and Safety in Health Care 2012, Paris, France, April 2012 and the NETNEP 2012: 4th International Nurse Education Conference. Baltimore, USA, June, 2012.

As we reflect on the first year of the project we are mindful that our work has begun to answer a number of important questions. However, there is much work to be done and many more questions to be answered if we are to make a difference to patient safety.

We close with the words of one of the focus group participants. These words will provide focus and direction as we enter the next stage of the project:

*"I think all of us like to feel part of a team, and be asked "what do you think?" or having the option to say, "look, I'm just worried about this. Can you explain to me why you've done that?"*

Best Wishes

Tracy, Conor and the IPE team

## Contact

Please contact us if you would like further information about the project.

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