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Background to Interprofessional Skills

Within the health care professions, we are becoming increasingly aware that working well interprofessionally may be key for treating patients effectively. The General Medical Council’s Tomorrow’s Doctors standards (2003) now includes the following in its curricular outcomes

“Working with colleagues:
  a. Know about, understand and respect the roles and expertise of other health and social care professionals.
  b. Be able to demonstrate effective teamworking and leadership skills.
  c. Be willing to lead when faced with uncertainty and change”

Veterinary educators also realize the importance of advancing their students’ interprofessional skills, hence the creation of three resources which can be used separately or together as a unit.

We define interprofessional skills as those abilities that allow professionals to work efficiently and effectively in a multi-professional team.

CAIPE (Centre For The Advancement Of Interprofessional Education) in 2002 defined Interprofessional Education (IPE) as

“Occurring when two or more professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care”

Interprofessional skills centre around good communication and an appreciative knowledge of the skills and roles of other professions, this can be seen in Figure 1 below.

![Figure 1: Characteristics of an effective health care team (Sargeant, Loney and Murphy, 2008).](image-url)
Emergency Case Role Play as a Technique to Enhance Interprofessional Learning

Resource Type: Small interprofessional group activity to improve teamwork

The Emergency Case Role Play enables students from different professions to take part in a small group activity in order to improve team working skills. This emergency case involves cardiopulmonary cerebral resuscitation (CPCR) whereby one veterinary surgeon and one veterinary nurse are present when their patient undergoes heart and respiratory arrest. This is a situation which occurs in practice and can have serious consequences if immediate and effective action is not taken. This resource provides a scenario where students can practice the necessary skills to reduce mistakes and delays, while in a safe environment and with members of the other profession present.

A quote from a 2nd year veterinary nursing student after taking part in the activity demonstrates the benefits of the resource well:

“I found this role play helpful because it helped me to work effectively with a vet student. It was useful to learn CPR with a vet student rather than just pretending this is what a vet would do.”

The veterinary students that took part agreed, one typical quote is as follows:

“Working with the vet nurse was great. Previously I had limited knowledge of their course and how vets and vet nurses would work together in emergency situations. It was useful to be able to see their abilities and also see how our roles differ.”
Equipment

- Room Set-Up (see image below)
  - A small room where one student from each profession can take part in the role play (alternatively a secluded part of a skills laboratory)
  - Animal mannequin
  - Operating table, or substitute
  - Anaesthetic machine
  - ECG machine, if appropriate
  - Clock
- Computer and projection for introduction with PowerPoint
- A facilitator who is experienced in CPCR
- Printed copies of the CPCR flowchart
- A second venue for the rest of the class
- An activity for those not taking part in the emergency role play
- Nametags
Summary Session Plan, for class of n pairs:

- **Introduction to the session (all)**: 5 minutes
- **Pair 1 in Emergency Case Role Play, rest of class in other activity**: 15 minutes
- **Pair n in Emergency Case Role Play, rest of class in other activity**: 15 minutes
- **Whole class feedback, including distribution of CPCR flowchart**: 15 minutes

- **The Emergency Case Role Play**
  Each pair carries out the role play in the small room set up as an operating room, with a facilitator present, see image on previous page. A small room is chosen as it prevents outside noise and interruptions, and the potential for the students to feel uncomfortable if they are in a more public setting. If however a small room is unavailable, a secluded part of a skills laboratory is satisfactory. It is the facilitator’s role to set the scene and then announce the crash. The students must then act as if they are in a real life situation, the facilitator should try to intervene as little as possible. The activity ends after five minutes, or before, if the students declare they have completed the task or are needing guidance. After the activity, the facilitator will provide some brief individual feedback to the pair, and note down common mistakes and important facts to report in the group feedback session.

- **The Alternative Activity**
  Depending on the number of small rooms and suitable facilitators, the remaining members of the class may need an alternative activity to take part in. Some suggestions are as follows:
  - If you have the facilities you may wish to provide other clinical activities where the students can learn from and with each other in the skills laboratory. For example:
    - bandaging (veterinary students could in general learn a lot from the nurses on this topic)
    - animal handling
    - drug dose calculation
  - Interprofessional student life discussion – within the whole group, smaller groups or the pairs, questions can be used to encourage learning about each other. For example:
    - how long do you spend seeing practice outside college?
    - how many students are there on your course?
    - what’s the ratio of males to females in your year?
    - do you live on campus?
    - do you want to specialise when you graduate?
  - Social activities to break down the artificial walls between the groups
    - computer games in a computer room
    - team building or trust exercises

For all of these activities you must bear in mind that the key activity, the anaesthetic emergency case role play will only take approximately 15 minutes per pair and may mean students coming and going from the larger group on a regular basis.

The short PowerPoint presentation on the next page can be used to introduce your class to the session. It can be accessed on the Royal Veterinary College’s LIVE Centre website, under the activity Professionalism: [http://www.live.ac.uk/html/activities_professionalism.html](http://www.live.ac.uk/html/activities_professionalism.html).

The notes beside the slides will instruct you how to carry out the session.
Although in practice vets and veterinary nurses will work with other professions (receptionists/practice managers for example) in this case, the resources concentrate on the most frequent interaction, i.e. that between the vet and the nurse. The production of these resources was one of the first attempts to use IPE in veterinary education, whereby veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses actually train together.

**Introduction to Interprofessional Education (IPE)**
- Interprofessional skills are those abilities that enable us to work with people from other professions within the veterinary practice, in order to achieve common goals such as improving the health of patients.
- ‘Other professions’ = vet surgeons and vet nurses.
- In order to work well together, the professions should know about each other’s roles, abilities, priorities etc.
- IPE is increasingly being used in human medicine, but is only starting out in veterinary medicine.

**The Activity**

- Emergency Case Role Play
  - 1st: Kate, Kim
  - 2nd: Jane, Sophie
  - 3rd: Martin, Helen
  - 4th: Fiona, Sam

- Activity in Computer Room
  - Jane, Sophie
  - Martin, Helen
  - Fiona, Sam
  - Group Feedback, receive CPCR Flowchart

Pair the students up, one veterinary student and one veterinary nursing student. In their pairs they will participate in the emergency case role play while the rest of the group are involved in the alternative activity. You may wish to carry out a short ‘getting to know you’ activity, where the pairs are split up and given one minute to tell each other about themselves. This should mean that by the time they carry out the role play, they at least know each other’s names. This could take place in the small room, just prior to the activity. The nametags would also help with this!
At the Royal Veterinary College, the students are provided with the Cardiopulmonary Cerebral Resuscitation (CPCR) Flowchart, created through cognitive task analysis (CTA) of CPCR training sessions at the college’s teaching hospital, during the group feedback session. However, you may wish to provide the flowchart, or similar information, to the students before the activity. It should be explained to the students that this flowchart covers CPCR from the basics to more complicated hospital scenarios, and that it is designed as a guide. They should use it as appropriate.

This document is available upon request from the RVC. Please contact Tierney Kinnison; tkinnison@rvc.ac.uk
References
