Interprofessional Skills 'Talking Walls' Session

An Introduction to the Concept of Interprofessional Skills

The veterinary clinic is a multi-professional health-care team consisting of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses along with receptionists, a practice manager etc. Each profession works closely with the others to achieve the common goal of patient care.

It is becoming increasingly evident that in order for a multi-professional team (for example veterinary surgeons and nurses) to work in an efficient and effective way, maximising the benefit to their patient, they need to have good interprofessional skills. These skills should be developed as early as possible during academic studies.

Interprofessional skills centre around good communication and an appreciative knowledge of the skills and roles of other professions (Figure 1).
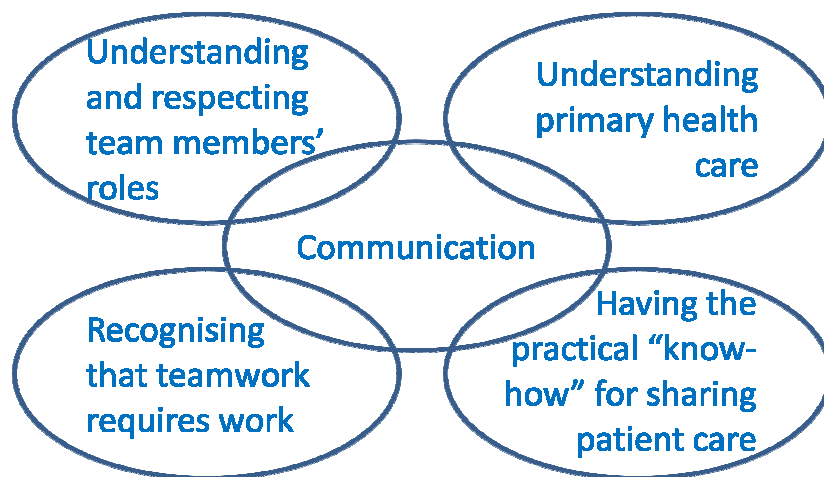

Figure 1: Characteristics of an effective health care team (Sargeant, Loney and Murphy, 2008).

Today's session will bring veterinary students and veterinary nursing students together to enable you to find out how much you really know about each other's profession.

Learning Objectives:

1. Appreciate the role of other professions within a veterinary clinic
2. Identify common misconceptions with regard to professional roles
3. Describe your own role within a veterinary clinic
4. Improve communication skills with members of a different profession

'Talking Walls' Activity

'Talking Walls' is a visual technique to understand and enhance interprofessional learning and was described by Parsell, Gibbs and Bligh in 1998.

Session Plan:

- Introductory Presentation
- Divide into small groups of both vets and vet nurses
- 'Talking Walls' activity, see PowerPoint slide below:

Talking Walls

- To understand and enhance interprofessional learning – Parsell, Gibbs and Bligh (1998)

- Two Flipcharts – 'The Veterinary Surgeon'
  'The Veterinary Nurse'
  Write the **roles and duties** of the other profession on their chart — 15 minutes

- Go over your own profession's chart – deleting, amending and adding — 10 minutes

- Mini group discussion – creation of misconception list — 10 minutes

- Large group discussion — 25 minutes

References:

Parsell, G., Gibbs, T. and Bligh, J. 1998. Three visual techniques to enhance interprofessional learning. *Postgraduate Medical Journal*, 74: 387-390.

Sargeant, J., Loney E. and Murphy, G. 2008. Effective interprofessional teams: "Contact is not enough" to build a team. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions,* 28: 228-234.