

Undergraduate Students' Experience of an Interprofessional Learning Opportunity in Dysphagia Management

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Abstract

Purpose of this study is to pilot the effectiveness of a dysphagia-specific, interprofessional learning (IPL) opportunity for undergraduate students of speech and language therapy and dietetics in addition to their placement-based experiences. A series of case-based experiential learning opportunities were designed to meet the specific and combined needs of each profession. In small interprofessional groups, students were assigned an acquired or developmental case. They collaborated to produce and individualized meal plan encompassing safe swallow advice and a texture modified meal that addressed personal, nutritional and dysphagia requirements. Students prepared the meals and shared learning across the group. Qualitative and quantitative data were gathered using the Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale, The Interprofessional Collaborative Competency Attainment Scale and free text responses. Data were analyzed using principles of qualitative description and statistical analysis. Faculty ethical approval was obtained. Preliminary findings suggest a positive overall response to IPL and a trend towards improved awareness and appreciation of the benefits of collaborative learning on a personal and multidisciplinary level. This readiness for learning across professional boundaries is an essential skill for our graduate healthcare professionals transitioning into the workplace.

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