Interprofessional Health Fairs in the Health Profession Division: Impact on Students’ Willingness to Work Together and Implications for Future Practice and Patient Impact.

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Introduction
With increasing focus on evolving healthcare delivery and education, there has been an emphasis in health profession education to integrate interprofessional education throughout curriculums. Interprofessional faces many logistical and perception barriers involved in coordinating the learning of several professions together. Nova Southeastern University health profession students participate in an annual student-led rural health fair in Clewiston and Belle Glade, FL with nine different health professional students working side by side.

The Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale is an indicator of health professionals’ willingness to participate in an interprofessional environment. RIPLS measures the students’ willingness to work in an interprofessional setting before and after they work together on the health fair.

Objectives
1. Learning while working with other students will help me become a more effective health care student.
2. Shared learning while working together will help to clarify the nature of patient problems.
3. Clinical problem solving skills for my discipline are best learned with students from my own department.
4. Learning while working with health-care students before graduation would improve my understanding of roles.
5. Team working skills are essential for all health care students to learn.
6. For small group learning while working together to work, students need to trust each other.
7. Team working skills are essential for all health care students to learn.
8. I have to acquire much more knowledge and skills in my profession than other physician.
9. Shared learning while working together before graduation will help me become a member of a health care team.
10. I have to acquire much more knowledge and skills in my profession than other physician.

Methods

Data Collection:
Pre surveys were given to students upon arrival at the health fair site. At the end of the health fair, students were given a post survey following their participation in the health fair. Over 240 students from nine different health disciplines were given a survey before and after the health fair across the years 2012 and 2013.

Data Analysis:
Three sub categories are identified in the RIPLS.
- Team work
- Professional identity
- Professional Role

The 18 questions were be divided into the four categories due to the Professional Identity having a positive and negative component. Data analysis was done with T-test comparing health professions for significance in each question and sub categories.

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teamwork</th>
<th>Negative Association w/ Identity</th>
<th>Positive Association w/ Identity</th>
<th>Understanding Roles</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.05</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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Table 1 2012 Sub category p-values

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<th>Teamwork</th>
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<th>Understanding Roles</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>0.03</td>
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Table 2 2013 Sub category p-values

Conclusions
The values across several health profession and overall values showed significant changes from the two years for several categories. This research demonstrates that in a student-led health fair setting, students develop increased positive attitudes towards working in an interprofessional team. Students working together with other health professions have statistically significant changes in their willingness to participate in teams, identify their professional identity, and understand their role in a health care team.

Implications For Future Practice
1. Health fairs can be used to introduce interprofessional teamwork for students.
2. Early student-led exposure to healthcare teams provide a greater understanding of various health professions’ roles and identities.
3. Increasing early interprofessional exposure in a students’ education will theoretically improve health care for patients by increasing the future healthcare professional’s willingness to work on an interprofessional team.

References


Acknowledgements
1. Debra Steinkohl MHSIA, Reach Fair Coordinator
2. Janet Moreland M.D., Belle Glade Coordinator
3. CL Brunback Center
4. Leonard Levy DPM & MPH, Research Advisor