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From: Missouri Area Health Education Centers

MAHEC: Addressing Interprofessional Education and Interprofessional Collaborative Practice

Medical errors became a point of national attention with the publication of *To Error is Human* from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) in 1999. The IOM report concluded that medical errors caused approximately 98,000 preventable deaths annually (*To Error is Human*, IOM 1999). Subsequent reports from the IOM called for a redesign of the health care system to include six aims: safety, patient-centered care, effective, timely, efficient, and equitable patient care (*Crossing the Quality Chasm*, IOM 2001) and recommended that all health professionals should be educated to deliver client-centered care as members of an interdisciplinary team, emphasizing evidence-based practice, quality improvement approaches, and informatics (*Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality*, IOM 2003).

In 2010, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued their Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice (WHO, 2010) which includes the now widely accepted definition of interprofessional education (IPE). IPE occurs when students from two or more professions learn about, from, and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes. The WHO report continues on to express that IPE is a necessary step in preparing a collaboration practice-ready health workforce (WHO 2010). Key points in the WHO statements define both the process of learning about the roles and responsibilities of different professions and the knowledge and skills of teamwork and collaboration for the purpose of improving care and accomplishing better health outcomes.

The AHEC Programs in Missouri, particularly the A.T. Still University – Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine and the Saint Louis University AHECs have engaged in the development and delivery of IPE programs with multiple health professions programs over the past 10 years. Two specific recent examples of IPE programs include:

On Oct. 25 and 26 (pictured), ATSU and Truman State University health professions students, participating in a home visiting program, met to complete a review of their third visit to an elder in the community. Students from ATSU's osteopathic school of medicine and Truman's nursing, health education, and communication disorders programs have participated annually in the House Calls Program over the last 10 years. In addition to targeting teamwork skills for future healthcare providers, the program introduces students to care of older patients in the community.

In October, Saint Louis University completed the second module in a 6-module, longitudinal course that includes 650 students from seven professions: medicine, nursing, physician assistant, social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and pharmacy (from the St Louis College of Pharmacy). During the Interprofessional Team Seminar, students meet in faculty-facilitated small groups for case-based learning and skills building for collaborative practice. In the October session students practiced Brief Team Huddles to identify the patient needs from multiple professional perspectives and identify collaborative approaches to understanding and addressing the patient's needs.



MAHEC is a partnership of seven locally-governed organizations and three university-based health professions education programs working statewide to increase the numbers of Missouri youth entering stable, high-paying jobs as healthcare professionals and the numbers of professionals caring for underserved populations.

The MAHEC partners include:

- A.T. Still University – Kirksville
- University of Missouri – Columbia
- Saint Louis University
- Northeast Missouri AHEC – Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri AHEC – St. Joseph
- West Central Missouri AHEC – Lexington
- Mid-Missouri AHEC – Rolla
- East Central Missouri AHEC – St. Louis
- Southeastern Missouri AHEC – Poplar Bluff
- Southwest Missouri AHEC – Springfield

MAHEC: Connecting students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health