Health Professions Accreditation Councils' *Forum*

A coalition of the accreditation Councils of the regulated health professions.

Position Statement

Interprofessional learning

The members of the Health Professions Accreditation Councils' Forum (the Forum) acknowledge that multidisciplinary team care is a key feature of contemporary models of health care and that effective teams improve patient care. It is this collaborative feature of many existing and emerging models of clinical practice that is driving the need to educate and train future health professionals to work more collaboratively across professions in the interest of better patient safety and care.

An interprofessional education (IPE) workshop (June 2015) considered the health service drivers of interprofessional practice, examples of interprofessional education, and the role of accreditation standards and processes in enabling good interprofessional education.

The Forum members have agreed to the outcomes of that workshop with the following actions.

Commitment to support good practice interprofessional education

Commitment is shown through the accreditation councils' roles in setting standards and assessing programs of study and providers for accreditation, and through the assessment of overseas-trained health professionals.

A shared definition of interprofessional education

The Forum members endorse the World Health Organization's definition of interprofessional education:

Interprofessional education *occurs when two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes.*

- *Professional is an all-encompassing term that includes individuals with the knowledge and/or skills to contribute to the physical, mental and social well-being of a community.*

Collaborative practice *in health-care occurs when multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds provide comprehensive services by working with patients, their families, carers and communities to deliver the highest quality of care across settings.*

- *Practice includes both clinical and non-clinical health-related work, such as diagnosis, treatment, surveillance, health communications, management and sanitation engineering.*[1]

Interprofessional competencies

The Forum members adopt the following statement and interprofessional learning competencies as a reference point (i.e. guidance only) for use in their processes for accreditation of health profession programs. These competencies and the statement have been developed through

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[1] World Health Organization: Health Professions Networks Nursing & Midwifery Human Resources for Health, *Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education & Collaborative Practice,* 2010, http://www.who.int/hrh/nursing_midwifery/en/

research and consultation led by Professor Maree O'Keefe in an Office for Learning and Teaching National Teaching Fellowship. [2, 3]

Interprofessional learning

The principles of interprofessional learning encompass understanding, valuing and respecting individual discipline roles in health care. Interprofessional practice places the interests of patients and populations at the centre of healthcare delivery. A key element of interprofessional practice is the recognition and use of the skills of other health professionals in healthcare delivery. It is supported by interactions that clarify perspectives, and enable insights and learning from other health professions.

Interprofessional learning competencies

On completion of their program of study, graduates of any professional entry level healthcare degree will be able to:

- *explain interprofessional practice to patients, clients, families and other professionals*

- *describe the areas of practice of other health professions*

- *express professional opinions competently, confidently, and respectfully avoiding discipline specific language*

- *plan patient/client care goals and priorities with involvement of other health professionals*

- *identify opportunities to enhance the care of patients/clients through the involvement of other health professionals*

- *recognise and resolve disagreements in relation to patient care that arise from different disciplinary perspectives*

- *critically evaluate protocols and practices in relation to interprofessional practice*

- *give timely, sensitive, instructive feedback to colleagues from other professions, and respond respectfully to feedback from these colleagues.*

Supporting innovation and evolution of health profession education

The Forum members support innovation in the education and training of health professionals and recognise that education and training must evolve in response to changing models of care, community need and educational developments.

As interprofessional education itself also continues to develop and evolve, the Forum members have agreed to adopt the statement and the IPL competencies as reference material and recognise that education providers will continue to review and develop their own learning outcomes, curriculum content, learning and teaching approaches and assessment methods.

Supporting relevant cross profession accreditation activities

The Forum members are working together to ensure accreditation processes are efficient, and streamlined, building on each other's processes and those of other regulators where relevant.

Adopted
30 November, 2015

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[2] O'Keefe M. Collaborating across boundaries: A framework for an integrated interprofessional curriculum, Australian Government Office for Learning & Teaching 2015, http://www.olt.gov.au/resource-collaborating-across-boundaries-framework-integrated-interprofessional-curriculum-2015

[3] O'Keefe M, Henderson A, Chick R. Developing sustainable and embedded interprofessional education: threshold learning outcomes as a potential pathway. Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching 2015 http://www.olt.gov.au/resources