

Interprofessional education in hypertension: foundation for a team-based care culture

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Background

Hypertension, a major cause of death and morbidity in European countries including Switzerland, is poorly controlled. Due to ageing populations, busy clinical workloads, and shortage of physicians in most healthcare systems, several agencies recommend involving nurses and pharmacists to improve hypertension management. This change in approach of care calls for interprofessional education (IPE). Since 2015, La Source, School of Nursing Sciences of the University of Applied Sciences of Western Switzerland and the Faculty of Biology and Medicine of the University of Lausanne developed IPE for undergraduate nursing and medical students.

Objectives

Our objectives are to describe the principles, contents and challenges of the IPE in hypertension care. The aims of the course entitled 'Hypertension from A to Z' are to acquire knowledge and develop common competencies in hypertension care, and to build the value of working in interprofessional team.

Results

A team of nurses, physicians, and a pharmacist were involved in the design of the curricula and in the teaching. Sessions with participative methods and workshops are devoted to the team-based management of hypertension. Most students experienced for the first time an IPE. They often expressed not knowing the role of other healthcare professionals. Teachers also experienced for the first time IPE teaching. One major challenge was to be clear on the role of each healthcare professional in the management of hypertension and on their degree of independence, while building a team-spirit. Another challenge was to develop a course fitting in both nursing and medical curricula.

Conclusions

Improving the management of chronic disease such as hypertension requires a change in health model of care. Interprofessional education can help sharing skills and knowledge among future healthcare professionals. It also helps building a team-based care culture.

Key messages:

- 1. Improving the management of chronic disease such as hypertension requires a change in health model of care and health professional education.
- 2. Interprofessional education for nursing and medical student can help promote a team-based care culture.