



Student Attitudes to Inter-professional Education

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BACKGROUND

The delivery of high quality patient care is complex. Many patients have multiple co-morbidities and health needs requiring health care professionals from a number of disciplines to work together effectively. A multi-disciplinary healthcare team (MDT) has been associated with better treatment outcomes and quality of care compared to that delivered by a team of individuals from a single discipline^{1,2}.

Inter-professional education (IPE) is a learning situation where students from different MDT roles such as medicine, physiotherapy, and pharmacy are taught together and learn about, from and with each other.

Given that evidence indicates that inter-professional care improves healthcare outcomes, IPE is incorporated into many undergraduate health professional curriculums. This aims to shape students' professional attitudes and competencies for inter-professional collaboration in future healthcare roles. In particular, early interactions between students from different disciplines during IPE may help them to understand the importance of communication between different disciplines in the healthcare workplace³.

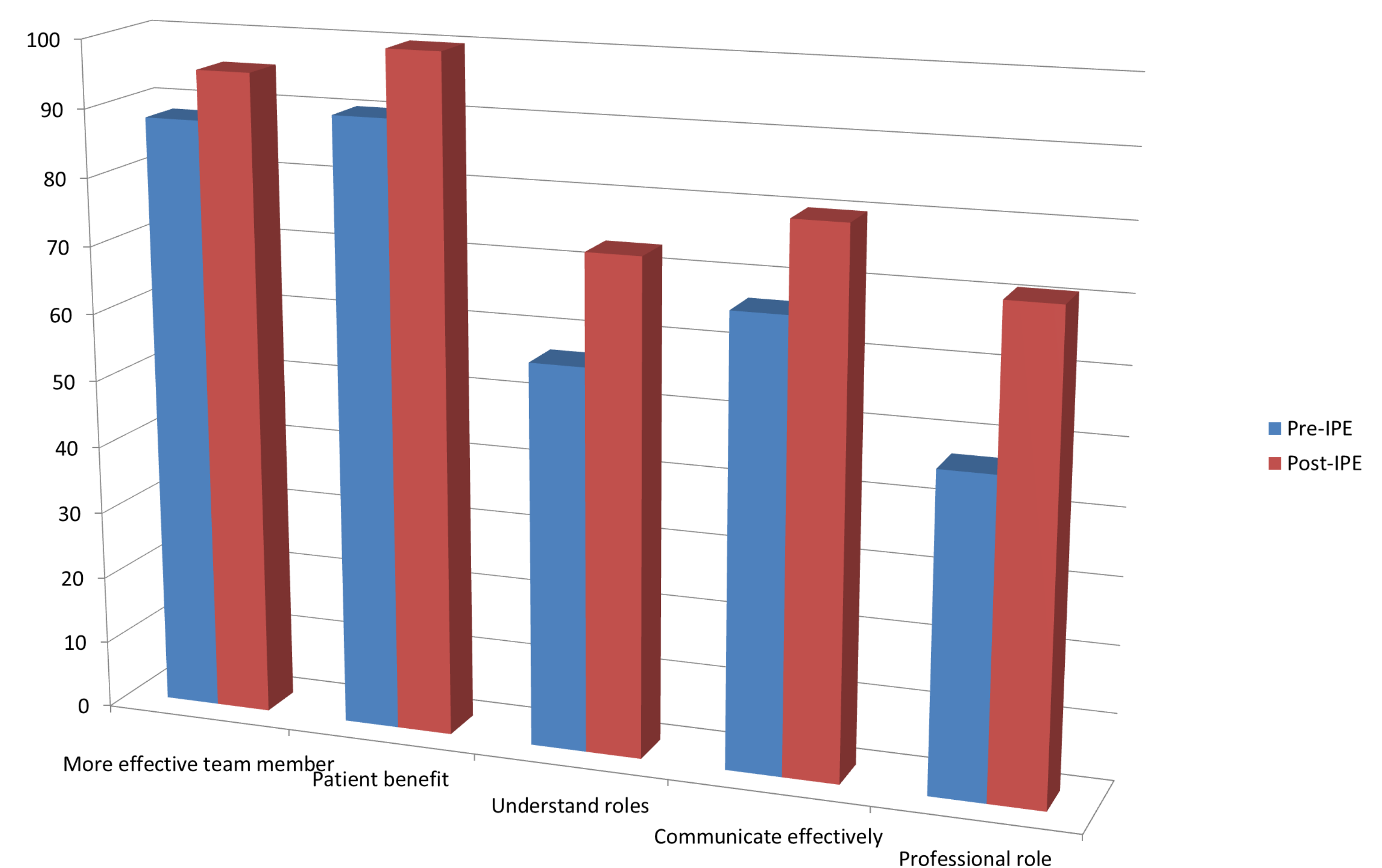
However, health professions students may have diverse perceptions towards participation in IPE³. This study aimed to evaluate the perception of RCSI undergraduate healthcare professions students towards IPE and their readiness to participate in IPE sessions.

METHODS

A modified Readiness for Inter-professional Learning Scale (RIPLS) questionnaire was administered to 96 undergraduate medical, physiotherapy and pharmacy students, before and after participation in an IPE session.

RESULTS

Most students expressed overall positive attitudes to IPE both before and after the session. Positive changes in attitudes to IPE were seen before and after participation in the session in a number of areas. This was evident in students' perceptions of the impact of IPE on their ability to become a more effective member of the MDT and in the benefit of learning in an IPE context on future patient care. Improvements were also seen in students' reported understanding of the roles of the MDT, their ability to communicate with other team members and their confidence in their understanding of their own professional role. Free text comments indicated that students felt the session was a good learning opportunity, and recognised the importance of learning about the roles of other healthcare team members.



CONCLUSIONS

Overall, this study suggests positive student attitudes to IPE. Some improvements in attitudes were seen following participating in IPE, suggesting that IPE has potential to optimise future collaborative practice.

References:

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3. Maharajan MK, Rajiah K, Khoo SP, Chellappan DK, De Alwis R, et al. (2017) Attitudes and Readiness of Students of Healthcare Professions towards Interprofessional Learning. *PLOS ONE* 12(1): e0168863.