

Rationale

The World Health Organization identifies the education of healthcare professionals for collaborative practice as essential for well-functioning interprofessional teams.¹ Exposure of students or clinicians from one profession to learning from and with other professions is considered by many to be an important part of preparation for collaborative practice.

Cross professional education (CPE) occurs when faculty members from one profession teach students from another.² Research on nurses teaching medical students procedural skills has been conducted. However, medical student learning from nurses in a simulation setting has not been well investigated.

Our high fidelity simulated ward (Figure 1) was developed to support education of final year medical students about patient safety³. A qualified nurse acts in the role of an experienced ward nurse and allocates tasks to students acting in the role of newly qualified doctors. The nurse is available to assist and answer questions in a manner consistent with her role. Medical faculty observe the simulation remotely using SMOTS.⁴



Figure 1: Simulated ward

Aim

The aim of this study was to investigate medical students' perspectives on working with the nurse on the simulated ward.

Methods

Students complete anonymous feedback questionnaires on their experience on the ward. Responses from fifty consecutive questionnaires to the question: What did you learn about working with the nurse from today's session? were thematically analysed and a word cloud was created from the content of the responses using word size to reflect frequency (Figure 2)

Findings



Figure 2: Word cloud of student responses to the question: what did you learn about working with the nurse from today's session?

Table 1. Reported student learning from the nurse

| | |
|---|--|
| The benefits of collaborative working (the nurse as a valuable resource) | <p>Benefits for patients - doctor getting a more complete picture and safer practice</p> <p>Benefits for doctors: nurses can support doctors as they know the patient better and they know ward procedures</p> |
| How to work with the nurse | <p>Practical aspects of working with a nurse, including communication, clarification of roles and sharing of jobs</p> |
| Working with the nurse was a positive experience | <p>Some students reported previous negative experiences with nurses on clinical placements. Students viewed the simulation ward very positively.</p> |

Discussion

Simulated wards can provide a valuable opportunity for experiential CPE where medical students can work with a competent and experienced nurse delivering patient care in a safe environment. Our ward was set up to support teaching and learning about patient safety but there appears to be a broader learning in the areas of teamwork and nursing roles. Future research into the benefits of similar CPE initiatives is warranted.

References

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 4. Scotia Medical Observational and Training System <http://www.scotiauk.com/smots/index.html#>

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