An Evaluation of an Inter-agency Interprofessional Education Partnership for Long Term Care and Retirement Living Settings

‘Inter-agency IPE programming: Early organizational challenges and opportunities in collaboration.’

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The Research Team

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The 'Learning To Care Together' (LTCT) project is an inter-agency interprofessional education (IPE) partnership between: George Brown College (GBC), and Revera Inc.,

(i) Involves faculty and students from GBC and staff/employees of Revera Inc.

(ii) The 'interprofessional ethical decision-making' training component also involves community-based health services agencies (Toronto-area Community Ethics Network)

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Purpose(s)

- To explore presage factors including contextual factors such as organizational policy, values and philosophy as well as module facilitator-developer characteristics, knowledge about IPE, work context and environment.
- To explore the process factors that may have influenced program’s outcomes and impacts.
- To identify product factors (outcomes).
- To provide key aggregated findings to the LTCT team to assist with understanding the role and interplay between theses three factors to assist with future IPE planning.
Mixed method design:

- surveys, individual interviews, focus group interviews, observational data, document collection (class assignments, meeting minutes)

- GBC REB approval (April 2007)

Realistic evaluation (Pawson & Tilly 1997)

- Dual focus: outcomes/impacts & underlying presage and process issues

  - Presage (contextual factors)
  - Process (teaching/learning)
  - Product (outcomes)
• Pre-program interviews were conducted N(18) with participants from GBC and Revera Inc.
• Results of project leaders, module developers/facilitators are the focus of this presentation.
• Transcripts coded and analyzed into themes, 3P model framed the presentation of findings.
Qualitative Findings
(Presage Factors)

Context of the Organizations

- Political climate
  - Evidence-base needed for IPC (for professions)
  - IPE mandate at GBC
  - Awareness building (not all stakeholders bought-in)
  - Restructuring/turnover
- Regulatory frameworks (Not evident)
- Funding
  - Public versus private
  - Unionized LTC staff
  - Replacement costs
- Geography
  - Geographically distant
• Learner numbers
  – Recruitment issues in long-term care
  – Difficult to replace staff learners
  – Student placement timing/availability for placement at same time

• Space and time constraints
  – Releasing staff for education
  – Need for students to attend minimum number of instructional hours

• Competing curricula demands
  – Professional development (PD)
  – Balancing ‘best practices’ and ‘accreditation’ (content) and IPE (process)
Qualitative Findings
(Presage Factors)

Values/Philosophies
academic sector/business sector;
organizational goals, hopes & expectations

- Decision-making process with focus on research aspect
- Decisions made by consensus
- Emphasis on process, less on product
- Curriculum viewed as a work in progress
- Material would undergo peer review

- Best Practice Approach
- Decision making process was streamlined
- Emphasis on product, less on process
- A learning organization that provides excellence in care
- Team/multidisciplinary approach to care delivery
Qualitative Findings (Presage Factors)

Leader/Organizational characteristics

• Conceptions of learning & teaching
  – Definition/interpretation of IPE

• Conceptions of collaboration
  – Timelines re: decision-making
  – Stakeholder consultation/involvement

• Expertise
  – In collaboration; partnership-building; IPE

• Enthusiasm
  – For interprofessional collaboration
Process for Inter-organizational Collaboration for IPE planning - *Approaches to working together & process for IPE*

**Operationalizing proposal**

– understanding and agreeing upon respective goals and expectations for the project and commitment of resources

“... when you write an RFP you have grand plans, but I think that when it comes down to implementation or operationalizing what you’ve visioned, that’s a challenge for anyone to do that.”
Qualitative Findings
(Process Factors)

Resources Allocated for module development-
Arranging protected time for staff from both organizations

“the individuals, it wasn’t that they didn’t want to be responsive, it’s just that they got a whole lot on their plate already, you know, and this was really an add-on.”
Qualitative Findings
(Process Factors)

Establishing an approach to decision-making and a process for resolving issues

Steering Committee

“(…) Well, a lot of internal discussion, but a lot of indecision internally. Again, if you don’t know what you’re looking for, how are you going to find it?”

• An executive committee was formed to make decisions about the process of IPE
Qualitative Findings
(Process Factors)

However, further challenges arose for the decision-making process by the executive committee.

“I think that is a constant theme in the story, is that the (...) academics like to linger, like to discuss, like to make changes, everything is in pencil until 100 years later when you finally make a decision. It is a very different decision making model, and that’s fine. I mean that is one of the learnings from having a business and an academic institution working together as partners, that they do things differently, and that includes the way you make decisions, the length of time that you spend talking about something before you can finalize it. And that is fine, you can—you know that going in. What we didn’t do was to make allowance for that, to develop a process”
Determining a Process for Decision-Making - Seeking input from Evaluation Team - Confusion between Implementation and Evaluation

“I felt strongly that because implementation and evaluation were mixed for so long, that it was impeding our progress in fact on both sides, on both the evaluation side and the implementation side. Knowing full well that you can’t evaluate something that doesn’t exist, that hasn’t been implemented yet.”
Getting to know the context, goals, culture, values and philosophy of the other organization rather than moving right into the work...

“I would like to have gone there for three days and worked in Org. B. and understand their workings. I think they should have come here and shadow us and we should understand what’s going on. It certainly helps to shape expectations.”
The Product is the Process for IPE - Approaches to learning and teaching

- Uniprofessional, multiprofessional or interprofessional
- Pre or post qualification
- Formal or informal
- Classroom or placement-based activities
- Work-based learning
- Compulsory or optional experience
- Facilitation Style (team teaching)
- Underpinning theory (multiprofessional, PD, IPE)
- Educational duration
- Number of Participants
- Assessment/Evaluation
Underpinning theory (Multiprofessional, PD, IPE)

Definition of IPE - Professional development, Multiprofessional education versus IPE

“We already do interprofessional education (...) We open up everything to anybody because it is a very different model, you need all hands on deck and we teach nutritional care to dietary aides and we teach nutritional care to registered nurses. So the topics are already interprofessional.”

Process versus Content – Conceptions of Teaching and Learning

“It is almost as if the content is an excuse to have people practice the process of collaboration.”
Agreeing on duration of IPE programming

“we don’t have enough staffing in long-term care as it is. And so then to, you know, pull staff off; we can’t risk the resident’s safety, you know, for staff to be pulled off the floor. So, there’re all those accountabilities that we still have to meet. And education is extremely important, but we still have a number of accountabilities that we have to meet. (...) The most we have is 20 to 30 minutes (...) So, we have to educate differently.”
Number of participants - Recruiting Staff Learners to participate

“It’s not just a matter of that paying though, it’s finding enough people with the right training to substitute. So it is a problem that it doesn’t matter who is involved in long-term care, there is a shortage of trained people to do the jobs.”
Assessment and Evaluation - Finalizing curriculum versus adapting it based on continuous feedback

“We were of the opinion that the project as it is unfolding into the fall, was really the piloting, and that we might not want to put too much effort into printing too much right now, knowing that it might well change after the first pilot goes. They were of the opinion that this was it, and so they wanted to spend the money and, you know, sort of do it up really nicely this time around. So, very different opinions.”
Political climate

Renewed partnership building and re-establishing project goals from the perspective of both organizations due to restructuring and turnover of leadership at Organization B and a change of project leader at Organization A (Presage and Process).

Funding

Public versus private; unionized LTC staff; replacement costs (20 min v/s 3 hours) & establishing a centralized process for budgetary and resource allocation decisions (Presage and Process).
Values and Philosophies & establishing an approach to decision-making and resolving issues (Presage and Process).

Conceptions of learning and teaching;

Expertise & operationalizing proposal (Presage and Process).

The Product is the Process for IPE-Approaches to learning and teaching

Questions?