A Guide for Effective Interprofessional Primary Health Care Teams
An IPCP & LE Initiative

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Introduction

Welcome to the Rural West Primary Health Care Team.

In 2010, Rural West was officially designated a Primary Health Care site. Providing care in 3 Health Facilities over an area covering 14,400 square kms serving a population of 4997, the team’s vision was designated as providing “Quality client focused health care in an accessible and timely manner by a coordinated inter-disciplinary team tailored to the patient’s needs”.

In 2010-11, Health Canada provided $1.84M in funding to support Interprofessional Collaborative Practices & Learning Environments (IPCP&LE) Projects in Western and Northern Canada. The goal of this project was to develop, implement and evaluate innovative and effective interprofessional collaborative practices in a Health Care Setting. Sun Country’s Rural West Primary Health Care Team was selected for implementation of this project in Saskatchewan (Appendix 1).

The Rural West Primary Health Care team is offering a Guide to Effective Interprofessional Health Care Teams while providing a glimpse into the team functioning of Rural West.

The guide provides a brief introduction into each team activity. In addition, copies of each tool are provided. Please feel free to utilize this guide to assist your team (we only ask that you make reference to the Rural West Primary Health Care Team when reproducing any of the tools and resources in the guide).

Sincerely,

Rural West Primary Health Care Team
Sun Country Health Region
INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TEAMS

Interprofessional education is one way to help your health care team better understand the roles and responsibilities of other team members. When you clearly understand how every team member can contribute effectively to patient care, you are able to collaborate more effectively and efficiently as a team.

Some of the benefits of IPE include:
- Improved relationships among team members
- Increased trust
- Dispelled stereotypes
- Improved attitudes towards other professional groups

WHAT IS INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE (IPCP)?

“A partnership between a team of health professionals and a patient where the patient retains control over his/her care and is provided access to the knowledge and skills of team members to arrive at a realistic team shared plan of care and access to the resources to achieve the plan” (Orchard, 2007)

WHAT IS INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION (IPE)?

“Interprofessional education occurs when two or more professions learn with, from and about each other in order to improve collaboration and the quality of care” (CAIPE, 2002)

IPE involves:
- Socializing health care providers in working together, in shared problem solving and decision making, towards enhancing the benefit for patients, and other recipients of services;
- Developing mutual understanding of, and respect for, the contributions of various disciplines; and,
- Instilling the requisite competencies for collaborative practice.

Interprofessional education helps develop the following collaborative skills (Barr, 2005):
- Describe one’s roles and responsibilities clearly to other professions.
- Recognize and observe the constraints of one’s role, responsibilities and competence, yet perceive needs in a wider framework.
- Recognize and respect the roles, responsibilities and competence of other professions in relation to one’s own.
- Work with other professions to effect change and resolve conflict in the provision of care and treatment.
• Work with others to assess, plan, provide and review care for individual patients.
• Tolerate differences, misunderstandings and shortcomings in other professions.
• Facilitate interprofessional case conferences, team meetings, etc.
• Enter into interdependent relations with other professions.

INTERPROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES
The CIHC National Interprofessional Competency Framework describes the competencies required for effective interprofessional collaboration. Six competency domains highlight the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that together shape the judgments that are essential for interprofessional collaborative practice.

The six competencies include for effective interprofessional collaboration include:
• Role Clarification
• Team Functioning
• Patient/Client/family/Community-Centred Care
• Collaborative Leadership
• Interprofessional Communication
• Interprofessional Conflict Resolution

In Sun Country Health Region, the CIHC National Competency Framework model (Appendix II) forms the basis of our collaborative work. We challenge you to focus on these competencies to build on collaboration in your work as a team.

References:
COLLABORATIVE COMPETENCIES IN TEAMS

The Sun Country Rural West Primary Health Care Team engaged in the Interprofessional Team Activities:

- Regular Team Meetings
- Community Consultations Meetings
- Assessment of Team Attitudes & Functioning: Pre & Post Questionnaires (Tool A)
- Code of Conduct Process (Tool B)
- Post-Learning Event Interview & Learning Event Presentation Outline (Tool C)
- Additional Tools & Resources (Tool D)

**Regular Team Meetings**

The purpose of regular team meetings is to provide opportunity for face to face interprofessional conversations on the current state of the team and to develop aims, measures and actions to move forward. This is an opportunity to understand roles and responsibilities of the team members.

The process of regular team meetings include:

- Yearly the team holds a planning session to develop their aims, measures and actions.
- Team leads are assigned to each of the aims.
- Team meets monthly - this drives the work and progress of the team.
- Team leads will meet between the monthly meetings to move their agenda forward, reporting back to the large group as needed.
- Other learning events, working sessions, planning sessions are held as needed

**Community Consultation Meetings**

The Rural West Primary Health Care Team held community consultations in 3 communities to date. These consultations involved education about Rural West, asking the community about their strengths, challenges and opportunities to work together with the team. This opportunity provided a way to listen and engage the community that builds relationships, trust and support. The overall purpose of Community Consultation Meetings is to involve, educate, and consult community.

**Assessment of Team Functioning: Pre & Post Questionnaires (Tool A)**

The following measurement instruments can be used at pre & post intervals in order to identify the team attitudes and level of functioning:
ATHCT Scale: **Attitudes** Toward Health Care Teams Scale

Team **Skills** Scale (TSS): a self-assessment instrument

Interprofessional Collaboration Scale (IPC): Team **function** from individual team members’ perspective specifically, effectiveness of communication, accommodation and appearance of isolation

Team Fitness Tool

Primary Health Care Team Effectiveness Survey

**Code of Conduct Process (Tool B)**

For an interprofessional team to function effectively, the team’s purpose and goals should be clearly understood and agreed upon by all members. Organization is an essential part of facilitating communication between different health providers practicing collaborative care. Be sure to identify each team member's responsibilities; hold regularly scheduled team meetings; record and distribute action items; and agree on how to communicate progress/changes between meetings. Discussing process issues related to interprofessional education and working in an interprofessional team environment (such as trust, respect, role clarification and perceptions) helps to address conflicts, miscommunications and role overlap.

The Rural West Primary Health Care Team engaged in a Code of Conduct Process with the purpose to develop team norms – a set of rules and guidelines that shape the interactions among team members. The Code of Conduct guides team behavior, and is used to assess how well team are interacting with each other and external partners. Team norms enable team members to call each other out on any behavior that negatively affects the success of the team.

The rationale for creating and maintaining a code of conduct is:

- That the members of every team and work group develop particular ways of interacting with each other over time.
- Effective interpersonal communication among members and successful communication with managers and employees external to the team are critical components of team functioning.
- How a team makes decisions, assigns work, and holds members accountable determine team success.
- Developing a code of conduct is an opportunity to form team relationship guidelines or team norms. (Rural West has identified this as a way to share how they work together with others)
Post-Learning Event Interview & Learning Event Presentation Outline (Tool C)

Learning about the tasks and responsibilities of different professions increases team member appreciation, promotes healthy communication and strengthens collaborative delivery of care. Be sure that your interprofessional education initiative addresses stereotypes and misconceptions, increases awareness of role differences and similarities and acknowledges the unique contributions of each provider. For collaborative health care strategies to be effective, the relationships among team members must be fostered over time and through shared learning activities (such as IPE).

The Post-Learning Event Interview was created with the purpose of capturing the learning that team members engaged in while attending professional development events. The Team Facilitator can conduct the Post-Learning Event data collection by interview format or as a questionnaire. Ultimately, the Team Facilitator may use this information collected to plan future team focused learning events.

The Learning Event Presentation Outline is very similar to the Post-Learning Event Interview as it can assist the Team Facilitator in planning future team focused learning events. However, the focus of this document is to provide the learner with a presentation outline to share their newly gained knowledge ‘back’ to their interprofessional team.

Additional Tools & Resources (Tool D)

Rural West will continue to expand its Interprofessional resources, in a variety of formats, in order to enrich collaboration of teams.

Examples of ways to enrich collaboration among teams and team members include:

- Knowledge exchange activities centred around the sharing of best practices
- Formal education: courses, lectures, tutorials, seminars, team rounds, clinical rotations, case conferences, clinical placements or locums
- Continuing education: workshops, conferences seminars, symposia or presentations, teleseminars (phone), webinars (internet)
- Educational resources: research papers, treatment guidelines, toolkits, websites, vodcasts (video), podcasts (audio)
APPENDIX II: The National Competency Framework (CIHC)

Figure 1: The National Competency Framework

- **Goal:** Interprofessional Collaboration
  - A partnership between a team of health providers and a client in a participatory, collaborative, and coordinated approach to shared decision-making around health and social issues.

- **Contextual Issues**
- **Simple**
- **Complex**
- **Quality Improvement**
- **Interprofessional Collaboration**
  - Conflict Resolution
  - Interprofessional Communication
  - Team Functioning
  - Role Clarification

- **Patient/Client/Family/Community-Centered Care**

- **Collaborative Leadership**
- **Contextual Issues**
- **Quality Improvement**
Assessment of Team Attitudes & Functioning: Pre & Post Questionnaires (Tool A)

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Code of Conduct Process (Tool B)

To be added by each team individually

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Additional Tools & Resources
(Tool D)

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