

1st International Interprofessional Health and Social Care Conference
ABSTRACT SUBMISSION
MULTIDISCIPLINARY LEARNING WITHIN THE MPHARM DEGREE

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Conference Theme: *The organisational impact of NHS Reforms on Interprofessional Practice: Professional Perspectives of students and staff.*

Type of presentation: Podium presentation preferred (poster acceptable).

Title of paper: MULTIDISCIPLINARY LEARNING WITHIN THE MPHARM DEGREE

Aim of paper: The aim of the present study was to map and document current approaches to multidisciplinary learning in the sixteen established Schools of Pharmacy (SOPs) within the UK.

Abstract: The Government has stated its aim to increase inter-professional learning within health professional education.¹ This study used triangulation of quantitative course document review, qualitative staff interview and quantitative student self-completion survey to final year undergraduates (n=1847; response rate 51%).

Interviews indicated that five SOPs undertook multidisciplinary learning, two were involved in multidisciplinary teaching and five undertook teaching with other science students. In the other four the entire programme was delivered only to pharmacy undergraduates. These findings were supported by the documentary analysis. In general most interviewees viewed multi-disciplinary learning favourably and a number of advantages and disadvantages were recognised.

Respondents (n=159) from the five SOPs with multidisciplinary learning, a majority (n=96, 60%) found the experience very or moderately useful, although

there was variability. Respondents (n=72) from the SOPs involved in multidisciplinary teaching showed much less support for the process. All respondents (n=917) were asked whether they agree with the statement that "joint learning with other health professional students should be a requirement for all undergraduate degrees in pharmacy". Over half of the respondents (n=533, 58%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement.

Staff interviews highlighted the wide variability in the use of multidisciplinary learning within the MPharm course. Respondents recognised many advantages but there were significant logistical problems. Students' experiences were variable but overall a majority had found it valuable and this was reflected in majority support for its compulsory inclusion. By focusing upon current examples within existing MPharm courses, successful wider implementation of multidisciplinary learning can be achieved.

Reference: 1. Working Together – Learning Together. A Framework for Lifelong Learning for the NHS. Department of Health, November 2001.

Biographies

Dr Chris Langley – Chris Langley is a qualified pharmacist who is a Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice at Aston University in Birmingham, UK. He specialises in teaching the legal and professional components of the MPharm degree and his research surrounds health professional education and the role of the pharmacist in both primary and secondary care.

Professor Keith Wilson – Keith is a pharmacist and deputy dean of the School of Life and Health Sciences at Aston University. He is a team leader for the Royal Pharmaceutical Society accreditation of pharmacy undergraduate degrees. He teaches in the area of pharmacy practice and health policy and has research interests that span pharmacy education and medicines management.

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