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Medicine, pharmacy and nurse practitioner discussing a case in an interprofessional setting.

Emphasizing Interprofessional Education for Missouri’s Future Health

World Health Organization (2010) defines Interprofessional Education (IPE) as “Students [or providers] from two or more professions learning about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes.” Interprofessional education (IPE) has been shown to improve the quality of patient care, lower costs, reduce hospital the length-of-stay and lower medical error risk. The Missouri AHEC network, partnering with educational institutions and healthcare facilities across the state, has been a key facilitator of IPE experiences for Missouri’s future healthcare workforce.

Mid-Missouri (Mid-MO) AHEC has offered a variety of IPE activities hosted at Phelps Health in Rolla, MO. TeamSteps strategies and tools were implemented in mid-2019 to be utilized statewide and locally as part of a robust didactic program provided to students and staff. Trainings on motivational interviewing were also provided in September of 2019 as part of a joint effort to improve collaboration and education in patient-driven IPE approaches.

Mid-MO also offers an IPE home visit project. In the spring of 2019, 12 interprofessional health student teams visited local senior community residents over the course of a month to evaluate, educate and aid in setting health-related goals. During the summer, a team of interprofessional students piloted a group visit project with local teenagers. This team met with the youth over the course of seven weeks addressing teen exercise and eating habits.

This fall Mid-MO and West Central Missouri AHEC (WCMO) partnered with ATSU in Kirksville to develop a collaborative case competition. Student teams will examine the life story and care of an individual and their family, and will develop an interprofessional team-based care plan to meet their needs. Participants will develop a video presentation of an interprofessional team-based care recommending strategies to ensure effective teamwork, communication, quality care and safety.

IPE is becoming a statewide effort as Northwest Missouri AHEC and Southwest Missouri AHEC have recently held IPE experiences in local clinics in their regions. Other centers are involved with IPE Situation Background Assessment and Recommendation (SBAR) activities with clinical students from different disciplines.

MAHEC is a partnership of seven locally governed organizations and three university-based health professions education programs working statewide to increase the numbers of Missouri youth entering stable, high-paying jobs as healthcare professionals and the numbers of professionals caring for underserved populations.

The MAHEC partners include:

- A.T. Still University-Kirksville
- University of Missouri-Columbia
- Saint Louis University
- Northeast Missouri AHEC-Kirksville
- Northwest Missouri AHEC-St. Joseph
- West Central Missouri AHEC – Lexington
- Mid-Missouri AHEC -Rolla
- East Central Missouri AHEC– St. Louis
- Southeastern Missouri AHEC – Poplar Bluff
- Southwest Missouri AHEC-Springfield



MAHEC: Connecting students to careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health