Evaluation of new multi-professional collaborative learning programmes for optimising dentists’, general practitioners’ and pharmacists’ healthcare knowledge and Delivery

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Introduction
A new multi-professional collaborative learning programme (MPCLP) brings together practitioners from dentistry, general practice and pharmacy. Co-ordinated by the postgraduate centres at Cardiff University, the aim is to develop events which address topics relevant to all three groups. Originally piloted online, two face-to-face group learning sessions have taken place to date.

This study explores whether multi-professional collaborative sessions are an acceptable mode of learning in healthcare.

Methods
We gathered data from post-session questionnaires following two MPCLP sessions (Oral cancer awareness, Significant Event Analysis) exploring attendee learning and opinions.

Following the Significant Event Analysis (SEA) event, attendees were invited to participate in a focus group to further explore their views on the session.

Results
Sessions on oral cancer (33 dentists/3 GPs attending) and significant event analysis (SEA) (9 GPs/9 dentist/7 pharmacists) were studied. A SEA event follow-up focus group was attended by 4 participants (1 GP/2 dentists/1 pharmacist).

36% of attendees (3 GPs/3 dentists/3 pharmacists) at the SEA event had attended at least one previous multi-professional collaborative learning session (as part of this programme or by another provider); 80% had attended the oral cancer session (n=7, 4 dentists/3 GPs).

Attendees reported that overall learning outcomes were met: 100% oral cancer/86% SEA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for attending</th>
<th>SEA</th>
<th>Oral cancer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>Dent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic relevant to work practice</td>
<td>(n=9)</td>
<td>(n=9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross-discipline learning from other professionals</td>
<td>(n=33)</td>
<td>5 5 2 0 8 20</td>
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97% oral cancer/77% SEA attendees indicated that they would be making changes to their practise following the session.

SEA attendees most frequently identified*:  
*Oral cancer evaluation did not ask for examples

- Implement more, and more focused, SEAs in the practice
- Incorporate discussion of SEAs into staff meetings

Suggestions for future MPCLP sessions included:
- caring for older patients,
- caring for patients with dementia,
- reducing antibiotic resistance,
- non-medical prescribing,
- accessing shared resources, and
- providing a multi-care approach to specific medical conditions.

Other professional groups thought to benefit from the sessions included:
- Optometry
- Nurses (Dental/Medical)

Conclusions
- MPCLP supports collaboration across professions leading to a co-ordinated approach to professional education.
- It addresses University and Wales Government’s aims to develop innovative educational opportunities to meet the ever-changing needs of the healthcare workforce, including drives towards multi-professional working and creation of GP clusters.
- Attendees’ reflections on the sessions suggest that collaborative shared learning addresses their needs and is a valued mode of delivery.
- Future sessions are planned

Acknowledgments
We wish to thank the programme co-ordinators (Kirstie Moons, Chris Price and Kathryn Hodgson) for their cooperation, and Wales Deanery for funding the evaluation.