

Interprofessional Inpatient Diabetes Care: Good for Medical Practice but Great for Medical Education

Michael J. Fowler, MD; Tiffanie Marksbury, DNP; Ann R. Hackett, APRN-BC, ANP, WHNP; James B. Mills, Jr., MSN., RN, ANP-BC, Brannan Cole, MSN; Blake L. Salmony, IV, RN, MSN, NP-C; Jennifer M. Prager, MSN, RN, FNP-C; Amy Ryder, RD; Chase D. Hendrickson, MD, MPH, Alvin Powers, MD

Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Nashville, TN, USA
Michael.Fowler@vumc.org

Objectives:

Medical students, regardless of their specialty of choice, will have to care for patients with diabetes during their internship. Use of multidisciplinary diabetes care has been shown to be effective in diabetes treatment, especially regarding diabetes technology. Interprofessional medical education is an effective method to teach healthcare delivery and foundational knowledge. The use of interprofessional teaching to prepare medical students for multidisciplinary diabetes care and to approach diabetes technology/devices has not been previously reported.

Methods:

Medical educators developed a four-week immersion course teaching practical and foundational diabetes knowledge with an interprofessional approach. In addition to learning foundational science, medical students received practical instruction from our multidisciplinary team in the management of blood glucose and diabetes technology in situations such as critical illness, tube feedings, total parental nutrition, and encountering insulin pumps/continuous glucose sensors in inpatient settings. Student feedback was collected at the end of each course offering via anonymous questionnaire and direct feedback.

Results:

During the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 academic years, 100% of students felt the course helped them work more collaboratively in an interprofessional environment, felt their skills of collaboration had increased, and felt more confident about their ability to care for patients with diabetes in an inpatient setting. All students developed the ability to teach patients basal/bolus insulin, insulin pens, carbohydrate counting, calculating insulin doses, and gained familiarity with insulin pumps.

Conclusions:

Vanderbilt's Diabetes Immersion course prepares students to treat diabetes mellitus as an intern and helps them develop ability to address diabetes technology/devices. This results in high degrees of student satisfaction and fosters an environment of interprofessional collaboration. This approach could be replicated in other institutions and in other disciplines.