

Interprofessional education for practice: moving and handling for people with complex needs in contemporary healthcare

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Method

In order to support our students learning and development of practical skills our team of physiotherapists, nurses, midwives, occupational therapists and operating department practitioners have produced interactive learning materials and instructional videos for a number of moving and handling procedures. Using a specialist bariatric suit and equipment we designed a simulated experience that involves assisting the person/patient to change position, moving within the bed and from the bed to the chair.

Members of the team practice all scenarios prior to introducing them to students, and worked through this scenario in a simulated clinical area. Undertaking the session in this manner has proven useful, giving rise to team discussions regarding knowledge, techniques and resources.

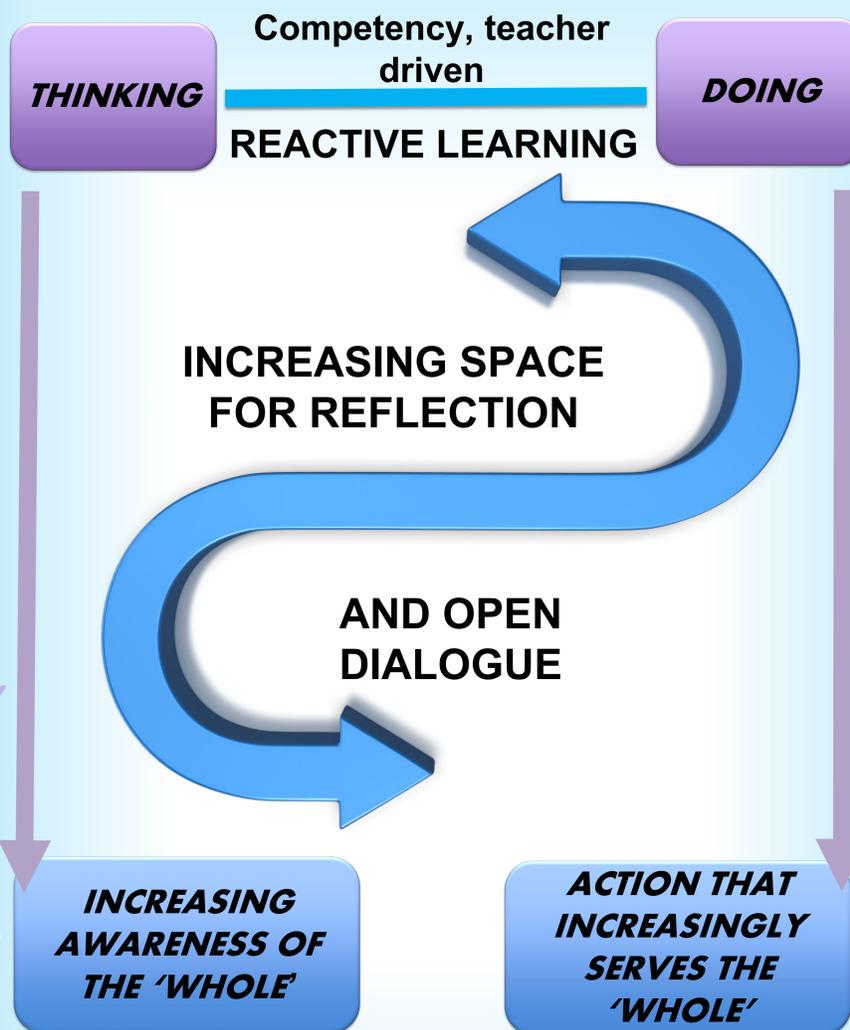
Purpose

Obesity is a growing problem in the UK affecting all areas of the NHS, with over a quarter of all adults falling into this category. The additional risks and co-morbidities that obesity is linked with leads to a high number of hospital admissions. The multidisciplinary teams working with these people require appropriate knowledge and skills to deliver safe and effective care, with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2014) recommending that staff be appropriately trained to use specialist equipment when working with this complex group of people. Research has shown that interprofessional team working can play an important part in improving patient safety. This report details the process an interprofessional team have undertaken to develop a simulated bariatric scenario as part of the learning materials that complement practical moving and handling sessions for undergraduate students.



Results

Working through the scenario required continual reflection on performance to understand and adapt practice, with open dialogue in problem solving facilitating exploration of new ideas to develop techniques and confidence. Key themes relating to the exercise include communication, interpersonal and practical handling skills, and resources. Of particular impact was that of resources; time and space, number of staff and equipment and how these factors contribute to successful completion of the task as a whole. The process of open dialogue relating to problem solving is viewed as a key factor prior to the transference of the simulated scenario for preregistration student learning. The simulated activity improved our understanding of the difficulties in employing usual moving and handling techniques with people with complex needs and the implications this may have for student learning.



Model adapted from Stephens (2019)

"From a psychological perspective this experience highlighted how isolated and lonely a person could feel and become. I was sitting in a chair that I couldn't get out of without help and therefore my independence was also affected."

"Whilst wearing the bariatric suit it gave me the opportunity to gain some insight into how hard it must be to be so obese. I was unable to breath, bend down or tie my shoe laces and even go to the toilet. I felt trapped and claustrophobic which made me very depressed where I just wanted to lie on the bed and sleep".

"The struggle in attending to personal care, being unable to both see and reach parts of my body became apparent whilst having the suit on."

"How a person might think and feel about their appearance was something that I experienced as even with a suit on I did not like looking at myself."

"The involvement of this session has offered me the opportunity to reflect on my own thoughts and ideas I had previously held when meeting and supporting people who are obese. I now have a greater insight and empathy with their situation."

Conclusion

Interprofessional education with in healthcare can lead to enhanced student learning, greater patients safety and understanding of team working common in the healthcare workplace. Introducing staff and then students to a safe and effective team approach using bariatric equipment seeks to prepare the students for practice placements and their future workplace.

Implications

Following this experience we plan to pilot the sessions with a group of preregistration healthcare professional students.

