

When I Say Theory-Practice Gap...

Work-in-Progress Presentation

Author(s): Carla Ferreira, Nassim Adhami, Elisabeth Bailey

Presenter: Carla Ferreira

Time: 1:00 – 2:00

Health professions (HP) educators play an essential role in helping students meet the competencies embedded in the profession they choose to pursue. Ensuring a competent workforce prepared to provide competent and safe care to a diverse population is at the core of the roles and responsibilities of HP educators.

Despite the expertise of HP educators, the phenomenon of theory-practice gap (TPG) continues to persist, particularly in nursing. TPG in nursing has specific attributes such as “relational problems between university and clinical practice, practice failing to reflect theory, and theory perceived as irrelevant to practice” (Greenway et al., 2019, p. 3).

Nursing education and practice are continuously changing, and both ought to keep up with the other. However, how NEs in academia ensure that what they teach is in alignment with current practice is not well understood. Uncovering the strategies/ interventions academic NEs use to mitigate TPG in nursing is essential in addressing this phenomenon.

In this presentation, participants will gain insight into TPG in nursing. Whether the disconnection is ‘real’ or ‘perceived’, TPG is experienced by nursing students, academic NEs, and front-line nurses overseeing students in practice. Until we understand the mechanisms that ought to be in place to closely connect theory and practice, TPG will continue to widen contributing to many negative outcomes including (1) student experiences of frustration; (2) underdevelopment of physical assessment skills among student nurses; and (3) decreased job satisfaction and increased attrition among newly graduated nurses (Saifan et al., 2021).

Key words: theory-practice gap, nursing

Co-Creating an Integrated 2SLGBTQ+ Pharmacy Curriculum with Communities: Successes and Learnings from Years One and Two of the Queer Curriculum Advisory Committee

Author(s): Lillian Chen, Tristan Lai, Alex Tang

Presenter: Lillian Chen

Time: 1:00 – 2:00

Problem: To address the ongoing health disparities experienced by 2SLGBTQ+ communities, SOGIE education was scaffolded throughout all four years of the Entry-to-Practice Doctor of Pharmacy program at the University of British Columbia using a community-based approach to co-develop an integrated 2SLGBTQ+ curriculum.

Methods: The Queer Curriculum Advisory Committee (QCAC) was founded in 2022 to bring together community voices and perspectives, inviting 2SLGBTQ+ subject matter experts, community members, and partners to work alongside students, faculty members, and staff. The QCAC's mandate is to advise on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of SOGIE education in undergraduate pharmacy training. In Year 1, QCAC focused on curriculum development and content review. In Year 2, the focus shifted to curricular evaluation, advocacy, and consultations. Annual evaluations were conducted to provide insight into the QCAC's function and to ensure it continues to fulfill its mandates. Anonymous feedback on committee operations, dynamic, structure, performance, and member self-evaluation were collected from committee members.

Findings: Year 1 and 2 evaluations captured 8 meetings. Quantitative and qualitative data revealed notable findings in the following domains: Dynamics: Members felt positively about the dynamics of QCAC. Operations: Members appreciated detailed briefing notes that provided context to agenda items prior to meetings. Performance: Members highlighted that the QCAC's ability to produce tangible results toward the committee mandate is a strength. Self-Assessment: Members viewed their personal level of engagement as favourable.

Implications: To create inclusive curricula, effective community engagement is crucial. This evaluation provides insight into the QCAC's strengths and areas of improvement.

EMPHASize: Learning Module for Professional Health Awareness on Weight Stigma and Eating Disorders

Work-in-Progress Presentation

Author(s): Sally Stewart, Jamie Piercy, Maya Libben, Lakoda Thomas, Dennis Jasper, Courtney Fornasero

Presenter: Sally Stewart

Time: 1:00 – 2:00

Eating disorders (EDs) pose a significant health threat and high risk of mortality. A substantial portion of the population, particularly those from diverse backgrounds and body types remain underserved in terms of care. In addition, there is a severe lack of curriculum content on this topic in health profession programs in higher education. Innovative education modules incorporated into health profession programs will increase awareness of the nuances of ED presentations and of ED stereotypes to ensure all individuals impacted by EDs receive timely and appropriate care.

Three learning modules have been developed, targeting future healthcare professionals. The first focuses on the psychological aspects of EDs, discussing impacts of weight bias and stigma, to dismantle harmful ED stereotypes. The second addresses clinical and health consequences of EDs, discussing populations at risk and presentations of EDs. The third addresses the link between neurotransmitters and EDs. Participants were students at the University of British Columbia in health-related programs of nursing, kinesiology, physiotherapy and psychology. Quantitative and qualitative data has been collected through online self-report surveys. The modules were iteratively developed to incorporate feedback, ensuring equitable access to learning materials.

The preliminary results indicate there was a significant increase in the learner's perceived knowledge on topics of weight stigma, ED stereotypes, and the clinical presentations of EDs. Participants described the modules as being highly relevant for their professional and personal lives.

Work is continuing on this project to involve other health professions such as dentistry, pharmacy, medicine, dietetics, and social work.

By recognizing the intersectionality of weight bias, stigma, and EDs this project can contribute to systematic healthcare changes through evidence-based education of future healthcare providers.

Shaping Tomorrow's Healthcare Leaders: An Innovative Curriculum for Leadership Identity Development

Work-in-Progress Presentation

Author(s): Patricia Gerber, Sandra Jarvis-Selinger

Presenter: Patricia Gerber

Time: 1:00 – 2:00

Background: Cultivating the next generation of healthcare leaders who are not only skilled but also consciously adopt a leader identity aligns with leadership effectiveness and prepares them to lead with self-awareness. Drawing from this and literature on how adults develop a leader identity, we seized the opportunity of a brand-new curriculum to develop a Leader Identity Formation pedagogical stream, to create student experiences that would instill a sense of leadership identity through a program-level approach.

Description of the Initiative: Blending theory with application, we developed teaching and learning strategies founded on student reflections and aligned with the “LEADS in a Caring Environment”, an evidence-based framework for health professions leadership development. We worked with course leaders to design activities mapped to the framework and aligned with course content, supporting students’ reflections on their evolving leader identities. This helped students focus the building of their leadership self-efficacy through reflection on: their emerging views of self and others, developing confidence, understanding dynamics in organizational contexts, and realizing the fluid nature of leadership development.

Implications in Healthcare Education: Taking advantage of the opportunities that arose from the design of this new curriculum, we developed a Leader Identity Formation stream embedded into the student experience. The results-to-date indicate that students view it as an effective springboard for insightful reflections and as a significant contribution to their ongoing leadership development. This unique initiative represents an advancement in hybrid pharmacy education that other health professions programs can adopt in efforts to cultivate the next generation of leaders.