

# Interprofessional Collaboration in Integrative Health Research: A Case Report

Audrey Cross, MS, LEED Green Assoc., Samantha Marocco, PT, DPT, MS, GCS Emeritus, & Deanna Errico, PT, DPT, ATC  
Utica University, Utica, New York

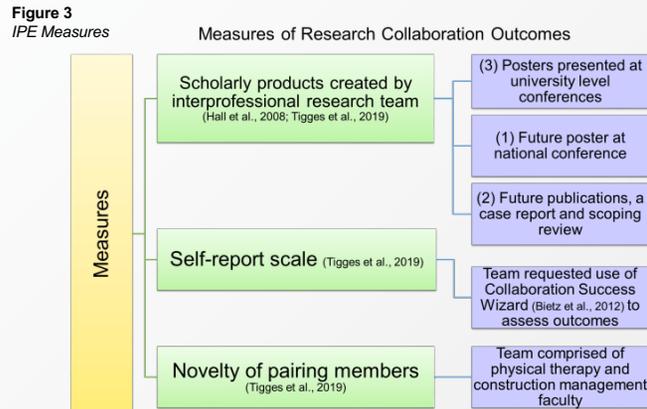
## BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Much of the interprofessional research to date has consisted primarily of traditional healthcare professions, however, healthcare providers should collaborate with integrative healthcare practitioners and professionals outside of healthcare. The Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) provides an “enabling framework for clinical care providers, public health practitioners, and professionals from other fields to collaborate more effectively and creatively across disciplines to optimize health care and advance population health” (p. 4). The updated IPEC core competencies document specifically indicates the need to collaborate with a diverse group to help deliver the highest quality of care. With this 2016 update, IPEC added representatives from over 60 additional professions to the recommended team collaborators.

The purpose of this case report is to describe a unique interprofessional research team collaboration composed of physical therapy and construction management faculty who investigated an integrative health concept through their research. The research team integrated the four IPEC core competencies (see Figure 1) into their collaboration as they recognized their relevance to research collaborations as well as the importance of role modeling these principles for students. The research team also considered the five constructs cited in the Workplace Health Interprofessional Learning study (WHIRL-see Figure 2), including collaboration, coordination, cooperation, communication, and commendation (Blake et al., 2020).

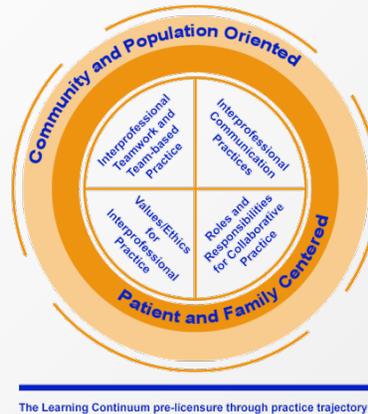
## OUTCOMES

Valid and reliable objective measures of IPE research collaboration have yet to be developed (Tigges et al., 2019). However, there are a number of measures currently being used to assess the outcomes of interprofessional research collaborations. (See Figure 3)



The researchers in this team all reported positive changes in healthcare knowledge and attitudes towards interprofessional research, as well as improved interprofessional collaboration skills. Team members educated each other on professional language, professional roles, and databases used by each profession. (See quotes in center of poster)

**Figure 1**  
IPEC Learning Continuum and Core Competencies



Note. This figure identifies the four IPEC core competencies. While these refer to interprofessional practice, the four competencies are stressed in interprofessional education and are directly relevant to interprofessional health research. From "Core competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice: 2016 Update", by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative, 2016, p. 9.

## QUOTES FROM RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS

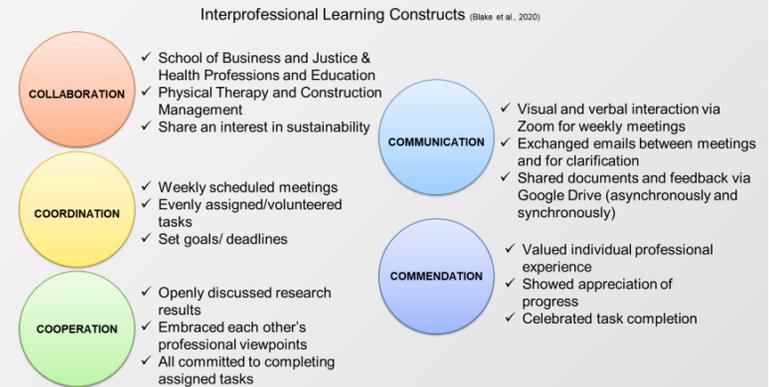
"I would not have been able to complete a project of this nature on my own. My knowledge of the topic and how to work with faculty outside my profession has grown tremendously over the past year and half." S.M.

"We have meshed so well together with each team member taking on a role to help the group perform at its best. Each member of the team brings different strengths and we have been able to monopolize on this with all aspects of the project." D.E.

"I'm so grateful that I was introduced to these colleagues. I enjoy the level of collaborative professionalism, but also the ability to share a story and a laugh. It feels like not only have I gained great research partners but friends as well." A.C.

## CASE DESCRIPTION

**Figure 2**  
WHIRL Constructs



## DISCUSSION

A focus on interprofessional education and collaboration at educational institutions should be encouraged through collaborative educational and research opportunities (IPEC, 2016). These collaborations are increasingly needed in integrative health research. Developing such partnerships promotes the importance of interprofessional collaboration amongst new graduates and helps to break down professional silos (IPEC, 2016). This poster provides an excellent example of a productive interprofessional research collaboration among physical therapy and construction management faculty.

The IPEC (2016) core competencies of shared values and respect, communication, and team dynamics were prominent during the research process. Following the Interprofessional Learning constructs found in the WHIRL research by Blake et al. (2020), the team demonstrated collaboration, coordination, cooperation, communication, and commendation during each step of the research process.

Further research on this topic is needed, including best practices for promoting successful integrative and interprofessional research, ways to objectively measure research outcomes of such teams, experiences of research teams composed of other professions, and qualitative research that identifies barriers such teams encounter. Educators and researchers should consider embodying the IPEC and WHIRL constructs when developing curricula and conducting research. Collaborations should include members of multiple diverse professions to meet the complex needs of health care and society. The partnership between construction management and physical therapy is an example of a unique research collaboration of diverse disciplines.

## REFERENCES

References available on the next slide virtually or by paper in-person

## Interprofessional Collaboration in Integrative Health Research: A Case Report

Audrey Cross, MS, LEED Green Assoc., Samantha Marocco, PT, DPT, MS, GCS Emeritus, & Deanna Errico, PT, DPT, ATC  
Utica University, Utica, New York

### REFERENCES

Alberto, J. & Herth, K. (2009). Interprofessional collaboration within faculty roles: Teaching, service, and research. *OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*, 14(2), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.3912/ojin.vol14no02ppt02>

Bietz, M. J., Abrams, S., Cooper, D., Stevens, K. R., Puga, F., Patel, D., Olson, G. M., & Olson, J. S. (2012). Improving the odds through the Collaboration Success Wizard. *Translational Behavioral Medicine*, 2(4), 480-486. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13142-012-0174-z>

Blake, H., Somerset, S., Whittingham, K., Middleton, M., Yildirim, M., & Evans, C. (2020). WHIRL Study: Workplace Health Interprofessional Learning in the construction industry. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(18), 6815. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186815>

Interprofessional Education Collaborative. (2016). *Core competencies for interprofessional collaborative practice: 2016 update*. Washington, DC: Interprofessional Education Collaborative.

Hall, K. L., Stokols, D., Moser, R., Taylor, B., Thronquist, M. D., Nebeling, L. C., Ehret, C. C., Barnett, M., McTiernan, A., Berger, N. A., Goran, M. I., & Jeffery, R. W. (2008). The collaboration readiness of transdisciplinary research teams and centers: Findings from the National Cancer Institute's TREC Year-One Evaluation Study. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 35(2), S161-S172. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2008.03.035>

Tigges, B. B., Miller, D., Dudding, K. M., Balls-Berry, J. E., Borawski, E. A., Dave, G., Hafer, N. S., Kimminau, K. S., Kost, R. G., Littlefield, K., Shannon, J., Menon, U., & The Measures of Collaboration Workgroup of the Collaboration and Engagement Domain Task Force. (2019). Measuring quality and outcomes of research collaborations: An integrative review. *Journal of Clinical and Translational Science*, 3(5), 261-289. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cts.2019.402>

## **Interprofessional Collaboration in Integrative Health Research: A Case Report**

**Audrey Cross, MS, LEED Green Assoc., Samantha Marocco, PT, DPT, MS, GCS Emeritus, & Deanna Errico, PT, DPT, ATC**

*Utica University, Utica, New York*

### **CONTACT INFO**

Authors can be contacted for questions at the following:

**Audrey Cross, 12'G, MS, LEED Green Associate  
Professor of Practice, Construction Management  
Thurston Hall, 101C  
School of Business & Justice  
amcross@utica.edu**

**Deanna Errico, PT, DPT, ATC  
Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy  
Post Professional transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy Program  
dmerrico@utica.edu**

**Samantha Marocco, PT, DPT, MS, GCS Emeritus  
Assistant Professor of Physical Therapy  
Post Professional transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy Program  
samarocco@utica.edu**