

Exploring IP competencies in the Rural Context

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Rural health care settings must respond to unique challenges related to geography and limited financial and human resources. These limitations affect not only health care practice but also the situational learning experiences of health care learners in these rural settings. Consequently, it is expected that Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Care (IPE & IPC) would also have special features in a rural health context. A greater understanding of IPE & IPC in a rural context is required in order to develop a model and tools to support interprofessional learning and care in rural and remote communities. Through qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the project “Experiencing Rural Interprofessional Collaboration” (ERIC) examined the perceptions of preceptors in northern Ontario to validate the elements of rural IPC and discover what learners are experiencing and/or needs to be taught about rural IPC elements. Models proposed in the IPC literature provided the basis for thematic analysis. Survey responses were cross referenced with other identified elements discussed in a rural team literature review. Findings resulted in rural preceptors identifying competencies exclusive to rural practice. A model for rural IPC and IPE will be discussed in addition to the various available opportunities for health care learners to develop these competencies.