

## **Interprofessional Collaboration on an Internal Medicine Ward: Role Perceptions and Expectations among Nurses and Residents**

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**BACKGROUND:** Effective interprofessional collaboration requires that team members share a common perception of each other's roles.

**PURPOSE:** Describe and compare residents' and nurses' perceptions and expectations of each other's professional roles in the context of an Internal Medicine ward.

**METHODOLOGY:** Study participants were volunteer residents (14) and nurses (14) from the Division of General Internal Medicine at the University Hospitals of Geneva.

We conducted individual semi-structured interviews to determine participants' perceptions of each other's professional roles. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, coded and analyzed using grounded theory and thematic analysis.

Additionally, participants completed a questionnaire containing 11 clinical scenarios for which they had to choose their own intended actions and the expected actions of the other professional, out of a list of 6 proposed actions. Correlation (Spearman) was computed between intended and expected action choices of residents and nurses.

**RESULTS:** Interviews: Nurses and residents shared a common overall representation of their roles and of teamwork. However, there were discrepancies in perceptions of professional interdependence and regarding nurse participation in decision making. Concerning unmet expectations, nurses expected residents to listen more to them and residents expected nurses to be more proactive in the decision-making process. All aspired knowing more about each other's profession.

Questionnaire (Table 1): The overall correlation of action choices between nurses and residents was 0.68 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Correlation between residents' expectations and nurses' intended actions was 0.56 ( $p = 0.08$ ), while correlation between nurses' expectations and residents' intended actions was 0.80 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Nurses' intended actions did not meet residents' expectations mainly regarding decision-making autonomy.

**CONCLUSION:** There was a lack of shared understanding and expectations about certain aspects of nurses' and residents' roles. Such discrepancies may influence the quality of collaboration between residents and nurses and thus affect patient management. Interprofessional training should foster a shared vision of interprofessional collaboration and understanding of each other's roles.

**Table 1. Number of occurrences of action choices across 11 different paper cases**

| <b>Cases type I (N=6) : actions intended by nurses and expected by residents</b> |                                  |                               |                     |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Action choices</b>  | <b>Expected by residents (N)</b> | <b>Intended by nurses (N)</b> | <b>Correlation*</b> |
| 1. call emergency team   | 0                                | 1                             | -                   |
| 2. call resident   | 55                               | 46                            | 0.74                |
| 3. call chief resident   | 1                                | 1                             | -                   |
| 4. call head nurse   | 18                               | 13                            | 1.00                |
| 5. wait for next round   | 27                               | 20                            | 0.50                |
| 6. manage by oneself   | 30                               | 53                            | 0.36                |
| <b>Overall</b>   |                                  |                               | <b>0.56</b>         |

  

| <b>Cases type II (N=5) : actions intended by residents and expected by nurses</b> |                                  |                               |                     |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Action choices</b>   | <b>Intended by residents (N)</b> | <b>Expected by nurses (N)</b> | <b>Correlation*</b> |
| 1. call a colleague   | 1                                | 4                             | -                   |
| 2. call chief resident  | 30                               | 38                            | 0.82                |
| 3. call emergency team  | 16                               | 12                            | 1.00                |
| 4. contact family   | 5                                | 1                             | 0.50                |
| 5. call a specialist  | 12                               | 12                            | 0.95                |
| 6. manage by oneself  | 28                               | 20                            | 0.67                |
| <b>Overall</b>  |                                  |                               | <b>0.80</b>         |

\*Spearman's rho across cases