



INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND COLLABORATION

The direction of healthcare in the United States and abroad is evolving with increased emphasis on preventive services and care. Additionally, a paradigm shift is occurring, moving towards an interprofessional model of care that demonstrates improved patient outcomes. This shift has caused educational and healthcare institutions to alter their cultural climate, and address the issue of interdisciplinary team based care. However, this interprofessional model needs to be introduced and integrated throughout the educational system when health care profession students begin their education. The World Health Organization (WHO) definition states, “interprofessional education occurs when students from two or more professions learn about, from, and with each other” (WHO, 2010). The Institute of Medicine’s report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health* (Institute of Medicine, 2011) also addressed that nursing education needs to include interprofessional models and introduce the concept of interdisciplinary teams.

The Organization for Associate Degree Nursing supports interprofessional education and has been a member of the Institute of Medicine’s Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education since its inception. Health care profession education has traditionally occurred in a silo approach with limited exposure to other disciplines. However, many community colleges have demonstrated the ability to educate health care professionals collaboratively. Currently, almost half of all undergraduate students in the US are enrolled in a public two -year college that is often considered the gateway to higher education for students.. For example, 54% of the nursing workforce begins their education through a community college program. The growing popularity of community colleges for education represents an opportunity for introducing interprofessional education (IPE) to students, health workers, and health professionals. Community colleges are engaging in different types of the IPE and OADN is extremely interested in facilitating IPE and disseminating this information.

As a result of the global IPE initiative, OADN is launching an initiative to provide practical information in educating your students on oral health. As nurses we are very aware of the oral-systemic link, and yet many nurses do not have a strong current knowledge base in this area. Sharing the expertise of fellow dental professionals would be a huge asset in increasing the knowledge level of students and ultimately helping patients.



OADN is fortunate to be able have a resident dental expert to assist us with dissemination of information in our new website column: "Nursing Bites for Oral Health." Dr. Mitchell will provide brief practical information you can use in educating your students.

Dr. Jan Mitchell, DDS, MEd is an Associate Professor in Oral Rehabilitation at the Dental College of Georgia in Augusta, where she has been inducted into the Georgia Health Sciences Academy of Educators. She is a graduate of Emory University School of Dentistry.

She completed a two year Comprehensive Dentistry Residency in the US Navy, twice receiving their Award for Clinical Excellence. She served on active duty for 26 years, including assignments overseas, on ships, and in teaching programs. She is certified as a Master by the Academy of General Dentistry and is a diplomat of both the Federal Services Board of General Dentistry and the American Board of Operative Dentistry, which she has also served as President. Dr. Mitchell lectures nationally on many topics, including new concepts in caries and dental materials, as well as on innovative teaching techniques.