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## WVSOM hosts interprofessional education event



The place: a large stadium-style classroom. At the bottom front, a slender man in a hospital gown sits atop an examination table. He is the focus of attention for WVSOM third-year medical students and visiting nursing and pharmacy students from the University of Charleston. In this exercise two different teams composed of medical, nursing and pharmacy students will play their roles, examining the patient, taking vitals, taking a history then returning with their differential diagnosis. In another room, a second interprofessional team awaits their turn.

Observing this exercise are faculty members from each participating program. While the first student team takes a break to confer, each faculty offers an assessment of the examination to the remaining students.

"Once needle marks had been identified on the patient's arm and he had admitted to previous heroin use, I would have requested the patient remove his socks, so I could examine his feet," remarked Karen Hoschar, MSN, RN, an assistant professor at UC's Bert Bradford School of Health Sciences. "This is doubly important because the patient revealed he is diabetic. The condition of his feet may be an indicator of how he is or isn't managing his disease."

The students take notes.

"Based on the information the patient provided, the pharmacist would ask 'Tell me how you've been taking your insulin – when and how often?'" added David G. Bowyer, R.Ph., Interim Chair of Pharmacy Practice and Director of Experiential Education at the UC School of Pharmacy.

"Look in the patient's mouth," remarks Earl Bundy, D.O., Assistant Dean of WVSOM's Statewide Campus South East Region. "See if he has lesions which might indicate a compromised immune system."

In just a few moments, the students return with their assessment. The patient is suffering from multiple conditions including congestive heart failure, poorly-controlled diabetes and IV drug use.

"This process is about the team making the decision. Everyone needs to provide input to ensure the patient is

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receiving the best care," summed up Steven Halm, D.O., Medical Director of WVSOM's Clinical Evaluation Center (CEC).

Upon completion of the Clinical Case Exercise, the students continued to their next activity involving mannequin simulation and Standardized Patient (SP) simulation exercises. The day wrapped with a debrief meeting. Participants were asked to evaluate key takeaways from the interprofessional training.

"Knowing you're not by yourself in looking after the patient – the knowledge that you have resources and support is important," contributed one student.

"There's a huge responsibility in knowing other health care providers are looking to you for answers, so you'd better come prepared. This gives you the confidence to speak up," added another.

"It's great to see the respect between different disciplines and see them working together toward a common goal," contributed WVSOM health educator, Lisa Seldomridge.

A growing body of research indicates that shared learning experiences across different disciplines can improve patient health outcomes. Leading authorities have identified interprofessional education as an effective way to improve treatment, including the World Health Organization, the Institute of Medicine, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation.

"WVSOM is committed to providing interprofessional education to our students," stated Stephanie Schuler, Executive Director of the CEC. "In fact, the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) is one of the founding organizations of the Interprofessional Education Collaborative which is committed to integrating and coordinating the education of physicians, nurses, dentists, pharmacists and other members of a patient's health care network to provide improved care."

The day-long event was one of multiple planned trainings at WVSOM which bring care providers together to build teamwork and trust, underscoring the new ways in which healthcare is evolving in the 21st century.