

Emma's Blog

A Student's Perspective of Interprofessional Education (IPE)

Emma Lightbody; Queen Mary, University of London
Dr Danè Goodsmán & Ellie Moe; Strategic Alliance of City University and Queen Mary, University of London



Emma with her flatmates, fellow medical students

Introduction

Interprofessional education/training (IPE):

"Those occasions when two or more professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care."

Freeth *et al* (2005).

The Project

In our project, which this poster represents, we aim to start to consider some of the key questions relating to IPE, as set out below. However, this will not be from the standpoint of the usual stakeholders such as; DoH, NHS, medicine, nursing and other healthcare professionals – but from the direct perspective of an individual student's lived experiences.

Key questions:

- What are the aims of IPE and how will they be achieved?
- Does IPE make a positive contribution to healthcare training and, ultimately, to the welfare of patients?
- Does IPE really hold the key to team building amongst healthcare professionals?
- What are the challenges facing integration of IPE into healthcare curricular?

The title: "Emma's Blog; a student's perspective of IPE", will be the running title of a diary (Blog) posted on the IPE Web-pages at City University, London. It is intended that the Blog will run for the duration of medical student, Emma Lightbody's, five-year MBBS course. Emma will update it on a monthly basis (the content will be monitored by the IPE Office). The project is therefore able to offer not only a unique, but also a longitudinal insight into IPE as an educational activity.

Why Emma?

As a medical student Emma has been involved directly with IPE from the start of her curriculum. She is therefore able to consider and discuss the important questions surrounding IPE from the perspective of a healthcare student generally and a neophyte medic specifically.

A Case Study – the case for our research project

We are using, for this piece of research, a naturalistic enquiry methodology, using Emma's Blog as the specific focus to bound our 'case-study'. Simons (1980:93), referencing Kemmis in; *Towards a Science of the Singular*, notes that he argues for a new perspective on case-study – one in which justification is derived not from logical or theoretical forms but from the nature of the phenomena studied in their social context, i.e. within the context itself. In our work we have taken this to mean the student's 'lived experiences' ergo, Emma's Blog. We will not be looking at the questions posted in terms of themes for Emma to explore as she writes, but will use her narrative to consider these notions, and their relevance, as the body of data builds up. The longitudinal nature of the Blog will, we believe, offer opportunities to triangulate theories and enable them to contribute to the wider debates surrounding IPE. We also take Kemmis' notion (1980:101 op cit) that like all science we are in the process (business) of truth seeking and that this case study will be 'judged by reference to a world accessible to the experience of any observer'. We are also taking as our guide, in thinking about research and its process, a key theme from Reason and Rowan's (1981:ix) 'new paradigm research', where they consider how we might 'make sense of human action and experience'. Emma's Blog, necessarily, from this perspective, becomes a dynamic record of her experiences – all of which are open to examination. We are also additionally advantaged in that Emma herself will be able to contribute to the process, not only in terms of generating the data but also in giving her view on what her experiences have meant to her. Roberts (2002, citing Josselson 1995:31), states 'Narrative analysis, it has been argued, is an alternative to the traditional 'scientific' understanding of the individual as 'abstracted' out of his or her context, rather than as part of it.' We believe that ability to look at Emma's Blog from a simultaneous insider/outsider viewpoint, will give an interesting perspective on the elements of 'objectivity and subjectivity' – key 'pinch-points' for research in general, and social research in particular.

The Blog



Emma with her flatmates, fellow medical students

"SAMDA (Student Assisted Medical and Dental Applications) aims to mentor students in local schools who are aiming to apply to medical school for 2007 entry. I have been attached to a local school and will be mentoring a student the whole way through the process."



"Through my involvement in the Academic Medicine Society, I was offered the opportunity to attend a Cancer Research conference. This included presentations about recent scientific and clinical advancements in the field, which in the future may dictate treatment protocol."

"As one of my Student Selected Modules I participated in a two week course on Clinical Hypnosis."

"I am regularly spending time with my GP tutor based in Stratford. This is a great opportunity to see primary care in action, and to make contact with other health care professionals. I have met and observed practice nurses, dieticians, health visitors and physiotherapists which is fantastic as it allows me to develop an overview of how all of these different services come together to impact on patient outcome."

"In the most recent Neurosurgery clinic that I observed, a student Nurse was also observing and it was interesting chatting to him about his experiences of observing medical practice and the differences between our courses, as he is also in his first year."

"The Teddybear Hospital clinic that I participate in is an incredibly rewarding way to spend half a day. The children are fantastic and I enjoy the challenge of chatting to them and answering their questions. It is really good to see local schools taking an interest in getting involved in health promotion issues and linking up with the medical school."

"I was delighted to undertake the position of the 1st year Emergency Medicine Society Rep. This is a new society and organises presentations by A&E and HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service) consultants, in addition to practical sessions teaching skills such as suturing. I have a special interest in Emergency Medicine so this was an ideal opportunity to become involved."



What is a Blog?

Blog is short for weblog. A weblog is an online journal (or newsletter) that is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption. Blogs generally represent the personality of the author or the Web site.
(www.bytowninternet.com/glossary)

Who is Emma?



My name is Emma Lightbody, I'm 23 years old and a first year medical student at Barts and the London Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry. I grew up and went to school in West Yorkshire before heading to the University of Durham (Collingwood College) to study for my first degree in Biology. In between my degrees I lived and worked in North Yorkshire for almost a year, which provided a great contrast to the

busting city living in the East End of London. I am passionate about all aspects of medicine but have particular interests in pre-hospital care, accident and emergency and neurosurgery. I enjoy going to the theatre especially in London's West End. I also involve myself in activities such as the Teddybear Hospital, SAMDA (Student Assisted Medical and Dental Applications), the TRAUMA Conference Committee and the Emergency Medicine & Surgical Societies here at Barts and the London.

IPE Experience to date:

Generally, all of the teaching sessions I attend are specifically for medics, and socially I interact primarily with medics. This is mainly because of the fact that the medics and dentists have a separate student's association from Queen Mary University of London. We had an interprofessional education session in the first term, in which we carried out a Problem Based Learning exercise with people training to be doctors, nurses and radiographers. It was an interesting mixture of lectures about MRSA and input from patients affected by MRSA, as well as the group learning sessions. Involving the patients in the teaching sessions was an excellent idea as it allows people to immediately see the importance of the information being discussed in relation to an individual person. We worked in groups of approximately fifteen people to discuss the topical issue of MRSA. It was fantastic to integrate with other students who were training to be healthcare professionals. It was interesting to have the opportunity to hear about their courses and how they differ from medicine. It also gave me a better understanding of how we might all work together in the future.

I am enjoying having the opportunity to interact with so many different healthcare professionals, and although we didn't have a specific interprofessional education course during the second term it is really easy to achieve for those that have the drive to seek it out. Even in our Problem Based Learning groups this term I have had a range of tutors from a medical sociologist to a professor of primary healthcare. I think that it is really advantageous to be interacting with so many different people so early on in my medical training as in the future I will be better able to understand their aims, concerns and priorities in a medical situation which might be very different but equally important to my own.

References:

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