



CANADIAN INTERPROFESSIONAL HEALTH COLLABORATIVE NATIONAL COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Competency #6 *Interprofessional Conflict Resolution*

INTERPROFESSIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

What is it?

Interprofessional Conflict Resolution occurs when health providers/students work as a team that actively engages in addressing disagreements and responds effectively to all types of conflict.

How does it work?

To support interprofessional practice, health providers/students address conflict by:

- Interacting in a positive and constructive manner.
- Valuing that a conflict situation always has the potential for a positive outcome.

Identification

To support interprofessional practice, health providers need to identify situations that could lead to conflict. These situations include role ambiguity, role overload, interaction with persons in different leadership positions and any goal differences that may occur.

Within this identification, there is an understanding that there are different philosophies, including personal and spiritual beliefs, lived experiences, as well as different areas of expertise, which lead to different approaches to care.

Strategies

Strategies that help in responding to conflict include:

- Establishing a safe environment where different opinions can be shared.
- Developing consensus amongst the differing views.
- Ensuring that all members feel that they have been heard.
- Using the term “Conflict Positive” to demonstrate that differences in opinion are part of healthy and constructive interaction. This term refers to the potential positive outcome of a conflict.

Differing Views and Triggers

Disagreements occur in both real and perceived situations where there are differing views. It is essential to identify those issues and situations that trigger conflict. Examples of those triggers include different views on: treatment approaches, questions of who provides consent, diagnosis, input from people, and goals and discharge plans.

Interprofessional Conflict Resolution In Action

For example, a person in a leadership role consistently belittles other people in team meetings. Consequently, other people on the team are very reluctant to attend the meetings and do not want to have any interaction with the person in the leadership role at all. The leader's habits are so ingrained that a direct conversation with an administrator does not produce constructive results. The administrator decides to talk to the team members, and then come back to the leader with some concrete examples of what is causing the conflict in meetings and how it can be resolved. After this the team is brought together to establish ground rules of conversation and engagement. The result is a more functional and productive team that still respects the leader's role within the team.

Outcome

By accepting responsibility in responding to disagreements, or potential conflicts, health providers/students create an environment of healthy collaboration. By applying effective principals of conflict resolution, the potential for a positive outcome is greatly increased.

For more information see page 17 of the CIHC National Interprofessional Competency Framework at www.cihc.ca/files/CIHC_IPCompetencies_Feb1210.pdf



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