

ACCP POSITION STATEMENT

Interprofessional Education and Practice

American College of Clinical Pharmacy

Key Words: interprofessional education, clinical pharmacy, multidisciplinary approach.

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The American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP) supports the principle that contemporary health professions education and practice should be restructured to engender comprehensive interprofessional learning and skills development, understanding of respective disciplinary roles, and mutual respect among students, residents, faculty, and practitioners.

ACCP advocates reform of systems of federal and state financial support for all health professions education and health services delivery programs such that a comprehensive and sustained commitment to interprofessional learning and patient care would be a requirement for receipt of funds.

ACCP supports the rigorous enforcement of accreditation standards for pharmacy professional degree programs that ensure a comprehensive and sustained commitment to interprofessional education and practice by faculty, preceptors, residents, and students.

ACCP supports the principle that the establishment of new schools of pharmacy should occur only within academic institutions that formally promote and facilitate meaningful and effective interprofessional education and practice. ACCP believes this is most likely to occur either within academic health centers as defined by the Association of Academic Health Centers or within universities having, at a minimum, an allopathic or osteopathic medical school and at least one other health professions education program as defined under Title VII or Title VIII of the United States Public Health Service Act.

Background

With the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases, advancements in health care technology, and growing complexity of health care delivery, the need for coordination and integration of clinical care through a multidisciplinary approach has become essential. To address this issue, the Institute of Medicine has called for a redesign of the health professions education process to provide health care professionals, both in the academic setting and in practice, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to work effectively in a multidisciplinary environment.¹ Such programmatic redesign will require a substantive and sustained commitment to the implementation of interprofessional education across the full spectrum of major health care disciplines.

Pharmacists play a critical role not only in the provision of patient care within multidisciplinary teams, but also in the delivery of interprofessional education. Most national pharmacy organizations have endorsed interprofessional education, and several have articulated specific policies and/or initiatives supporting interprofessional education. Nevertheless, interprofessional education has not yet been implemented effectively or consistently; moreover, the inability to effectively deliver interprofessional education in the classroom and clinic has been correlated with a decrease in the quality of patient care provided.² In addition, the incorporation of interprofessional patient care into daily practice has been compromised by growing workforce shortages within several key health professions.

This position statement has been formulated by ACCP in conjunction with a companion ACCP white paper that addresses key issues in interdisciplinary education, including terminology, levels of evidence, environment-specific models,

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assessment methods, funding sources, and other important implications and barriers as they apply to interprofessional education and clinical pharmacy.² The white paper also reviews current instruments that have been tested and validated in the assessment of interprofessional education, including the Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale, the Interdisciplinary Education Perception Scale, and the Attitudes Toward Health Care Teams Scale. Strategies are recommended that ACCP will consider in fostering the promotion and implementation of interprofessional education both within and outside the pharmacy profession.

With the publication of both the white paper and this position statement, the ACCP Board of

Regents commits itself to a serious and sustained effort within pharmacy to promote and lead the needed transition to a more effective framework for interprofessional education and practice that will meet the needs of patients and the health care system in the coming decades.

References

1. Institute of Medicine, Committee on the Health Professions Education Summit. Health professions education: a bridge to quality. Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2003.
2. Page RL, Hume AL, Trujillo JM, et al. Interprofessional education: principles and application. A framework for clinical pharmacy. *Pharmacotherapy* 2009;29(7):879. Available from <http://www.accp.com/docs/positions/whitePapers/InterProfEduc.pdf>.