

## KNN School Spotlight

### Interprofessional Education (IPE) Program Brings Together Students from Two or More Health and Social Programs to Learn

The MCW Kern Institute for the Transformation of Medical Education's interprofessional education (IPE) program brings together students from two or more health and social care professions to learn with, from, and about each other in preparation for collaborative practice in medicine. Traditionally, IPE activities at MCW focused on knowledge acquisition rather than interpersonal interactions and team dynamics. This meant students did not get an experience that mirrored working environments in medicine.



To create the collaborative IPE program the Kern Institute sponsors today, Erica Chou, MD, developed a core IPE thread and formed partnerships within MCW and with Marquette University, Concordia University Wisconsin, Milwaukee School of Engineering, Columbia College of Nursing/Alverno College, and Gateway Technical College. The expanded IPE program brings together medical, nursing, paramedic, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology, social work, pharmacy, and dentistry students. These interprofessional students are placed in teams to learn with and from each other over a two-year period to develop familiarity and trust as they progress through their respective educational programs.

Throughout this thread, delivered in four sessions over four semesters, students develop skills in each of the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) competencies with caring and character at the heart of each competency. In the "Interprofessional Communication" session, students begin by listening to understand and considering different perspectives. In "Values and Ethics," students explore psychological safety and are challenged to be brave and to speak up, while also utilizing tools of conflict resolution. In "Roles and Responsibilities," students focus on humbly recognizing one's own limitations, respecting the expertise of others, and understanding the interconnectedness of the team. Last, in "Teams and Teamwork," students are tasked with using an interprofessional approach to team problem-solving on simulated patient cases.



As the MCW Kern Institute IPE work grows, their vision is to build on the successful transformation of the classroom-based IPE curriculum at MCW and partner schools by developing meaningful student roles on interprofessional teams in the clinical learning environment. These intelligent and enthusiastic learners, armed with their developing team skills, will add value for patients, healthcare teams, and our communities. While the pandemic keeps us physically apart, it has driven us to innovate. Novel ideas like the Test Kitchen will continue long after the pandemic ends, and the IPE activities developed during the pandemic will create a more versatile and resilient healthcare workforce.

