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Title: A safe space for inter-professional faculty development

Abstract:

#### Background

Faculty Development (FD) utilizing inter-professional small groups is uncommon. At the University of British Columbia, we implemented a longitudinal FD program where faculty from various health professions taught and learned from each other in facilitated small groups. We sought to understand how the inter-professional setting impacts teaching and learning in faculty development.

#### Summary of work

Two cohorts of five participants each, met for six, 90-minute sessions over one year. All sessions were moderated by a FD lead who also modeled the first session on 'feedback'. Subsequently, each participant developed and delivered a session on a key educational topic using interactive methods. Participants provided structured feedback; dialogue and reflection was encouraged.

Interviews were conducted with three participants and two cohort leaders. Preliminary content analysis was conducted by two of the authors by coding the transcripts and identifying themes.

#### Summary of results

Participants felt safe to share their experiences when focusing on educational topics and shared their perspectives more freely among other professionals versus with their own professional groups. They began to appreciate commonalities and variations in how health professions applied educational principles. While lesson planning, they considered their lack of knowledge about others' perspectives, resulting in a fresh approach to the topics. Over time, the feedback and discussions became more robust, and participants incorporated the observed strategies.

#### Discussion

Inter-professional FD in small groups may have fostered learning and engagement in an environment which was perceived as safe through a focus on educational topics and the longitudinal structure.

#### Conclusions

FD with active participation of inter-professional faculty in a secure environment within small groups may promote a deeper understanding of the way other people teach and enhances the feedback process.

#### Take-home message

Creating non-threatening environments for inter-professional faculty to learn and teach together may have a positive impact on learning teaching skills.

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