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Using online communities to develop IPE in practice.

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USING ONLINE COMMUNITIES TO DEVELOP IPE IN PRACTICELesley Diack¹, Sundari Joseph¹, Morag McFadyen¹, Jenni Haxton²¹School of Pharmacy and Life Sciences, Robert Gordon University, ²NHS Grampian

Objective: Interprofessional education has been perceived as problematic to teach due to the logistics with large groups of students. In Aberdeen the two universities Robert Gordon University and University of Aberdeen decided to develop an online module, combining face-to-face practice experience with computer-mediated discussion in interprofessional groups.

The students interact in groups of 30 to complete tasks depending on the year and course of study. These groups have the ability to stay together for the duration of their courses capitalising on informal and serendipitous learning which are evidenced as achieving interprofessional learning outcomes. Virtual learning communities have been created allowing informal learning to occur out with traditional study time.

Method: The tracking tools in the Virtual learning environment, Moodle have been used to analyse the interaction online.

These tools are can be interrogated in a number of ways including pages viewed, forum posts, times, dates, location and length online.

The modules were constructed as blended learning with interprofessional events and placement experience with all elements anchored in face to face interactions and supported by online discussion and resources.

Results: and Discussion 3000 students are attached to IPE Buddy Groups which are online discussion forums. Since 2009 there have been 46640 views of the forums, with 1187 replies to forum postings and 171 new discussions instigated by the students.

These results are not unusual in online learning and there will be discussion of results, analysis of postings and future plans given at the conference.

Conclusion: The students in these virtual communities are discussing current issues with others interprofessionally and developing their own practice. Using the educational tool of a Network of Practice, structured and facilitated by elearning and academic staff.

This has meant a greater degree of engagement and deeper awareness of health professional roles related to patient centred issues.