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# Pharmacy and medical student interprofessional education placement week.

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SEE TERMS OF USE IN BOX ABOVE

## 1 Pharmacy and medical student interprofessional education

2 placement week

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## **Authors' contributions**

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<u>Dr Tesnime Jebara</u> meets conditions 1, 2, 3 and 4. She led the collection 24 25 and analysis of data in addition to the write-up of the manuscript and approving it for publication. She agrees to be accountable for all aspects of 26 the work. 27 28 Ian Thomas meets conditions 1, 3 and 4. He led the conception and 29 planning of the project and was involved in approving the manuscript for 30 publication. He also agrees to be accountable for all aspects of the work. 31 32 <u>Prof Scott Cunningham</u> meets conditions 1, 2, 3 and 4. He led the collection 33 and analysis of data and was involved in drafting the manuscript as well as 34 approving it for publication. He also agrees to be accountable for all aspects 35 of the work. 36 37 Gordon F Rushworth meets conditions 1, 2, 3 and 4. He led the conception 38 and planning of the project and was involved in the interpretation of data, 39 the write-up of the manuscript and submission for publication. He also 40 41 agrees to be accountable for all aspects of the work. 42

44 Pharmacy and medical student interprofessional education

45 placement week

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47 **Abstract** 

Background: Developing collaborative practice through interprofessional
education activities (IPE) in undergraduate healthcare curricula is advocated
by the World Health Organisation and the regulatory bodies for Medicine
and Pharmacy within the UK.

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Approach: Our local faculty, comprising educators from within the Highland
Pharmacy Education & Research Centre (HPERC) and Highland Medical
Education Centre (HMEC) developed a five-day IPE placement for pharmacy
and medical students on clinical placement within NHS Highland.

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**Evaluation:** We collected qualitative evaluation data using face-to-face 58 focus group discussions with five pharmacy and four medical students 59 (January 2020 cohort). Three key categories and multiple themes within 60 61 each category were identified from participant narratives. Category 1: 62 overall perception of experience - (themes: better than previous IPE experience; greater exposure to clinical pharmacy). Category 2: student 63 interactions – (themes: learning with a buddy; understanding of 64 65 interprofessional roles). Category 3: suggestions for improvement -(themes: choice of relevant clinical rotation and content; increase learning 66 from clinical pharmacists; better orientation to placement). Overall, 67 students valued their participation during this week and reported many 68

benefits of learning with students from another profession. Students also highlighted suggestions to improve their learning experience. **Implications:** This evaluation has indicated students' support for embedding interprofessional placements into their curricula. Clinical educators should consider designing similar placements, while further work should focus on inclusion of higher student numbers and look to include a range of professions and practice settings. **Keywords:** Interprofessional education, multidisciplinary communication, pharmacy education, medical education Competing Interests: None to declare Funding: This study was funded by the Highland Pharmacy Education & Research Centre 

## **Background**

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There is global interest in interprofessional education (IPE) to ensure 88 collaborative and harmonious patient care delivery. According to Fransworth 89 et al, IPE first emerged in the United States and United Kingdom in the 90 1960s-1970s but gained more popularity following the publication of two 91 World Health Organisation reports; Continuing Education for Physicians<sup>2</sup> and 92 Learning Together to Work Together for Health<sup>3</sup>. 93 94 The Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education (CAIPE) 95 defines interprofessional education as "occasions when two or more 96 97 professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care".4 Preparing students for collaborative practice is 98 taking on ever-increasing importance in undergraduate healthcare 99 education. It gives students from different healthcare backgrounds the 100 chance to learn together to better prepare them for working in 101 multidisciplinary teams upon graduation. Regulators are calling for more 102 interprofessional learning opportunities during undergraduate curricula.5, 6 103 104 105 Many countries across the world have taken steps to embed interprofessional placements into their curricula such as in the United 106 States<sup>7-9</sup>, Australia<sup>10</sup>, UK<sup>11</sup>, Canada<sup>12</sup>, and The Netherlands<sup>13</sup>. Literature 107 highlights many benefits of IPE including; understanding roles,<sup>7</sup> readiness 108 for teamworking, 10 and taking a more active role in delivering care 13. 109

111 While local MBChB and MPharm courses contain elements of IPE, these are limited to non-clinical settings and there is no current opportunity for IPE 112 113 clinical placements of a sizable duration. 114 In this article, we aim to describe and present an initial evaluation of an IPE 115 experiential learning clinical placement for pharmacy and medical students. 116 117 **Approach** 118 We designed a week-long placement within an existing 4th year MBChB 119 placement block (cardiovascular, clinical pharmacology, vascular surgery, 120 121 and respiratory block) in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness. There was no selection process for medical students as they were already due to be on 122 placement. However, we invited all 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year pharmacy students to 123 apply to attend, then convened a panel to review the applications. We 124 selected the top ranked pharmacy students and allocated placement dates 125 in order of student preference. 126 127 At the start of the placement, we introduced the medical and pharmacy 128 129 students to each other then buddied them into pairs. The placement coordinator then discussed the learning objectives (see box 1), timetabled 130 activities, assessments, and answered any questions. 131

[Insert Box 1]

132

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During the week, the students were given ample time for clinical experience with opportunity to attend ward rounds, outpatient clinics, investigations, and interventions such as broncoscopy, PCI or vascular surgery (depending on clinical specialty). The IPE week also offered additional clinical learning opportunities such as attending wards with clinical pharmacists.

We delivered a number of tutorials over the course of the week which were attended jointly by the students. The multidisciplinary faculty who taught during the week included physicians, surgeons, and pharmacists. Students were provided with case studies and, within their pairs, were asked to jointly produce a PowerPoint presentation typically focusing on clinical therapeutic management.

The students also completed mini-Clinical Evaluation Exercises (mini-CEX) in their pairings. This was a formative assessment where we observed students taking a clinical history from a patient on a ward setting. The medical student was asked to open the history and explore the presenting complaint, history of presenting complaint and past medical history before the pharmacy student took over to complete the history, including the drug history. At the end of the mini-CEX, we conducted verbal debrief and provided written feedback to each of the students. Learning points were linked back to the learning objectives of the IPE week as well as picking out some of the specific learning points from the individual cases.

Finally, the week culminated in a ward-based immersive simulation, conducted within the Highland Clinical Skills Centre, where the students "acted-up" as qualified junior pharmacists and doctors. Within their pairs, the students were given an orientation to the simulation ward setting, including the equipment, the simulated patient and documentation available as well as the nurse (confederate). We designed the simulation scenario, with defined learning objectives, such that the students were required to work together to get through the simulation. At the end of the scenario, the students were debriefed on their experience by the placement coordinator.

## **Evaluation**

To explore students' views and experiences with the IPE week, we invited all pharmacy and medical students of the January 2020 IPE week cohort to participate in focus groups at the end of their placement.

We applied the Kirkpatrick Four-Level Training Evaluation Model<sup>14</sup> (see box 2) when designing the evaluation so as to objectively determine the impact of training programmes and their effectiveness. The model is based on four levels; reaction, learning, behaviour and results. The current evaluation of the Highland IPE week focused on Levels 1 and 2.

[Insert Box 2]

## Sample and recruitment

Prior to the start of their placement, all medical and pharmacy students who were expected to attend the January 2020 delivery (n=10) were emailed by the placement coordinator inviting them to participate in the focus groups and informing them of their times and locations if they wish to participate.

### Data generation

[Insert Box 3]

We devised a focus group topic guide based on our experience and published literature, and underpinned by the Theoretical Domains

Framework (TDF)<sup>15</sup>. The TDF summarises key elements of 33 theories and proposes that determinants of behaviour cluster into 14 domains. Those domains most relevant (e.g. knowledge, beliefs about capabilities and consequences, motivation and goals, environmental context and resources) were used to guide construction of interview core questions. TJ piloted the questions in an informal educational feedback session on a previous cohort of students and changes / modifications were made. As shown in Box 3, the final set of questions focused on exploring students' views and experiences within the IPE week in general.

We conducted two focus groups to allow for honest reflection within each professional group; one with medical and one with pharmacy students. All focus groups were approximately 60 minutes in duration and were conducted face-to-face in Inverness by a trained researcher (TJ). The focus groups were recorded and transcribed verbatim and checked for accuracy of transcribing prior to analysis.

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209	<u>Data analysis</u>
210	We undertook thematic analysis of the data using the TDF and the interview
211	schedule as thematic guides. Analysis was performed by two research
212	members independently with any disagreements resolved through
213	discussion. In reporting this study, the Consolidated Criteria for Reporting
214	Qualitative Studies (COREQ) was followed.
215	
216	Ethics and governance
217	The evaluation protocol received approval from the ethical review panel of
218	the School of Pharmacy and Life Sciences at Robert Gordon University and
219	adhered to all relevant research governance and ethics policies including the
220	Declaration of Helsinki (1964). Informed consent was collected from all
221	interviewees prior to commencing the focus groups.
222	
223	<u>Results</u>
224	Two 60-minute focus groups were conducted; one with pharmacy $(n=5)$
225	and another with medical $(n=4)$ students. One medical student was unable
226	to attend the focus group due to illness.
227	
228	We identified multiple key themes from participant narratives, which we
229	mapped under three categories. Category 1: overall perception of
230	experience – (themes: better than previous IPE experience; greater
231	exposure to clinical pharmacy). Category 2: student interactions –
232	(themes: learning with a buddy; understanding of interprofessional roles).

Category 3: suggestions for improvement – (themes: choice of relevant clinical rotation and content; increase learning from clinical pharmacists; better orientation to placement). These categories and themes are explored in more detail in Table 1. Overall, students reported that the Highland IPE week was more beneficial when compared to previous IPE events. They believed that this week allowed them to consolidate knowledge gained from their degrees and get exposed to new experiences (such as clinical pharmacy for medical students). Students also reported that, as a pair, they were able to learn better about patient care in general and about each other's profession and are subsequently better prepared for a more collaborative practice in the future. However, they did express a desire to change the clinical area where the placement will be conducted in future, to allow both students to gain the most out of this week. Time spent with clinical pharmacists was highly valued by all students who encouraged embedding more of it in future placements.

### [Insert Table 1]

### **Implications**

Due to coronavirus complications, data were only collected from one cohort (January 2020) thus results should be interpreted with caution.

The IPE placement was well-perceived by students who highlighted its impact on improving their learning experience and providing insight into their future practice. As a result of this evaluation, we have made some

changes to the design of the placement week; in particular, it has been offered to students as part of a long-term conditions block hosted in an older adults unit. There was thought to be plenty of scope for both sets of students to optimise the interprofessional placement learning opportunity within this clinical specialty. Three one-week placements are planned for the coming academic year and all have successfully recruited students.

The authors recommend that other Schools of Pharmacy and Medicine consider co-production of similar IPE placements and then embed these within their curricula in an effort to better prepare students for real-life collaborative practice. Particular attention should be paid to the hosting specialty and how to ensure sufficient patient contact for all students given increased student numbers in clinical areas. We also recommend having a robust plan for the orientation of students arriving on placement. Beyond a geographical orientation of the placement site for all students, faculty should set expectations of how students will communicate and work to help each other through the week, giving examples of how the students could get the most from their placement.

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## **Box 1: The learning objectives for the IPE placement week**

- 1. Demonstrate a deeper understanding of the role of other health care professionals.
- 2. Apply practical experience in the treatment and management of patients with cardiac, respiratory, vascular disease.
- 3. Analyse understanding of the importance of appropriate prescribing, including the practical problems of prescribing, including the use of Personal Formularies.

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# **Box 2: The Kirkpatrick Four-Level Training Evaluation Model**

- Level 1 Reaction; relates to how training was valued by participants and how engaged they were with it.
- Level 2 Learning; relates to the benefits acquired as a result of the training in terms of developed skills, attitudes, knowledge, and confidence.
- Level 3 Behaviour; relates to the extent to which participants apply their training often in real life situations.
- Level 4 Results; relates to the extent to which the training has impacted outcomes relevant to an organisation.

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#### **Box 3: Focus Group Topic Guide**

- Overall, how would you describe your experience?
- What were the positive aspects of this week? Anything you particularly liked?
- What about the negatives?
- Have you been on other placements? How does this one compare? What are the biggest differences then between this placement and other placements that you've been on?
- What are your views of the different activities you were involved in this week?
- Is there anything you would like to be changed (added or removed) to improve your experience during this week?
- How did you get along with your partner?
- Did you feel you learned more/better because you were with them? How, if at all, did working with him or her influence your learning?
- How do you think this experience would impact your future practice? Did you learn anything that you would like to implement in any future placements/career?
- As a result of taking part in this week, do you think you are now more confident to go and talk to other people (other healthcare professionals, patients ...etc.)?
- Do you think the week has changed your understanding of the role of a pharmacist/doctor? In what way?
- Would you recommend this type of teaching as a way of learning?

Table 1: Key themes identified from qualitative evaluation data			
Category	Theme	Definition	Quotes
(1) Overall	Better than	Students noted that it was better than any	"This doesn't even compare to previous IPE that I felt was
perception of	previous IPE	previous IPE experience they had as it was the	completely pointless in the past because we basically just did
experience	experience	first time they were allowed to work alongside	team building exercise and then never saw the people again.
		another healthcare student in a real-life practice.	I think this was better." M3
			"They were just showing us what they do on a day-to-day
			basis Usually when you go on a placement, they will have a
			list of things and it's not probably what they have actually in
			their day-to-day." P3

Greater exposure	Medical students were particularly impressed with	"She was speaking to me about a few different resources
to clinical	clinical pharmacists and how they were able to	and how I could get in contact with a pharmacist if I needed
pharmacy	learn a lot from them.	help prescribing something, and so that was good because I
	The week was also praised by students as it	didn't know those services were available." M4
	allowed them to experience things they would not	
	have exposure to otherwise during their studies.	"Another good bit I thought was the tutorials we did because
		they had more of a pharmacology focus, which we don't
		normally get, but it's still really important." M4
		"We've had a couple of tutorials with the pharmacists [before]
		but nothing like this week. This week has been by far the best
		pharmacology teaching." M1
		"I was able to sit through a surgery and that's something,
		without IPE, I wouldn't have been able to experience, like at
		all." P5
		"We got to see a lot of conversation between the doctors and
		occupational health in terms of managing patients at home
		We have seen a lot of IPE-type [sic interprofessional] things
		going on between referring to different services all over the
		highlands." P3
		"I feel like I probably could tell you a lot more now than what
		I would from what were taught at uni, so as much as I
		understood it then, my understanding is completely
		different." P3
		umerent. F3

(2) Student	Learning with a	Students from both professions enjoyed doing this	"I quite enjoyed having her there, I got on with her, and
interactions	buddy	placement together and reported that, as a result,	when we did a history together, it worked really well." M2
		they were able to learn better.	
			"I learned so much from medical student just like a lot of
		Being paired with a medical student was	terms that came up and then I would then explain the
		considered beneficial to help pharmacy students	pharmacology so we've been able to just kind of do half and
		interact with them without feeling intimidated.	half to get the whole picture." P1
			"I think it's quite healthy to integrate us because in a few
			years we all will be working together, and I think that mixing
			us in early is a good thing to do." M2
			"It was nice being with medical students, because they're
			students as well, there's still stuff that they're learning, so
			talking to them about different things, it didn't feel
			uncomfortable." P3
	Understanding of	The week was also believed to help students	"I chatted with [partner] quite a bit about pharmacy and their
	interprofessional	better understand each other's profession and the	career routes and I learnt more about what they can do we
	roles	different roles they can perform.	don't really cover that otherwise." M4
			"I think it's really nice to have that kind of peer
			environment we've kind of built up a relationship of
			understanding what each other knows and doesn't know, and
			the benefits of discussing things together." P3

(3)	Choice of	Most students were placed in cardiovascular or	"The pharmacists don't get taught anything about vascular
Suggestions	relevant clinical	respiratory wards except for one pair who were	surgery, so I felt kind of sorry for [partner] who I was with,
for	rotation and	allocated to vascular surgery. This was considered	she was put in a ward that has very little pharmacy input
improvement	content	a poor choice as pharmacists usually have little	anyway." M1
		input in this area.	
			"Being on vascular [ward] felt quite out of joint almost,
			because there wasn't really much pharmacy side, so the
			medic was having to explain everything." P1
		Also, medical students did highlight that they had	"We certainly had far less contact time this week, I must say,
		less clinical contact with patients compared to	but when you double the amount of students on a ward, I
		their regular placements.	don't really think there's any way around that." M1
	Increase learning	Both medical and pharmacy students expressed	"I was with [clinical pharmacist] for like 3 hours I learned
	from clinical	interest in attending more clinical pharmacist	loads I'd quite like to have stuff with the ward pharmacist."
	pharmacists	wards and advocated for incorporating this into	M2
		future placements as the current week was more	
		focused on medical activities.	"Me and my medical student only saw a pharmacist today it
			has been good for us to see the medical side, but I don't
			think the balance has been there with the medical students
			getting to see the pharmacy side." P4
	Better orientation	In addition, students also pointed that they	"I think it was good, I would do it again, but again [needs]
	to placement	require a better introduction to the IPE week and	more structured approach and just 100% knowing what our
		the students they are partnering with.	role is, and what we're meant to do with it, would be helpful
			at introduction maybe." M3
		One medical student noted that sometimes they	
		had to take on a more mentoring role than	"She [student pharmacist] couldn't follow exactly what was
		anticipated.	going on, so at times, I would be trying to explain it. I wanted

		to try and help them have a good time, but I don't know if
		that was our role." M4