



QUALITY OF LIFE, QUALITY OF CARE, AND PATIENT SAFETY

THE INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE OF AN INTER-PROFESSIONAL, POSTGRADUATE DERMATOLOGY PROGRAMME: EXPERIENCE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE, UK

R Penzer-hick⁽¹⁾ - J Schofield⁽¹⁾ - K Radley⁽¹⁾ - M Flanagan⁽¹⁾

University Of Hertfordshire, Postgraduate Medicine, Hatfield, United Kingdom⁽¹⁾

Background: The World Health Organisation coined the phrase interprofessional education in 1973. The benefits of different professional groups learning with each other, in terms of greater collaboration and improved quality of care because of greater understanding of roles and improved communication, are now acknowledged. This approach is particularly relevant in dermatology where the long-term nature of skin conditions means that varying needs will be met by different members of the multi-professional team over time and the shortage of specialist doctors has necessitated the development of extended role practitioners (usually nurses).

Observation: In 2006 a Masters programme in dermatology was developed at the University of Hertfordshire. teaching students from a wide variety of professional healthcare backgrounds together, in particular nurses and doctors.

The success of the MSc programme, which includes a broad range of dermatology modules, is evidenced by the increasing number of students studying part-time and full-time each year from 12 in 2006 to 97 part-time, UK/EU and 40 full-time international students in 2017. Over 200 nurse-surgeons have have been trained. Students tell us that the programme has directly impacted on delivery of dermatology services and patient care, both in the UK and overseas. Overseas students regularly comment on the unique impact of learning with other health care professionals and feel empowered to return to their own practice and work with their nursing colleague to develop their roles and improve patient care.

Key message: The University of Hertfordshire has developed a successful inter-professional masters programme in Dermatology which is improving the quality of patient care by enhancing multi-professional team working.

