## Incorporating Interprofessional Education to Distance Curricula Through Online Simulation: A Pilot Project

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## ABSTRACT

Simulation is a vehicle to develop Interprofessional (IP) Education (IPE) collaboration. In a situation where handson simulation is not possible, especially with online and distance programs, learning may happen through observation, active participation in debriefing, and selfreflection. With the need to develop IP activities for laboratory sciences distance learners, an IP simulation was designed to immerse students in IPE concepts by a mock scenario providing counseling regarding syphilis test results to a pregnant patient. Prereadings were provided and IP student teams were assigned. Teams prepared before experiencing a standardized participant encounter. Following the encounter, teams participated in debriefing where they reflected on the team performance. Students completed pre- and post-activity evaluations of selfassessments of the learner's perceptions of IPE and the simulation, using a Likert scale. Students from pharmacy,

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genetic counseling, medical laboratory sciences, cytotechnology, physician assistant, and public health programs participated. Results from both face-to-face and online evaluations were compared. There was statistical significance between the pre- and post- assessment scores in simulation experiences (P < 0.01). Only 18% of participants strongly agreed with the statement they had the ability to "Learn with, from and about IP team members to enhance care" before the activity. After the activity, 91% of participants strongly agreed with the statement. Students agreed the simulation was a valuable educational activity. This project provides an IP team learning activity in both face-to-face and online formats, which highlights the role of medical laboratory sciences in contributions to patientcare decision making and develops the IP communication skills of future health professionals.

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