Interprofessional Team Empathy Among Perioperative Team Clinicians: A Proposed Phenomenological Research Study

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Background
- Interprofessional collaboration is emerging as a key factor in reshaping healthcare practices in Canada.¹
- Interprofessional relationships continue to be characterized by conflict and inconsistencies between the way that a particular profession views itself and how it is viewed by other occupations.²
- Social psychologists have given considerable attention to the possibility that empathy could be used to improve attitudes and relations among groups.³
- Teamwork empathy may be an effective way of improving quality of care and patient safety, as well as diminishing staff shortages, stress, and burnout among healthcare workers.⁴
- Without an understanding of the lived experience of how healthcare providers experience empathy between each other, it is not possible to understand how empathy is or can be incorporated into interprofessional collaborative teamwork.¹

Objective
To describe the perioperative clinicians’ lived experience of interprofessional empathy; healthcare provider’s ability to listen, hear, and understand one another during care provision.¹

Research Questions
1. What experience do clinicians in the perioperative team have with interprofessional empathy?
2. What factors do they perceive as barriers or facilitators of interprofessional empathy?

Design
- A descriptive phenomenological approach will be used to describe the concept of interprofessional team empathy.
- Moustakas’ process for phenomenological data analysis will be used to analyze the data.

Setting
One rural hospital in a mid-prairie province, Canada
Perioperative departments (Day Surgery, Operating Room, Recovery)

Sample (n=8)
- Standardized recruitment e-mails sent to appropriate professional leaders, who then would send out recruitment e-mails to respective clinicians.
- Purposive Sampling to recruit all members of the accessible team member population
- Inclusion Criteria: Employees of a Day Surgery, Operating Room, and/or Recovery Room department who have been a participating member of the perioperative team for a minimum of a six month period.
- Exclusion Criteria: Residents/Students; Administrators/Managers, Support Staff

Methods
- 1:1 Audio recorded semi-structured interviews¹
- Data analysis (Moustakas)
  (Lists of Significant Statements; Themes; Textural, Structural, & Composite Descriptions of Phenomena)¹
- Results & Discussion
  Findings to be compared and contrasted to K. Adamson’s six themes critical to developing high quality empathic relationships on interprofessional teams.¹
- Significance
  This study will allow further understanding of interprofessional team empathy within the perioperative team and how it affects teamwork and collaboration and therefore quality of care and patient safety.
- Acknowledgements
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References