

Quick Guide to Interdisciplinary Teamwork



Interdisciplinary teamwork is when multiple professionals who have complementary expertise collaborate to impact patient care. It has been linked to improvements in outcomes such as increased patient satisfaction with care, higher staff engagement, and lower burnout.

Effective teams emphasize the following characteristics, which can become barriers if neglected.

Characteristic	Description
Leadership	Clear shared values and vision to meet the organization's and team's missions
Communication	Established processes for regular communication that includes a climate for collaborative sharing of information
Professional development	Access to training and/or mentorship to build confidence and skills
Climate	Culture of trust that values member contributions and respects and values different perspectives and expertise
Quality & outcomes	Focused on patient outcomes and uses data and scientific evidence to drive decisions and improve care

Best practices for interdisciplinary meetings

- Increase your understanding of other team members' roles through formal opportunities (e.g., training workshops or journal clubs) and informal ones (e.g., interviewing clients as a team).
- Build relationships by socializing, particularly in informal settings (e.g., over meals or during shared break times) which flatten hierarchies.
- Adopt an agenda to keep meetings structured and efficient respecting start and stop times.
- Strive to find a time that all disciplines can participate – each team member has their own unique knowledge to contribute.
- Seek input from all members of the team regarding potential goals and interventions that facilitate shared decision-making and reduce power imbalances that act as barriers to effective collaboration.
- Highlight successes and team members' contributions to boost morale and build trust.

Assessing teamwork

The [Revised Collaborative Practice Assessment Tool](#) is a structured way to look at a team's strengths and weaknesses.

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