

### **39. ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING (PBL) IN INTER-PROFESSIONAL ETHICS TRAINING**

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#### **Abstract:**

Lack of inter-professional communication, respect and cooperation is major source of medical errors and ineffectiveness in patient care in the clinical workplace. Yet, pedagogic strategies in the training of medical/health care professionals for addressing this problem have not been in place in medical institutes or clinical settings. Problem-based learning (PBL), which emphasizes establishing competencies in soft skills such as communication, professionalism, team spirits and ethics, has been implemented in medical schools and some hospitals during the past decade in Taiwan, but it has been confined to specific professions with a high degree of professional homogeneity, such as medicine, dentistry, nursing and pharmacy. Cross-professional education in medicine is rare in Taiwan, especially at the preclinical level, when students have more time and are more receptive to new ideas and ready to absorb new concepts and challenges.

This study examined the effectiveness of inter-professional learning (IPL) as part of a problem based learning approach to preclinical professional ethics education.

Appropriate ethics cases relevant to medicine and nursing were designed and presented to three groups of students from the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing. One group was medical students only and the other group was medical students only. The third group consisted of an equal number of medical and nursing students. During PBL tutorials, trained observers monitored the learning process with a checklist to evaluate the learning process. Observers' evaluation sheets and students' self-evaluation forms were then compared.

Results support the hypothesis that appreciation and learning of ethical issues works better in student heterogeneous groups of professionals than in homogeneous groups.

**Key words:** Inter-professional education (IPE), Problem-based learning (PBL), professional ethics, medical ethics