



COLLABORATIVE INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

Jillian M Graves, School of Social Work
Alankrita Pandey, Department of Management

Social Work

Management

Varied Resources

Justice

Advocacy

Policy

Individual Wellness
Mental Health

Partners

Interdependence

Timeliness

Competition

Optimizing

Imperfect
Information

Stakeholders

Laws

Individual and
organizational
outcomes

Uncertainty

Alignment

Networks

Coordination

Collaboration

Communication

- Theoretical approach
- Case Study
- Within Discipline



COVID-19 PERSPECTIVE

- SIGEL Crisis- Surprising, Intractable, Global, existential, and lingering (SIGEL) crisis
 - Multiple stakeholders
 - Multiple perspectives
 - Complex, Time dependent, Interlinked across organizations and profession
- Conceptual Classroom discussion –does not prepare students for these situations at work.

INTER- PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION IPE

- Based on World Health Organization Priorities in Healthcare that were written in 2010 about the importance of collaborative care and professions learning from each other.
- Education in healthcare has been traditionally siloed and IPE is a way to teach cross disciplinary collaborative skills
- IPE is an experience when two or more professions learn from each other and learn skills to work together.

SIMULATION SET UP

Online with Upper level graduate students from Management and Social Work (students in mental health concentration).

Scenario and interest developed out of research into the experiences of retail workers and mental health challenges after COVID-19

Cased Based Simulation with a pre-post-post design

Before we start the simulation, the students describe their training and their roles in terms of profession.

The goal of the simulation is to help them reflect and gain confidence on their ability to collaborate rather than teaching specific skills





ACTIVITY: HOW JRA IS DEALING WITH COVID19

- **Management Students:** You are a Store Manager for JRA Market, a local grocery chain in Michigan. Your store has about 100 employees. You love working for JRA. But the Covid-19 years have been so challenging. Like all other grocery stores, JRA was open right through the pandemic.
- **Social Work Students:** You are a social worker who works with JRA corporate EAP and you have been contacted by the manager of the store because of concerns among their employees that are listed below. You have been asked to work with the manager to better understand and address the needs of the employees as a whole.

ACTIVITY: HOW JRA IS DEALING WITH COVID19 CASE

- **Problem:** JRA was open from when Covid-19 hit, with the uncertainty through 2020, the hope of the vaccine in early 2021, then the Delta and the Omicron waves. So many workplace changes: social distancing, extra sanitizing and cleaning measures, changed workflow, store-wide masking policies, then testing and after the vaccines came in- mandatory vaccine reporting. All this with so many personnel issues. Despite all possible precautions, a lot of frontline staff had to deal with sometimes severe sickness for themselves or their immediate families. They felt unappreciated and lonely. A number of staff quit- over child care or long term dependent care or they were just exhausted of all the things they were dealing with.



CHALLENGES

- The political climate being as it was, stores also had to deal with some very polarized customers- verbally abusive, violent, trying to pick up fights and sometimes the police had to be called in when they threatened your staff.
- It has been two years but it is not yet over. Mask and other restrictions are easing, but things are not back to normal. You are working with a workforce that has very different expectations from two years ago. With the great resignation, it is hard to find workers now. The ones who remain are very demoralized and justifiably so- they did not feel as supported by JRA- something that you and top management feel you need to address.
- Working together with your colleagues in Management or Social work, you need to work a joint strategy to address this and other issues in the future.



SIMULATION

- The students were asked to go into breakout rooms with 3-4 students, including a number from each profession to discuss the case study and make decisions about what they will do.
- Instructors were available and periodically checked on rooms but the role of instructors is to facilitate discussion but the discussions have to be primarily led by the students.
- When they returned, they were asked to report out on their experiences—the collaborative skills is what they are learning, not about how to assess employees in a grocery store.



ACTIVITY : DISCUSSION AND DEBRIEF

- What do you think you learned from doing this sim?
- What have you learned about other disciplines?
- What have you learned about doing healthcare work in a non-healthcare setting?
- Is there any additional information you would like to share about your experience with the SIM?
- Students also received the ISVS-2I and other measures pre- and post—that measured collaborative skills



STUDENT REACTIONS

- “This week was (to me) wonderful for an “aha” moment. When collaborating with social work students I got to see their side of things in career fields that have played a part in many of mine over the years.”
- “One Aha moment this week was that everywhere speaks a different language, and it is our job to help everyone speak a common language”
- “It was the ability to work with other students from social work and answer questions about ourselves, and the current degree program we are in and what we do in our current jobs functions. We answered questions in regards to how work with others in different fields. Also, being able to respect one another's thoughts/opinions as we all feel that was important.”



WHERE DO
WE GO
FROM
HERE....

- This study was specifically designed to work on attitudes and comfort levels regarding interdisciplinary collaboration
- The next work we want to focus on is building specific skills:
 - 1. Communication Skills
 - 2. Assessment Skills
 - 3. Formulating a Plan of Action