A literature review of education competencies for clinical educators in the health professions

This project was funded by the ClinEdQ Research and Publication Initiative to conduct a review of the literature around the competencies required by clinical educators in various health professions. The summary below outlines the key outcomes of the project.

Summary

Increasing numbers of health profession students are training in clinical settings. Part of this clinical training includes interprofessional working and learning. A meta-analysis sampled literature around knowledge, skills and attitudes taught to clinician educators to assist in their clinical teaching role, to determine similarities and differences between the health professions.

A search of published studies in peer-reviewed health professional education journals in the last ten years was conducted, followed by a meta-analysis. Inclusion criteria for the search included: 1) Clinician educators in Allied Health, Medicine, Nursing and Oral Health; 2) Teaching programs and interventions designed to develop clinical educator skills; 3) Outcomes of clinician educator teaching programs; and 4) Studies or reports about training clinician educators for teaching health profession students. 111 were included in the review. Information about type of study, participants, methodology, outcomes, and conclusions were summarised in tables using narrative analysis for similarities and differences. Data underwent thematic analysis using themes of 'Learning', 'Teaching' and 'Logistical' issues. Most papers were teacher-centred or about logistics related to teaching. Only 17.6% focused on the learner perspective and 18% on interprofessional teaching.

There were similarities and differences in teaching programs for clinician educators in the four health profession areas. Most papers were teacher-centred or about logistical issues and focused on the role and tasks of the teacher, while fewer focused on the learner or interprofessional teaching. This has implications for students learning and working in interprofessional contexts and settings, and provides direction for further research and scholarly activity.
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