



Transcending Boundaries: Transforming Learning

Health, health care, and the health professions workforce in the United States are undergoing dramatic change, and barriers to health are substantial. Issues of access, safety, timeliness, efficiency, and effectiveness require centeredness on patients and communities. These urgent issues demand thinking beyond health care and health care delivery system to define health in new ways. Health requires a community focus, an “all-policies” focus, a focus on prevention and wellness, and an interprofessional focus, and must be facilitated through teamwork in learning and practice.

In many respects, health professions education remains isolated from practice realities, and profession-specific learning does not prepare future and current health professionals for working together. We must transcend boundaries to connect “traditional” health professions, educators, new and emerging health and care providers, care coordinators, administrators of health care delivery and payment systems, and policy-makers in partnership with patients, communities, and populations.

The American Interprofessional Health Collaborative transcends boundaries to transform learning, policies, practices, and scholarship toward an improved system of health and wellness for individual patients, communities, and populations. We transcend:

- Professional boundaries;
- Organizational boundaries;
- Various perspectives and philosophies of interprofessional teamwork and collaboration;
- Stages of professional development;
- Boundaries around education, practice, and research;
- Boundaries around professionals and individuals, communities, and populations; and
- Geographic and national boundaries.

Composing the American Interprofessional Health Collaborative are individuals and organizations committed to influencing a more positive future. As institutional and program leaders charged to ensure the integrity, viability, and quality of education and training programs, as leaders of policy-setting organizations and agencies committed to assuring health in all policies, and as leaders in systems impacting health and care delivery, we transcend profession- and organization-specific boundaries. We advocate for and advance the alignment of the interprofessional educational programs; the importance of interprofessional health care delivery; and the research programs that facilitate examining these education-practice linkages towards better outcomes for health and health care.

The American Interprofessional Health Collaborative believes educating those entrusted with the health of individuals, communities, and populations to value and respect each other’s unique expertise and skills and to work together is fundamental to care that is effective, safe, of high quality, and efficient in terms of cost, resources, and time.

The American Interprofessional Health Collaborative is committed to the preparation and deployment of a workforce that exemplifies ethics and values for interprofessional collaboration; that understands the breadth and complexity of roles and responsibilities for collaborative practice; that has the foundational skills for effective interprofessional communication; and has the requisite competencies for interprofessional teamwork and provision of team-based care of individuals, communities, and populations.

The American Interprofessional Health Collaborative promotes the scholarship and leadership necessary to develop interprofessional education and transform health professions education across the learning continuum, for students, practitioners, and educators.

To achieve its vision, the American Interprofessional Health Collaborative:

- Functions as the coordinating organization in the US for interprofessional developments and sharing of resources across institutions and health professions;
- Stimulates advances in interprofessional education, research, and collaborative practice;
- Provides a venue for networking among those with leadership responsibilities at institutions and organizations;
- Advocates for state-of-the-art interprofessional collaborative care for all patients, communities, and populations.
- Participates in global consortiums, collaborations, and conferences.

The Early History of AIHC

Interprofessional education, typically elective experiences, has been present for several decades in the United States health professions education programs. Between the 1970s and early 2000, various professional conferences focused on cross-professional practice and education have been held, such as the Interdisciplinary Health Care Team Conference (IHCTC) and the Congress of Health Professions Education and Group on Multi-Professional Education (GOMPE) meetings. While the U.S. was identified for many years as a leader in IPE programming and scholarship, international efforts in IPE progressed during the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s to include the establishment of national centers and collaboratives (i.e., the Center for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education in the United Kingdom and the Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative). The need for an organized U.S. IPE presence emerged during 2003 when it became clear previously held national meetings around IPE had been discontinued and there was increased international attention in this area. In the absence of a national organization, individuals in the U.S. collaborated with CIHC to develop the first Collaborating Across Borders Conference (CAB I): An American-Canadian Dialogue on Interprofessional Health Education. From that effort, institutional leaders emerged with an interest to establish a U.S. based interprofessional organization, now known as the American Interprofessional Health Collaborative. (See Blue AV, Brandt B, Schmitt M. American Interprofessional Health Collaborative: Historical Roots and Organizational Beginnings. *Journal of Allied Health*. 2010;39(3 pt 2):204–209.)

AIHC Milestones

- 2007 First Collaborating Across Borders conference held on the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities campus, Minneapolis, sponsored with the Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative
- 2009 Group meets at the Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, S.C. to explore mutual interest in education for interprofessional collaboration. Mission and values statements are drafted. The name, American Interprofessional Health Collaborative is adopted.
- Information sessions hosted at the Collaborating Across Borders II conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- 2010 Eighty-five participants attend a pre-conference meeting at Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, to share information about IPE efforts at universities. Support for AIHC grows.
- Organizational meeting is held on the University of Minnesota campus to formalize the AIHC and begin incorporation.
- 2011 AIHC leaders participate in the development of national core competencies for interprofessional collaborative practice meeting.
- AIHC is incorporated as a 501 (c) 3 organization; board of directors formalized and officers elected. Workgroups are formed to develop the organization.
- The Collaborating Across Borders III conference was offered at the University of Arizona, Tucson and launched a number of initiatives to continue organizational development.