



Meet an IPE Champion from Thomas Jefferson University Michaela Scotten

Describe your work with JCIPE:

As part of the two-year curriculum for my Master's degree in Occupational Therapy, I engaged in the Health Mentors Program. Additionally, I had the honor of volunteering with No One Dies Alone through the student IPE interest group throughout my last year. My main involvement with JCIPE was through Student Hotspotting, beginning July, 2016 (offered through Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, Primary Care Progress, and Association of American Medical Colleges). I had the opportunity to work with an interdisciplinary team of eight students and four faculty members to identify "super-utilizing" patients with complex psychosocial and healthcare needs. As a team, we listened to the stories of four Philadelphians who have recurring medical visits due to disease and disability. Through much collaboration with health insurance providers, community partners, and Jefferson clinicians, we sought to understand and eliminate barriers to quality care to improve outcomes following our patients' interactions with a continuum of providers, from emergency to primary medicine. This experience allowed me to grow immensely in clinical reasoning skills, communication, and navigation of the health system.

What excites you about this work?

My favorite aspect of Hotspotting is efficient teamwork. With a diverse team of students and faculty dedicated to generating solutions to our patients' barriers, we identified resources and coordinated client visits much more effectively than if we were alone in our endeavors. Working alone in healthcare can be isolating and cause undue burnout. Working with a team provides opportunities for brainstorming, laughter, and a fundamental focus on targeting needs from many angles, rather than from the perspective of a single specialty.

An especially exciting aspect of Hotspotting is the experiential component of keeping a client at the center of medical decisions, learning about other disciplines' approaches, and having countless opportunities for networking with students and professionals across the country involved in similar projects. Classroom lectures can give students a taste for these components of healthcare, but nothing beats putting concepts into action in your own neighborhood!

What have you learned that was new?

As a member of Hotspotting, I've learned that navigating the healthcare system is incredibly challenging. Pointing fingers at a case manager, doctor or scheduler is not a solution for long-term change. From timely medical transportation services to surgeons who make daily decisions regarding the appropriateness of life-changing surgeries, it takes a team to make a difference. Effective communication across all disciplines is incredibly important for efficiency of treatment and rapport-building with patients. "Cookie cutter" solutions may work in the moment, but true solutions within complex patient care coordination often result from the willingness to ask difficult questions that may not yet be solved.

Why is IPE/CP important to you?

Just like there are many dimensions of wellness (physical, emotional, spiritual, social, environmental, etc.), it's crucial that providers address each area together for holistic health. It is impossible for healthcare providers to be knowledgeable and proficient in every aspect of an individual's care, but it is imperative that healthcare is delivered from a client-centered team's perspective to ensure safety, timeliness of treatment, health promotion, and health prevention.

How do you think you will apply your IPE/CP learning to your future?

As a new occupational therapist, I am actively seeking a position within an organization which promotes and even celebrates interdisciplinary collaboration. Though working on a team may involve extra emails and lunch meetings, the perspective gained regarding a patient's well-being and progress is invaluable. I hope to improve my capacity as a team player, advocate for more efficient and accessible arenas for collaborative practice, and one day work as a consultant to empower more efficient interpersonal interactions, use of space, and more within the workplace. I also plan to stay connected with IPE and CP veterans who have a wealth of wisdom in implementing team-based care. Thanks for everything, JCIPE!