

Interprofessional Action for Oral Health: Building a Dignified Life Through Education and Care

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Abstract

Interprofessional Collaboration (IPC) is a partnership between individuals from different professional backgrounds who work together to solve health problems and provide health services. IPC occurs when various health professions collaborate with patients, families, and communities to provide comprehensive, high-quality care. The goal of interprofessional collaborative community service activities (dental and oral health screening and counseling) is to increase public awareness, attitudes, and behaviors regarding dental and oral health care. Interact and communicate directly with students regarding economic, social, and health conditions. Apply the knowledge gained in lectures to the community. The activity was carried out with the following series: a. Preparation Stage, b. Implementation Stage, and c. Evaluation Stage. This activity received a warm welcome from kindergarten children, MA MTQ students, and members of the Bulu PCM, who participated enthusiastically. However, there were several challenges that need to be addressed for similar activities in the future, such as the number of community participants that did not meet the target, and internal miscommunication regarding the target participants. In addition, public hesitation towards health checks indicated the need for a more educational and persuasive approach.

Keywords: IPC, tooth, kindergarten, Collaboration

1. INTRODUCTION

Interprofessional Collaboration (IPC) is a partnership between individuals from different professional backgrounds who work together to solve health problems and provide health services ([Samuriwo, 2022](#)). IPC occurs when various health professions collaborate with patients, families, and communities to provide comprehensive, high-quality care ([Pelone et al., 2017](#)). IPC is intended to achieve goals and provide mutual benefits for all involved. Effective collaboration among healthcare team members facilitates the delivery of quality services ([Irajpour & Alavi, 2015](#)). Therefore, developing interprofessional collaboration in healthcare activities is a priority for all healthcare organizations.

Efforts to develop an equitable, just, and prosperous Indonesian society are not solely the responsibility of the government. This task is proportionally shared by all other components of the nation, including the community itself ([Carron et al., 2021](#)). All of these components have an interest in actively synergizing in efforts to improve the community's welfare. Students, as the next generation and intellectual element of society, are one of the parties responsible for national development ([Pomare et al., 2020](#)). Students' participation in society is not limited to academic obligations and the campus environment but is also vital in various other functions in the field. And student dedication to community development can begin early through various forms of work and community service.

One step that can be taken, in this case, by Faculty of Dentistry students, in their capacity before working directly in the community as doctors, nurses, or other medical personnel, is through health and humanitarian outreach activities. One form of this is community service ([Abd Hamid et al., 2016](#)). The community of Puron Hamlet, Bulu District, Sukoharjo Regency, was partnered with the community of Puron Hamlet, consisting of two primary target groups: early childhood children in kindergarten (TK) and high school students at the Bulu Muhammadiyah Tjarotul Qur'aniyah Islamic Senior High School (MA MTQ). Based on initial observations and communications with community leaders and school officials, several key challenges were identified are low knowledge of dental and oral health, lack of access to routine dental health checkups and services, lack of interprofessional

collaboration in health education, and lack of contextual and child-/youth-friendly educational materials.

2. METHODS

Dental health education and examination activities that support the running of Interprofessional Education (IPE), where students are educated together about collaboration, and Interprofessional Collaboration (IPC), where Students actively collaborate in real service delivery activities are carried out with the theme "Ajining Wojo Kanggo Urip Luwih Mulyo". Participants in the community service activities were the people of Puron Hamlet, Bulu District, namely children from Kindergarten and Madrasah Aliyah Muhammadiyah Tijaratul Qur'aniyah (MA MTQ) Bulu, Sukoharjo Regency.

The community service activity will be held on Sunday, December 22, 2024, starting at 08:00 a.m. WIB until completion, with activities spread across two venues: the Bulu Community Center (PCM Bulu) and the Bulu Muhammadiyah Tijaratul Qur'aniyah Islamic Boarding School (MA MTQ) in Sukoharjo, Central Java. The event will involve a total of 203 participants, organized under a structured participant-to-facilitator ratio to ensure balanced guidance, effective interaction, and optimal learning outcomes. The program is designed in three stages: the preparation stage, where committees, facilitators, and participants coordinate through briefings, role assignments, and logistical arrangements; the implementation stage, where students from different professional backgrounds apply the principles of Interprofessional Collaboration (IPC) by providing services such as health education, oral screenings, general check-ups, and counseling directly to the community; and the evaluation stage, where participants and facilitators engage in reflection, feedback, and data collection to assess achievements and identify improvements.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Preparation stage: the first committee was formed in September 2024. Negotiating and advocating for solutions to problems related to public health and oral health in Bulu District, in collaboration with internal parties. Conducting a survey of the target group through coordination with relevant parties and requesting permission for community service activities ([Bok et al., 2020](#)). Determining the theme, event schedule, and health promotion materials. The last was sending a permit letter and providing further coordination regarding the implementation of the community service ([Vestergaard & Nørgaard, 2018](#)).

Implementation Stage: conducting a briefing regarding the activity flow, planning, job assignments, and event equipment for the committee, delegates, and professional or co-assistant students. The community service activity begins by directing participants who have arrived to register. For children, the committee will request informed consent from parents/guardians if they are willing to undergo treatment. Afterward, registered participants will be provided with snacks. The community service activity opened with introductions and a joint slogan. The health promotion team began a health promotion session on general health for adolescents, delivered by a delegation from the Nutrition Department, while a session on dental and oral health for adolescents was delivered by a delegation from the dental profession students. Each session consisted of 15 minutes for presentation and 5 minutes for questions and answers. The children, specifically, were directed by the committee to gather in the field for a coloring contest. First, the committee helped the children form small groups and form a circle. Then, the committee distributed drawing paper to the children. The results of their work were collected and assessed by the committee, which was tasked with determining the first, second, and third place winners. All participants underwent a screening and medical check-up, which consisted of filling out a dental and oral examination card, vital signs, and nutritional status. Participants who were indicated for treatment were directed to the treatment

table. This community service activity included five types of procedures, including TAF (Topical Application Fluoride), fissure sealants, extraction with topical anesthetic, and IPM (Oral Disease). Distribution of basic necessities to participants who had undergone the examination. The event closed with the announcement of the coloring contest winners, prizes, and a group photo of all community service participants.

Evaluation Stage: monitoring and evaluation of implementation by collecting activity data, reporting activities, assessing and evaluating program achievements to identify problems and determine problem-solving efforts for future programs. A report was prepared by the secretary before the activity was carried out and adjusted to what had been prepared by the committee.



Figure 1. Community service activities. Screening activity (left), counseling and tutoring how to brush teeth (right)

The community service activities in Puron Hamlet, Bulu District, generally proceeded smoothly and enthusiastically (Figure 1). This was reflected in the active participation of kindergarten children and Islamic Senior High School (MA MTQ) students who enthusiastically participated in dental health education and examinations. The involvement of the community and members of the Bulu Muhammadiyah Branch Leadership (PCM) also demonstrated positive support for the importance of cross-professional collaborative activities in raising public health awareness. The warm, communicative, and educational atmosphere provided a pleasant experience, especially for children, the primary target group ([Itzhaki et al., 2023](#)).

However, despite this success, several important points remain for future evaluation and learning. One major obstacle was the lower attendance target set by the committee. Public participation was relatively low, driven by several factors, including a lack of extensive outreach, busy schedules, and concerns about health checks, especially dental exams, which are often associated with pain or invasive medical procedures.

Furthermore, there was a lack of communication between the committee and professional students regarding the activity's objectives, particularly regarding the number and type of children's groups to be involved. This led to a mismatch between the implementation plan and its implementation on the ground. While this did not disrupt the event, it highlights the importance of more thorough technical coordination between parties, including establishing participant targets and alternative scenarios if the number of participants does not meet expectations.

These findings provide valuable input for improving similar activities in the future. A more effective communication strategy is needed, both with the community and within the implementation team, to ensure the interprofessional collaboration that underpins this activity can be more effective and have a broader impact. Future activities should also consider a more persuasive and humane approach to encouraging the community to participate in voluntary health screenings and be aware of the benefits.

4. CONCLUSION

The community service activity themed “Ajining Wojo Kanggo Urip Luwih Mulyo” which carried the Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Interprofessional Collaboration (IPC) approaches was successfully implemented in Puron Hamlet, Bulu District, Sukoharjo Regency. This activity received a warm welcome from kindergarten children, MA MTQ students, and members of the Bulu PCM who participated enthusiastically. However, there were several challenges that need to be addressed for similar activities in the future, such as the number of community participation that did not meet the target and internal miscommunication regarding the target participants. In addition, public hesitation towards health checks indicated the need for a more educational and persuasive approach. Overall, this activity had a positive impact in raising awareness of the importance of dental health and cross-professional collaboration. The evaluation obtained became the basis for improving future implementation strategies to be more effective, participatory, and sustainable.

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