

Time to learn with, from and about...

As we approach the start of a new academic year, I want to welcome those students embarking on their journey into midwifery and also congratulate continuing students for their hard work and successes so far.

As a midwifery academic and Faculty Lead for Interprofessional Education (IPE), I take every opportunity to bang the IPE drum to promote its relevance to the curriculum, the practice environment and the service user experience, and what better time to do this than the start of a new academic year?

IPE is defined as 'occasions when [members or] students of two or more professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care and services' (CAIPE, 2016). So why is IPE so important? In addition to it being a professional requirement (NMC, 2023), it improves service user satisfaction and outcomes; it enhances effective teamworking, communication and collaboration; it promotes respect by challenging 'silo mentalities' through debunking false assumptions and stereotyping, and last but not least it increases job satisfaction!

Revisiting the main goals of IPE: 'improving collaboration and the quality of care and services' – this continues to be work in progress. The Ockenden Review (2022) found that a 'them and us' culture between midwifery and obstetric staff led to significant failings in maternity care. So, we look to you as the midwives of the future to embrace the ethos of IPE and actively engage with IPE opportunities throughout your programme. Be curious about the roles of other professions: how can your combined skills and expertise improve service user outcomes and satisfaction? For me, respect for others is the key: we are a proud profession; however, we must remember we are also 'interprofessionals', working within the wider health and social care team.

I wish new and continuing students good luck for the coming academic year and cordially invite them and you to join me in banging the IPE drum!

References

Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education (CAIPE) (2016) Statement of Purpose [CAIPE]. Available from: <https://www.caipe.org/resource/CAIPE-Statement-of-Purpose-2016.pdf>. [Accessed 20.08.24].

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Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) (2023) *Standards for education and training. Part 1: standards framework for nursing and midwifery education*. London: NMC