Introduction: There is extensive literature espousing that interprofessional education (IPE) promotes collaboration in health care, and thus, improved quality of patient care and outcomes. Empirical evidence to support this assertion is limited. Exploration of factors that influence the development of IPE is needed before meaningful studies can be designed to evaluate its influence on interdisciplinary collaboration. The purpose of this study was to describe faculty attitudes toward and readiness for IPE in the health care professions and factors influencing those attitudes.

Method(s): A descriptive cross-sectional design was employed using web-based software to collect data via the internet. The study questionnaire consisted of a measure of attitudes toward and readiness for IPE, The Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale (RIPLS) (Parsell & Bligh, 1999); a researcher-developed measure of faculty perceptions of interprofessional collaboration, Evaluation of Perceptions of Interprofessional Collaboration (EPIC); items to identify barriers to interprofessional education; and items to solicit demographic information. The study sample comprised medical, nursing, pharmacy, and dental faculty at an east coast state university (N = 133).

Results: Descriptive analyses showed that faculty respondents have positive attitudes toward and readiness for IPE. Respondents identified faculty, administrative, and institutional barriers to interprofessional education. A significant correlation was noted between attitudes toward interprofessional education (M = 4.07) and perceptions of interprofessional collaboration (M = 4.15) (r = .752). Significant relationships were not observed between demographic characteristics and attitudes toward interprofessional education.
Discussion & Conclusions: While positive attitudes are present, findings suggest that faculty development may be beneficial to overcome attitude and knowledge-based barriers to interprofessional education. Further research is needed to determine the nature of the relationship between interprofessional education and interprofessional collaboration. Replication of the study with a larger sample size is recommended to confirm findings.

Abstract History:
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.
Dissertation defense

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No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.

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