

## **Preparing health professionals to support patient decision-making in inter-professional context: where is the theory?**

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### **Introduction**

Inter-professional collaboration is important in the process of supporting patient decision-making. Studies showed that health professionals were not adequately prepared to face the strong hierarchical relation in collaboration as practiced in the Asian context. This systematic review aimed to gather evidence about educational interventions to prepare health professionals in supporting patient decision-making in an inter-professional context.

### **Methods**

We searched publications published in January 1990 - December 2011 from Medline, ERIC, CINAHL, PsycInfo, Social Science Citation Index, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection. We included original articles reporting educational interventions aiming to improve the skills of health professionals to support patient's decision-making. The intervention should contain components to improve inter-professional collaboration or involve different health professions in one course. Two researchers conducted abstract and full text screening and data extraction independently, then discussed for consensus.

### **Results**

After screening 3431 abstracts and 230 full texts, 39 articles were included. Most studies lack a control group. Results were limited to Kirkpatrick level 1 and 2. Most studies were conducted in a Western culture; only three were from Asian countries.

Most courses combined lectures and active approaches such as role-plays and discussion. Theories were mainly used to inform teaching strategies to train skills in supporting patient decision-making. The learning of inter-professional collaboration itself was seldomly based on theories.

### **Conclusion**

Interventions to strengthen the collaborative skills of health professionals in supporting patient decision-making should be consistently theory-based. More evidence from Asian context is urgently necessary to tailor interventions to this context.