

## RATIONALE/NEED

Research supports that inadequate communication across health professions can cause harm and increase health care costs (Bower et al., 2003; Davenport et al., 2007). Communication and teamwork are necessary for improving delivery health care services at an affordable cost (Bisognano & Kenney, 2012). Through inter-professional learning activities, students of varying health disciplines will be able to discern the similarities and differences in their roles and responsibilities when working as a team for the best care of their clients (Zierler, 2014).

## METHODS/DESCRIPTION

Faculty from the Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physician Assistant (PA) Studies programs created an inter-professional learning opportunity in which their students learned about each discipline while also interacting with community-dwelling older adults to determine risk of falling and to provide fall prevention information (Leland et al., 2012). The purpose of the project was to determine the students' change in knowledge gained in inter-professional roles and working relationships of OT practitioners and PAs in primary care setting as well as in their performance and comfort levels in addressing fall prevention with community dwelling older adults through participation in an educational experience. Participants were first year, third semester graduate students enrolled in either the occupational therapy program or physician assistant program. Data collected included a pre- and post-experience likert and open ended question evaluation tool.

## RESULTS & EVALUATION

Questions		Ratings of students (1 – 10)			
		OT (Mdn)		PA (Mdn)	
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Interprofessional work	Performance	6	8	7	9
	Comfort	6	8	7	9
Professionally talking with an older adult	Performance	7	9	7	8
	Comfort	7	9	8	9
Conducting a fall assessment	Performance	5	8	5	8
	Comfort	6	8	5	8
Disseminating info on fall prevention	Performance	6	8	5	8
	Comfort	6	8	5	8

### Explain how this experience changed your knowledge level about the other profession.

- Curriculum/educational background of other profession.
- Increase understanding of the scope of practice of the other profession.
- Work settings of the other profession.

### How did this experience impact your understanding of inter-professional collaboration?

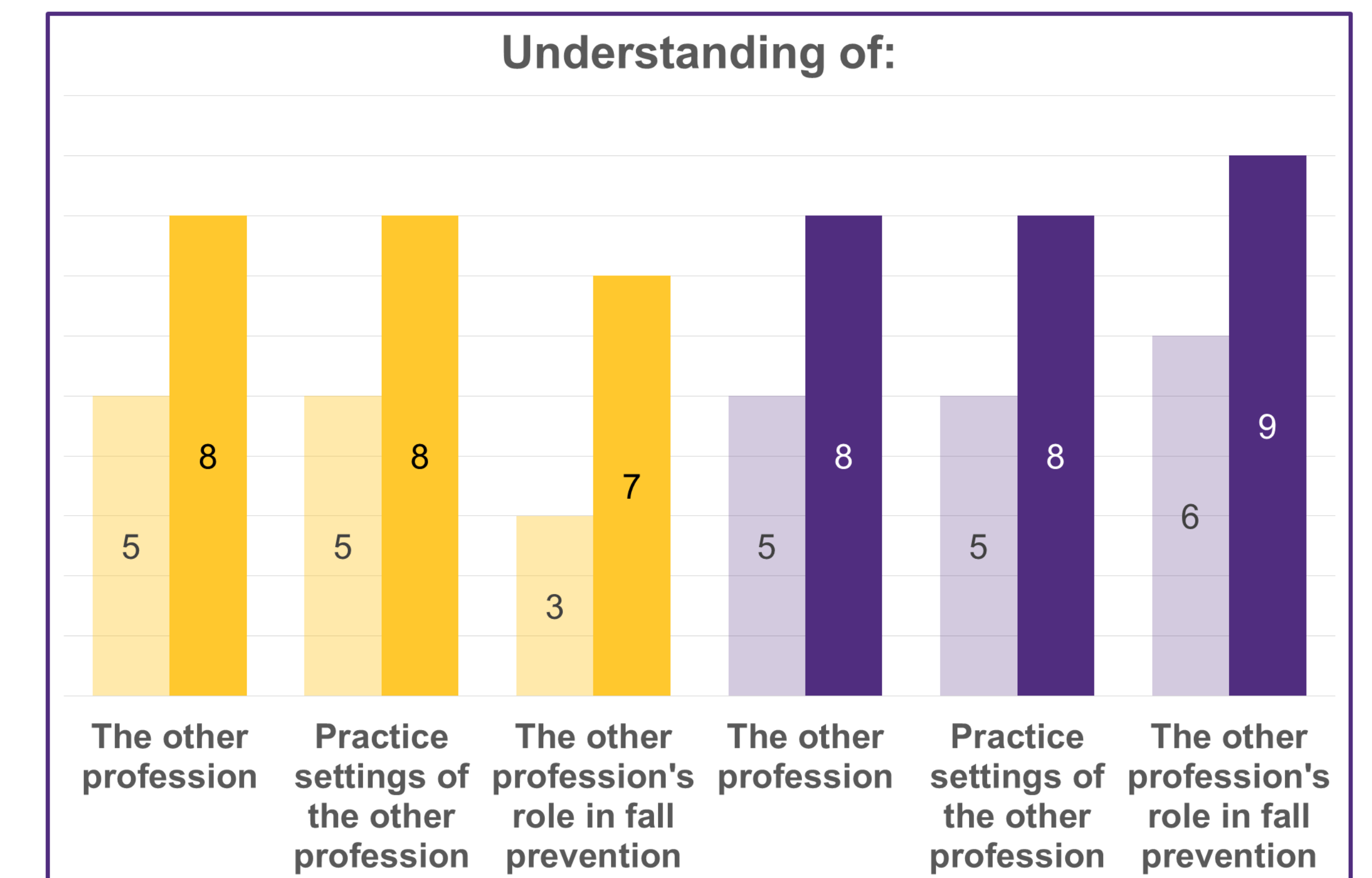
- Increased understanding how to collaborate with another professional (inter-professional).
- Increased understanding of the other professional's knowledge (educational background) and/or scope of practice.

### Explain how this experience changed your performance level as a professional.

- Increased communications/comfort/confidence working with patients/clients/colleagues.
- Increased comfort/confidence administering/performing assessments.
- Increased knowledge/experience in the other professions, team work, client interaction, fall assessment, and/or time management.

### Explain how this experience changed your comfort level as a professional.

- Comfort/confidence in working inter-professionally.
- Comfort/confidence in client interaction.
- Comfort/confidence with actual experience.



## IMPACT/LESSONS LEARNED

The potential impact of inter-professional experiences is a workforce better prepared for teamwork beyond the medical provider and those immediately working in their area. Better understanding of the other professional also encourages conversation between providers and improves the utilization of all health care professionals to best meet the needs of our aging population. More succinct conclusions will be made when the data analysis has been concluded.

## REFERENCES

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