

"Teamwork makes the dream work"- interdisciplinary team dynamics within the operating room La clé de la réussite est dans le travail d'équipe : la dynamique des équipes interdisciplinaires dans la salle d'opération

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The association between healthcare miscommunication and poor patient outcomes has been well documented in the literature.¹ Ineffective interdisciplinary team communication within healthcare can lead to misdiagnosis, delayed treatment, medication errors. This lack of communication can harm patients, with further impacts also on efficiency and costs to the healthcare system. Therefore, improving effective communication is a global priority, and one that affects patients, all members of the healthcare provider team, hospital administration, and government bodies.²

One such area where interdisciplinary communication is crucial for optimal teamwork function is within the operating room. Effective communication provides opportunity for accurate information exchange between members, which promotes efficiency and the delivery of safe patient care. Communication failures can lead to delayed cases or prolonged operating time, and preventable errors including performing the incorrect

procedure, not having correct equipment in the room, and intraoperative or post-operative morbidity or mortality. This ultimately results in greater inefficiency, procedural errors, team tension, and resource waste.

Typically, the intraoperative team includes the patient, anesthesiologist, surgeon, nurses, and trainees. In the ideal setting, effective interdisciplinary communication involves communal goals and expectations between team members, and a shared perspective of what effective collaboration entails. It is important also to recognize each team member's respective roles and objectives. This involves self-perception of one's own strengths and weaknesses within their own role, as well as awareness of others areas of expertise and contribution to the team. As our profession migrates away from the historical segregating hierarchal roles of healthcare professions and the associated professional silos, there continues to be an emphasis towards improving interdisciplinary team collaboration. The intraoperative team is a prime example where healthcare delivery is truly a team sport, succeeded by optimizing interdisciplinary communication and collaboration.

References

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