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Updated April 2009.
# CONTENTS

Welcome to IRPbc ................................................................. 4
What is IRPbc? ................................................................. 5
IRPbc Contacts ................................................................. 6
Introduction ................................................................. 7
Interprofessional Education ........................................... 8
IRPbc Interprofessional Learning Activities ....................... 10
InterProfessional Teamwork ........................................... 14
Conflict Resolution ....................................................... 15
Student Overview ....................................................... 16
Student Checklist ....................................................... 18
Resources ................................................................. 19

Two of the famous bears around Port McNeill
WELCOME TO IRPBC

So you want to spend the summer with a group of new friends, learn something innovative and explore some of BC’s most spectacular geography? Well Congratulations – you are about to embark on just such a remarkable journey with IRPbc! This practical education experience offers a unique opportunity to experience rural practice and life in a rural BC community while doing just that!

You are one of a select group of students representing a professions such as medicine, midwifery, nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, audiology, social work and pharmacy, completing your practice education placement in a fabulous rural community in British Columbia. In addition to your discipline-specific placement objectives, you will be part of an interprofessional student team, working with rural practitioners beyond your own discipline and with representatives of the broader community to learn about interprofessional practice and rural health.

IRPbc will enhance your discipline specific skills by providing firsthand experience in collaborative patient-centred care. It will give you a broader understanding of the scope of rural practice and illustrate the importance of teamwork between healthcare professionals working in rural areas.
WHAT IS IRPBC?

The goals of Interprofessional Rural Program of BC are to:
* Model and evaluate interprofessional learning among health professionals
* Expand the capacity for educating health professionals in BC
* Support rural recruitment and retention of health professionals

Ultimately, IRPbc aims to enhance healthcare services in rural communities.

Since its inception in 2003, IRPbc students have represented thirteen different professions in communities across each of the five health authorities. Each of the teams has been unique; reflecting the diversity of students and professionals, as well as the characteristic activities of each respective community.

Each team has made a significant impact through the energy and ideas they bring to the communities, through personal and professional growth, through their leadership, and through their feedback which has helped shape interprofessional learning for future students and existing healthcare teams in the host communities.

The IRPbc communities are very committed to your learning and to providing a positive exposure to rural life and practice. They welcome your ideas and insights. They look forward to your contributions which often extend beyond formal “health services” and may include interacting with community representatives, inspiring youth in the community, participating in community events and more. You are encouraged to share your learning, recently acquired skills and life experiences with other students, your preceptors and the community.

This Field Guide is designed to provide you with some background in preparation for your placement. Please take the time to read it before you arrive on placement!

Welcome! Enjoy! This practical education placement is sure to change your view of rural practice!
Mailing address
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Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z3
604.822.2611
info@irpbc.com

You know you are an IRPbc student when

– You’ve tackled your preceptor during a soccer game
– In return, your preceptor scored against you in the same game
– You’ve had more meals at your preceptor’s house than you’ve cooked yourself this week

IRPbc Field Guide
INTRODUCTION

One of the foundations of IRPbc is that it is community-driven. Each of the communities will provide a variety of ways to orient and engage you in rural life and practice as an interprofessional team. These may include an orientation workshop, meeting(s) and dinner with preceptors, interprofessional hospital rounds, travel to outlying communities, speakers, community festivals and more.

The more you seek out and take advantage of, the more you will discover.

Shared accommodation will be provided for you and your student team. Previous IRPbc teams have expressed how valuable the common living space has been to team building, informal professional learning and sharing of experiences.

In addition to your discipline-specific preceptor, there will be support from the community IRPbc coordinator who will provide direction and assistance in interprofessional learning activities and expectations. As soon as possible, get to know the other preceptors and community contacts.

We welcome your feedback. Program evaluation is very valuable to the ongoing planning of IRPbc and interprofessional rural placements. We ask that you take the time to complete the evaluation form that will be given to you at the launch, or emailed to you before your placement begins and then again near the end of your placement. A debrief session will be organized in September.

We encourage you to share your perceptions, reflections and photos with your team and with the program. An album of your experience serves as a reminder of the power of education and is an integral part of ensuring IRPbc continues to benefit students and communities for the future.
Definitions, Objectives & Activities

During your IRPbc placement you will be addressing the course requirements of your specific health professional program. Complementary to this, you will be involved in interprofessional learning and collaborative practice with other students and rural health professionals.

**INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION** – When two or more professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care. (CAIPE, 2002)

**COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE** – A process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go well beyond their own vision of what is possible.

Morricetown, near Hazelton
**Objectives**

The objectives of your IRPbc experience include:

1. **Gain Experience in interprofessional team work:**
   - Establish and maintain interdependent relationships with students
   - Develop an understanding of interprofessional team structures, effective team functioning and knowledge of group dynamics

2. **Understand the roles and contributions of the professions with whom you interact during your rural placement:**
   - Understand your own profession in relation to others
   - Provide patient-centred care that is personal, professional and community sensitive
   - Involve the patient/client and family as partners in group decision-making processes as part of an interprofessional care plan

3. **Identify/utilize community resources outside the traditional healthcare setting:**
   - Contribute collectively in a meaningful way to the rural community
   - Provide and seek peer support in your rural learning experience
   - Identify the impact of social determinants of health on the rural community

As a member of an interprofessional team, you will be interacting regularly with other health professions. In addition to meeting on a weekly basis with other students to discuss issues of shared interest, you will also take part in a number of joint learning activities. It is important to note that within the following outline of activities, each team/community will be charting its own course. The overall purpose of the interprofessional component is for you to learn “with, from and about” each other as you apply critical thinking and problem solving skills to the health needs of individuals and the community.

There will be a range of opportunities for your student team to be involved with interprofessional learning and collaborative practice in your rural placement. We encourage you to talk together as a student team, with your community IRPbc representatives and preceptors/other health professionals regarding how to best access and schedule these.
IRPbc INTERPROFESSIONAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

It is expected that you will participate in the following team activities. These will complement and enhance the discipline-specific requirements of your respective school. The team will meet together as a group for a minimum of three hours a week. This learning opportunity will take precedence for all team members.

Please note that your team members will be arriving and departing at different times given that start and end dates for the placements across the disciplines and schools differ. This has significant implications for your interprofessional interaction and team assignments: communication with your team mates may need to be conducted via email, facebook and/or telephone.

As a member of an interprofessional student team, you will:

* Meet as a team for a minimum of 3 hours each week or as negotiated with your IRPbc coordinator
* Shadow one another and/or other health professionals beyond your own discipline
* Participate in interprofessional rounds as available

As an interprofessional team, you will:

* Do at least one in-depth case study relating to a complex situation – patient, family or community-focused
* Discuss the function of your team as you learn with, from and about each other (see page 16 for IP teamwork questions)
* Complete an IRPbc Community-based Team Project – see below

In addition, you may have the opportunity to:

* Be part of formal/informal events within the community
* Travel to outlying communities with healthcare practitioners as available
* Interact with and learn about Aboriginal culture and Health Services
* Meet community leaders
* Visit the local elementary or high school and profile healthcare careers to youth
* Spend a night “on call” with the emergency staff
**Shadowing**

It is expected that you will shadow at least two other students and/or healthcare professionals from a discipline other than your own for at least two hours during the course of the placement. The shadowing will provide an opportunity for you to gain a deeper understanding of the roles and responsibilities of other disciplines. It is recommended that you have a list of questions ready prior to shadowing another student or professional and that you arrange to do this early in your placement.

![Shadowing Image]

*Trail team community display on fall prevention, 2006*

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**YOU KNOW YOU ARE A STUDENT IN A RURAL BC TOWN WHEN**

- Your idea of “rush hour” is rushing to finish your 10 km run around the lake before your 2 minute drive to the hospital.
- Everybody in town knows your name, and you’ve only been there a week.
- You’ve become lost, more than once, during a jog down back roads.

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*IRPbc Field Guide*
IRPbc Community-based Team Project

The community-based team project should:

1. Be relevant: Address student interests as well as clearly identified local need(s)
2. Be negotiated: The topic should be identified through discussion between students and community lead/preceptors and relate to the interests of those involved
3. Be “broadening”, that is, involve interaction and consultation with the local community outside ‘normal’ clinical context
4. Be doable, that is, manageable within the placement timeframe and other activities
5. Be agreed to prior to the placement through discussion among students and with community lead.
6. Reflect interprofessional collaboration

Depending on the local context, the project may:

* Be promotion, prevention or treatment oriented
* Involve one, two or more agencies or sectors
* Build on previous work
* Be totally new initiative
* Contribute to an ongoing program provided by local health professionals
* Identify ways to seek funding or support within or outside the local community
* Recommend ways to improve interprofessional collaboration
* Support the sustainability of interprofessional rural education

**Note:** Student teams are encouraged to consider documenting and/or disseminating information about their project by providing a short written summary for future IRPbc students or presenting the project to the community, health authority representatives and/or IRPbc fall debrief.

Previous IRPbc projects have reflected a range of activities including:

* Promoting health care careers to youth through community displays or presentations at schools.
* Promoting community health, through community displays on areas such as lung health.
* Providing health education for example by developing information brochures on specific diseases prevalent in the community, or on health and social services available in the region.

* Undertaking program planning and/or evaluation— for example, by reviewing and recommending efficiencies across chronic disease services; and assessing the impact of health care reorganization on staff.

* Promoting collaborative practice by developing an interprofessional discharge form or developing an interprofessional resource manual on diabetes management.

* Influencing health and education policy— by presenting to key decision-makers (e.g. senior Ministry and health authority staff) on the impact of interprofessional rural education.

With thanks to University of Melbourne’s Rural Interprofessional Education Project website, April 2006.

**YOU KNOW YOU ARE A STUDENT IN A RURAL BC TOWN WHEN**

- Every grandmother in town drives a Ford F-150
- You’ve had an elderly patient try to “set you up” with their grandchild
- You’ve arrived at work by air ambulance

Trail
Interprofessional education is about **learning together to work together**. Being aware of your own learning style and exploring your own understanding and experience of working in groups and teams will assist you in understanding other members of the healthcare team and their various roles. Effective, well functioning teams have enormous potential to improve healthcare delivery. There is increasing evidence that interprofessional education is integral to addressing issues such as patient safety, chronic disease management and primary health care.

Some things to think about:

Before we can learn **with** others, we must know ourselves.
* What is your learning style?
* What has been your experience of team work in the past?
* Review the effect of good communication, understanding of self and others and good group skills on healthcare delivery and the healthcare team

In order to learn **from** each other, we need to understand how teams work and how to work well together.
* How do teams function?
* What are the different roles within teams?
* What are some features of well functioning teams?
* What are barriers to team work?

Strategies for communication
* Learn who are the members of your health care teams?
* What stereotypes, assumptions and biases do you have about other professions and what ideas do others have about your profession?
* Roles and scopes of practice of team members
* Overlap within the team and working together

Effective teams do not happen by chance. They are a result of:
* Clear purpose and roles
* Effective relationships
* Communication
* Personal and team accountability

*For more information on interprofessional teams, see Marcia Choi and Barbara Casson's website: [www.cassonandchoi.com](http://www.cassonandchoi.com)
Part of working as a team is encountering conflict and learning to resolve it effectively and with positive outcomes. Respectful conflict can lead to great ideas and strong relationships when there is a willingness to grow and learn from varying viewpoints.

Conflict resolution is a skill. The first step in conflict resolution is to minimize the occurrence of negative conflict. Establishing strong ground rules for the team is a vital part of this process. Creating an environment of trust, dignity and respect, equal participation, honesty and intolerance for personal comments, ensures healthy debates can ensue. As part of an IP Team, take the time upfront to establish team ground rules and discuss strategies for resolving any conflict that does arise.

Here is one approach to Conflict Resolution:

1. Ask each participant to define the conflict as they see it without judgment or blame.

2. Ask each participant to describe specific actions they’d like to see the other party take that would resolve the conflict.

3. List all the possible solutions through brainstorming.

4. Decide on a possible solution and develop a plan to implement the solution. Evaluate the outcome.

5. Acknowledge the effort of each person to follow the plan and reward each for contributing to the solution.

6. Recognize that those directly involved in the conflict are not the only people who are affected by the conflict.

7. Recognize that people's different learning styles affect how they perceive a situation.

(adapted from the Introduction to IP Teamwork Module on the In-BC website www.in-bc.ca)
STUDENT OVERVIEW

As you prepare for your interprofessional rural experience, here is a list of items to consider:

**Before you go**

You will have received a list of students on your team along with discipline-specific preceptors and schedule of your respective placements – contact your fellow students and introduce yourself, **where possible coordinate travel with other students.**

* Contact your preceptor to introduce yourself and ask if there is anything you can bring (resources, other)

* **At least one week in advance, you MUST let the community IRPbc coordinator know how and when you will be arriving. You are responsible to make your own travel arrangements!**

* Look up community information on websites and gather maps/travel brochures Information about your community is posted on the IRPbc website at [www.irpbc.com](http://www.irpbc.com)

* Pack your gear for a range of outdoor activities and bring some of your favourite recipes and music to share with the others.

**Watch the IRPbc video posted on [www.irpbc.com](http://www.irpbc.com) and get PSYCHED!**

Bella Coola
When you go

* You will work out your respective schedule with your preceptor and the IRPbc community coordinator after your arrival. Please think about and let them know of any particular experiences you would be interested in!

* Consider the many opportunities that may be available to you

* Check out the range of outdoor activities!

* Take lots of photos – please leave some for the community and forward some to IRPbc for our website and promotional activities

As you leave

* Acknowledge and thank your preceptor and community representatives

* Document your lessons learned and share your stories – through professional journal articles, newsletters or presentations to fellow students or others at conferences

* Stay in touch... with your team, the community and IRPbc. We all like to know what other exciting adventures you embark on.

Debrief session

There will be a debrief session held in the fall – stay tuned for details.

Another reminder that you are a student in rural BC

– You’ve kayaked to the grocery store.

– At the local grocery store, one of your patients hollers across the aisle “what did you say my diagnosis was?”

– You’ve paid $2 for an apple at the grocery store.

IRPbc Field Guide
STUDENT CHECKLIST

* Contact the community coordinator and notify them of your travel arrangements
* Connect with your fellow students by email, Facebook or another means of communication to introduce yourself and coordinate travel plans where possible
* Keep an open mind to the many incredible people and learning opportunities
* Be sure you have lots of battery power for your camera!
* Please share your pictures with us!
* Complete the Evaluation form when it is emailed to you

Team mascot, 2004

IRPbc Field Guide
RESOURCES

Here are some links you might find useful during your placement:
Interprofessional Rural Program of BC
www.irpbc.com
Teamwork: www.cassonandchoi.com

Library Resources

Online indexes and databases – also provides the link to show students
how to connect to restricted e-resources:
http://toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/onlinelist.cfm
A list of the UBC library e-journals
http://toby.library.ubc.ca/ejournals/ejournals.cfm
Subject guides – librarian have done some excellent guides which will
assist the students in their work.
http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/subject-resources.html
eHelp virtual reference service – where students can chat online with a
UBC librarian to obtain help with their research questions; available from
many screens, wherever the e-Help icon appears.
http://vrl-web1.lssi.com/wcscgi/CDM.exe/ubc
Currently the hours of eHelp are:
Sun-Thurs 11 am–10 pm; Fri and Sat 11 am–6 pm
Ebooks and ebook collections -
http://toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/ebooklist.cfm
Ebooks in the life sciences
http://toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/infopage.cfm?id=1039

Other IP links

National Health Sciences Student Association (NaHSSA)
www.nahssa.ca
College of Health Disciplines, UBC
www.chd.ubc.ca
Interprofessional Network of BC
www.in-bc.ca
Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative (CIHC)
www.cihc.ca
Rural Coordination Centre of BC (RCCbc)
www.rccbc.ca

IRPbc Field Guide
The Kootenays

front: Enderby, 2006