



**INTERDISCIPLINARITY AS A TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY**  
**A INTERDISCIPLINARIDADE COMO ESTRATÉGIA DE ENSINO E APRENDIZAGEM**  
**INTERDISCIPLINARIDAD COMO ESTRATEGIA DE ENSEÑANZA Y APRENDIZAJE**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** to report the experience of Nursing students at PET-Health with members of the Veterinary Medicine courses from the experience of interdisciplinarity and interprofessionality. **Method:** this is a descriptive study, the type of experience report. The population was constituted by students and tutors of the Nursing, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine courses, as well as other professionals. **Results:** it was found that, in practice, students integrated teaching, service and the community, in order to foster interprofessional and interdisciplinary action among those involved. After the experience in all services, it was noted the growth of students regarding the understanding of different relationships between professionals, enriching and encouraging welcoming practices, humanized and permeated by comprehensive care. **Conclusion:** it was noticed that the participation in the program contributed to the construction of an important vision for the professional formation of the students of each course. Thus, the importance of extension as a fostering medium for experiences of interdisciplinarity and interprofessionality among the students of the three courses, teachers and preceptors is emphasized. **Descriptors:** Patient Care Team; Professional Training; Nursing; Professional Practice; Health Services; Health Education.

**RESUMO**

**Objetivo:** relatar a experiência de discentes do curso de Enfermagem no PET-Saúde com integrantes dos cursos de Medicina e Medicina Veterinária a partir da vivência da interdisciplinaridade e interprofissionalidade. **Método:** trata-se de estudo descritivo, do tipo relato de experiência. Constituiu-se a população por discentes e tutores dos cursos de Enfermagem, Medicina e Medicina Veterinária, além de outros profissionais. **Resultados:** verificou-se que, na prática, os discentes integravam o ensino, serviço e a comunidade, de modo a fomentar a atuação interprofissional e interdisciplinar entre os envolvidos. Notou-se, após a vivência em todos os serviços, o crescimento dos discentes quanto à compreensão das diferentes relações entre os profissionais, enriquecendo e estimulando práticas acolhedoras, humanizadas e permeadas pela integralidade do cuidado. **Conclusão:** percebeu-se que a participação no programa contribuiu para a construção de uma importante visão para a formação profissional dos discentes de cada curso. Ressalta-se, assim, a importância da extensão como meio fomentador para experiências da interdisciplinaridade e da interprofissionalidade entre os discentes dos três cursos, docentes e preceptores. **Descritores:** Equipe Interdisciplinar de Saúde; Formação Profissional; Enfermagem; Prática Profissional; Serviços de Saúde; Educação em Saúde.

**RESUMEN**

**Objetivo:** relatar la experiencia de los estudiantes del curso de Enfermería en PET-Salud con los miembros de los cursos de Medicina Veterinaria a partir de la experiencia de la interdisciplinaria y la interprofesionalidad. **Método:** se trata de un estudio descriptivo, de tipo de informe de experiencia. La población estaba constituida por estudiantes y tutores de los cursos de Enfermería, Medicina y Medicina Veterinaria, así como por otros profesionales. **Resultados:** se encontró que, en la práctica, los estudiantes integraron la enseñanza, el servicio y la comunidad, para fomentar la acción interprofesional e interdisciplinaria entre los involucrados. Después de la experiencia en todos los servicios, se observó el crecimiento de los estudiantes con respecto a la comprensión de las diferentes relaciones entre profesionales, enriqueciendo y alentando prácticas acogedoras, humanizadas y permeadas por la atención integral. **Conclusión:** se notó que la participación en el programa contribuyó a la construcción de una visión importante para la formación profesional de los estudiantes de cada curso. Por lo tanto, se enfatiza la importancia de la extensión como un medio propicio para las experiencias de interdisciplinaria e interprofesionalidad entre los estudiantes de los tres cursos, maestros y preceptores. **Descriptor:** Grupo de Atención al Paciente; Capacitación Profesional; Enfermería; Práctica Profesional; Servicios de Salud; Educación en Salud.

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## INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, there is a need to build public policies with emphasis on the effective change in the pattern of training of health professionals, based on the guiding principles of the National Curriculum Guidelines and the Unified Health System (UHS).<sup>1</sup> that the integration between students, preceptors and teachers during undergraduate education is permeated by educational initiatives of research and extension projects. Thus, the Education for Work for Health Program (PET-Saúde) was created, implemented by Interministerial Ordinance n. 421 of 2010, in order to readjust the educational background of the health professional.<sup>2</sup>

It stands out as a tool for building tutorial learning groups in strategic areas of UHS and is characterized as a tool for qualification in service of health professionals, as well as job initiation, aimed at undergraduate and postgraduate students in health.<sup>3</sup> In this perspective, there is the insertion of service needs as a source of knowledge and research production in educational institutions.<sup>4</sup>

This program ratifies an integral approach to the health-disease process, transforming the processes of knowledge production through teaching-learning.<sup>5</sup> Knowledge is also promoted in the provision of health services through tutorial learning. SUS programs and actions, and it is possible to improve the functions of undergraduate students through the experience granted by higher education institutions in conjunction with the Municipal Health Secretariats (MHS).<sup>6</sup> Education acts as an alternative for UHS consolidation by valuing primary health care and preparing students for quality action within this system.<sup>7</sup>

There is a conceptual and semantic confusion regarding the terms of “multi” or “inter” professionalism and disciplinarity. It is understood the conception of the term “multi” as representing the independent relations between the different areas of knowledge or practice, while the “inter” point of view is related to the thought that different fields of knowledge and practices interact with each other, supporting shared and collaborative learning.<sup>8</sup>

Interdisciplinarity is defined by the level of integration between the knowledge, joint, integrated and interrelated actions of different professionals from different backgrounds with regard to the basic area of knowledge. Through this interaction, the aim is to overcome fragmented knowledge, allowing to recognize and respect the specificities of each professional area, aggregating these elements.<sup>9</sup> It is shown that a multi-professional team is indispensable for quality health care, provided that it acts in an

integrated, articulate manner that seeks to prioritize interdisciplinary education.<sup>10</sup>

It is assumed that the implementation of projects to achieve this purpose allows us to identify the management of paradigmatic changes in health professional training and, consequently, seeks to subdue the flexnerian model, focused on curative and hospital-centered care.<sup>11</sup>

## OBJECTIVE

- To report the experience of students of the Nursing course at PET-Health with members of the Veterinary Medicine courses from the experience of interdisciplinarity and interprofessionality.

## METHOD

This is a descriptive study, the type of experience report, describing the experiences of undergraduate nursing students from the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE), with professors of the Veterinary Medicine courses at the Federal Rural University of Pernambuco (UFRPE) and UFPE Medicine, with the Municipal Health Secretariat of Moreno-PE, Brazil.

Actions were conducted that were conducted through planned stages in a project submitted to the Ministry of Health Notice No. 13 of September 28, 2015 - Selection for the Education Program for Health Work (PET-HEALTH / GRADUASUS ) - 2016/2017.

The actors from the academic community (teachers and students) and SUS actors (health professionals and managers) were included, focusing on interdisciplinarity, teaching-service integration, humanization of care, comprehensive care and the development of activities that consider the diversification of scenarios of practices and collaborative networks in the formation of UHS.<sup>2</sup>

The municipality of Moreno was chosen for the development of actions, located in the state of Pernambuco at a distance of 28 km from the city of Recife, the state capital. It is divided into two districts, Bonança and Moreno, and has an area of 192.14 km<sup>2</sup>. The district of Moreno<sup>1</sup> currently has an estimated population of 62,263 inhabitants and its population density is 289.16 inhab./km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>12</sup>

The composition of the sample of PET-HEALTH / GRADUASUS components is shown in Figure 1. During the project, the teaching-service-community integration was promoted, which also aimed to experience interdisciplinarity between students and participating professionals, providing communication between these three pillars, constituting moments full of discussions to overcome the weaknesses evidenced in the experience period.

Work areas	Tutors	Preceptors	Students
Nursing	4	4	6
Medicine	3	3	6
Veterinary Medicine	3	5	6

Figure 1. Sample composition of PET-HEALTH / GRADUASUS components. Moreno (PE), Brazil, 2016-2018.

It was defined that, besides the general objective, each course had a specific subproject and the theme developed by the nursing team (tutors and students) was “Health of the elderly worker: a teaching-service integration proposal”.

In parallel to the program activities, a return was produced for professionals and, especially, the community, through a situational diagnosis that allowed the direction of health measures and actions directed to the real needs of the elderly population, especially the elderly who still had work activities.

From May 2016 to May 2018, the theoretical and practical activities of the program were carried out in order to accomplish 8 (eight) hours per week, totaling 804 hours at the end of the project. Figure 2 shows the activities that were developed, as well as their place and period.

Location	Type of activity	Period
UFRPE	Training Course	21/05/2016 to 31/05/2016
Moreno	Family Health Unit	01/06/ 2016 to 31/05/ 2017
	Health Surveillance	01/06/2017 to 14/08/2017
	Polyclinic Beiro Uchoa	16/08/2017 to 27/09/2017
	FHSC	30/09/2017 to 27/11/2017
	Project Closure	30/11/2017 to 31/05/2018

Figure 2. Practical theoretical activities developed by undergraduate nursing students during PET-HEALTH / GRADUASUS. Moreno (PE), Brazil, 2016-2018.

The project was divided into two phases, one theoretical and one practical. The theoretical phase consisted of offering a training course for the students of the three courses, with the objective of promoting a leveling of knowledge on the theme related to primary health care, UHS and integration teaching service. The course with a total workload of 40 hours/class, offered by teachers / tutors and health professionals of the municipality/preceptors, was held at URFPE facilities.

In the practical phase, it was offered to work in Moreno health care units and networks. The first practical actions started at Family Health Units (FHU), where groups were formed composed of one student from each course, which were distributed, interdisciplinarily, in the Beiro Uchoa Polyclinic and in the Family Health Support Center (FHSC) and activities were developed according to university availability and workload.

Data was presented from the experiences and practical activities that were developed by the students throughout the project. It is relevant to report these experiences and thus highlight the importance of developing activities in an interdisciplinary and interprofessional manner throughout the undergraduate course.

The group met at the end of each rotation, in order to evaluate the experience, identify the development of subproject research, and share the experiences of each field. It is noteworthy that, at these moments, there was the participation of tutors, preceptors and students, providing a broad approach to the positive and

negative points, as well as providing a critical construction in relation to the practices and interaction between participants.

The research project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of the Federal University of Pernambuco, under protocol N. 1,904,109 and CAAE No. 62713416.1.0000.5208, respecting all necessary ethical principles and recommendations.

RESULTS

♦ Beginning of activitiy development

After the integration phase, the PET members were present in the UHS training course, in order to level the students' knowledge about the theme and thus optimize the performance quality of the functions that would be developed in the municipality. The following topics were addressed: UHS and Social Control; Family Health Strategy and FHSC; Health education; Health Surveillance - Epidemiological and Information Systems; Health Surveillance - Sanitary and Environmental; Worker's health; Elderly Health; Integration; Teaching / Service; Epidemiology - Indicators.

The classes were taught by teachers and professionals of the Health Department of the municipality, through active methodologies, leading to critical reflections. The training experience was made possible through knowledge sharing among the students, teachers and service professionals, obtaining the reports of the professionals themselves, who addressed the particularities of the practical application, the routine of care, and the positive points and



difficulties inherent to the services, as they had contact with the theoretical foundation of the themes.

It is observed that the students of the nursing course are, throughout their education, in greater contact with the contents that cover public health in general views of all other members, through the training promoted by the program. It is also noticed that the nursing and medical students were able to share their experiences through the disciplines taken during the undergraduate course.

The difficulties with the familiarization of the themes experienced by the students of the veterinary medicine course are pointed out, since the public health contents were only addressed in the last periods of the course and the participants had not yet attended the course. It is noted, however, that it was not a limitation, because the level of knowledge between teachers, students and professionals quickly occurred. At the end of the course it was noticed the growth of the participants, who were enthusiastic, demonstrating the relevance of the themes for the good professional formation of the students.

#### ◆ **Knowing to assist: profile of the population of the municipality of Moreno-PE**

After conducting the training of students, it was necessary to deepen the knowledge about the themes that would be worked on during the program, by researching scientific articles available in the literature and information systems of the UHS. The students were divided into three groups, in a multi and interprofessional way, aiming to integrate and enable interdisciplinarity.

Three different population profiles of the last years in the city of Moreno were traced, describing the socio-demographic and labor situation related to pesticide poisoning of rural workers, health of the elderly worker and accidents with motorcyclists, according to the specific proposals related to each one of courses involved.

The results achieved at an event held by the Health Department of the municipality were presented, which brought together management representatives, health professionals from all areas, teachers, students and users of the health service. The objective was to update the professionals about the population design of certain groups and to correlate with the experiences and realities brought by the professionals and users.

#### ◆ **Actions in the various health promotion scenarios**

Practical actions were established in the services, after the scientific basis and design of the population in question, in which the students were divided into pairs and threes, in a multidisciplinary manner and often in the services on alternate days during the week. The service

professionals welcomed them, who presented the work routines and the infrastructure of the places, as the students incorporated the service routine. One could notice the exchange of theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as the sharing of experiences among the various actors.

Students were present in the construction and execution of health promotion activities developed by the units, enabling the integration of knowledge acquired in the classroom with the reality of material and human resources to implement these activities.

#### **Performance at the FHU**

Students were distributed to field activities in the seven FHU of the municipality: Vila Holandesa, ABC, Bonança, Heráclito, João Paulo II, Pedreira, located in the urban area of the municipality; and Massaranduba, located in the rural area. The teams of these units are formed, generally, by: nurses, nursing technicians, doctors and Community Health Agents (CHA).

#### ◆ **Health Surveillance Practice**

Subsequently, the students were segmented by courses, seeking to achieve the objective of the specific subproject of each area. At this stage, the routine of surveillance was experienced in all its subdivisions: sanitary, epidemiological and environmental. Thus, the daily life, the existing particularities, the disparities and the points of proximity between each of the subdivisions were understood.

Intervention actions were followed, such as: facility inspection, vector control, endemic case tracking, and vaccine distribution. It was also found the articulation between health surveillance, management, other services, the community and the environment.

In line with the development of local actions, through a semi-structured instrument, data collection was started with the elderly workers of the region, with the purpose of identifying the socio-economic-demographic situation, health profile, health problems related to workers' health, work ability index, work process of the elderly and the difficulties faced. Through this instrument, the work capacity index was evaluated, which included questions about work ability compared to the best in all life, work capacity in relation to physical demands, number of current diseases diagnosed by the physician, loss of estimated to work because of illness, sick leave in the last 12 months, self-predictability of work ability two years from now and mental resources.

This profile identified the importance of the need to train caregivers of the elderly, health professionals working in the FHU and undergraduate students, regarding care for the elderly who suffer health consequences resulting from previous work activities or who perform work

activities, besides contributing to the reflection and better definition of the actions directed to this social group.

#### ◆ Actions at the Beiro Uchôa Polyclinic

In this scenario, we identified the functioning of the municipal reference service (medium complexity), the Beiro Uchôa Polyclinic, and the peculiarities of the sector in relation to the previous ones, such as: different demands, urgent and emergency care, different attributions and interactions among professionals. It is emphasized that, as it is a general emergency hospital, data collection related to the elderly workers was continued, because during the experience in this field some elderly sought care.

#### ◆ FHSC Activities

Finally, the last health service experienced by students of the nursing course was highlighted, which enabled the multi and interdisciplinary performance of the health team through the elaboration of a STP - Singular Treatment Plan - for each case welcomed by the community, jointly between the various professionals.

It is pointed out that another important tool used by FHSC is health education, which aims to disseminate knowledge, enabling better awareness of the population about the health-disease process and improving quality of life, disseminating healthy habits. Health education actions were developed with the team in various community settings, such as FHU and municipal schools, addressing topics of health relevance, ranging from discussions about hygiene, prevention of parasitic diseases, to prevention activities in pink October and blue November.

#### ◆ Experience evaluation

After the experience in all these services, it was noted the growth of students regarding the understanding of the different relationships between professionals, in addition to all the gain in knowledge, enriching and stimulating welcoming, humanized practices, permeated by comprehensive care as future professionals. The importance of the articulation between the sectors was also solidified, strengthening the aspects of interdisciplinarity and interprofessionality.

Finally, a general report was prepared to describe the activities performed, to evaluate the positive points and limitations of each experience. In addition, there was a time when students, teachers and health service professionals could share their experiences related to the interaction between academia and health services. The interrelationship between students from different courses, teachers from different universities and health professionals was highlighted.

#### ◆ Limitations

During the project, several challenges were found that hindered the development of the PET proposal. It was pointed out that one of the difficulties was the availability of participants' schedules to perform the activities, since they had to reconcile the academic activities with the extension, just as the professionals had to match the demands of the service with the program activities.

Another difficulty was noticed, which was the limitation of the municipality's infrastructure for the activities to be developed, namely: reduced transportation availability, hard-to-reach locations and precariousness in the structure of some services. Other obstacles are the lack of preparation of some professionals in the reception of students and in conducting activities in the services.

It is recognized that the difficulties encountered during the life time did not outweigh the positive results that were achieved during the program.

#### ◆ Strengths

It was observed that one of the main positive points of this experience was the integration teaching-service-community, allowing students to consolidate the knowledge acquired in undergraduate. It is noted that similar experience was found in another experience report of a PET held in Porto Alegre, in which it was identified that the program strengthened the training of students, making them safer to practice in the profession.

It is noteworthy that the possibility of working with professionals from different areas of knowledge, once they had contact with the knowledge and specific actions of each profession, also built new knowledge from the contribution of each one. A good relationship was also established in the activities carried out by the interdisciplinary teams, making them able to use their skills together to solve problems in different health settings.

It is emphasized that, considering the limitations and favorable points, the balance of all PET experience was positive, resulting in a unique opportunity for personal and professional growth during participation in the program.

### DISCUSSION

The activities of PET-Saúde begin with a moment of presentation and familiarization between tutors, professionals and students. Some dynamics were performed that facilitated the interaction between the participants, enabling an exchange of experience between the different professions, favoring interprofessionality. Interprofessional education is evidenced as an

important educational method for the development of a collaborative practice, with the purpose of qualifying the students in future professionals capable of teamwork, ensuring the improvement in the quality of care to users.<sup>13-4</sup>

The active methodology was configured as an important tool, as it favored the development of learning in a collaborative way, considering that each professional contributes in some way with their experiences, bringing to light the process of reflection of the actions performed by them in the service.<sup>13</sup> The importance of working on these topics in the context of undergraduate studies is emphasized, resulting in a change in the conduct of future professionals, making them more committed to their practical performance and service routines.<sup>11</sup>

It was made possible, from the construction of the population profiles, a better understanding by the students and teachers about the studied population, allowing necessary adjustments and redirects in the initial proposals. It was made possible the discussion and deepening of the themes, favoring a necessary approach of the students with the reality of the population and the services in which they will act.<sup>11</sup>

It was noted that the purpose of the action was to know the population of each area, its location, the infrastructure, the work process, as well as to perform a geographic mapping of the scope of each FHU. Data were obtained from collections at the units themselves and at home visits. It was evident that home visits were important because they allowed to know the reality of the communities, understanding the sanitary and socioeconomic conditions that influence the health of each user, directing care to their specific needs.<sup>15</sup>

Concomitant to this, it was possible to experience the routine of the establishments, providing interaction with various professionals, as well as contact with the community. Thus, it is favored the approximation between different areas of health knowledge, the mutual respect in the interrelationship between professionals and the qualified care delivery to the user.<sup>15</sup>

It was favored the change of view of students about care based on the biomedical model, raising awareness about the need to provide comprehensive care to the user. The need to change this view of public management was encouraged, in order to train professionals with a broader perspective in relation to health practice, as advocated by PET.<sup>16</sup>

It was found that this construction took place dynamically, relying on the specificities and knowledge of each profession involved in the process, highlighting the particularities of the individual. It is known that the performance of FHSC is based on the foundation of

interdisciplinarity and comprehensiveness, which aims at a broad look of various professionals in order to transform the health situation of the population.<sup>17</sup>

Some adversities were also found in other reports of similar experiences, such as the experience of the PET program in Minas Gerais, in which the difficulty of communication with management is observed as a limitation, unlike what was found in this experience.<sup>18</sup>

The interaction between the community and the service professionals was made possible, thus enabling the student to be able to recognize himself as a transforming agent of reality in health.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, it is noteworthy that PET-Health aroused the interest of students about the production of scientific material through the data obtained in the collections of the city and the experiences, providing the preparation of abstracts and scientific articles for presentations at research events. . It is noteworthy that, according to a research conducted by the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN) with students of medical, nursing and dentistry courses, the participants of PET-Saúde stood out in the area of research and extension, as well as had a higher overall performance score in the 2010 National Student Performance Exam (ENADE), with an overall average of 55.48, compared to those who did not participate in the program, who scored an average of 50.96.<sup>19</sup>

Advances from adherence to programs for this purpose are consolidated in the literature, by demonstrating the experiences lived by students through manuscripts published in journals that evaluate the various contexts of this practice.<sup>3,7-9</sup> It was evidenced that PET -Health acts as an indispensable strategy for training critical-reflexive professionals, as well as favoring the formation of qualified professionals to promote the articulation and qualification of interprofessionality, as well as making students aware of the effective coping with the various realities of life and health from the community.<sup>10</sup>

It was found that the basis of the program is the promotion of education, service and community integration, inserting the students in the true scenario of the levels of health care that make up the UHS, in order to transform the knowledge and reflections of these professionals in training.<sup>3</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the participation in the program contributed to the construction of an important vision for the professional formation of the students of each course regarding the teaching-service-community integration, which represents a great challenge, emphasizing the



importance of extension as a developing means for interdisciplinary and interprofessional experiences among the students of the three courses, teachers and preceptors.

It is expected that the results evidenced in this report may also support a reformulation of the curriculum of health courses, encouraging greater integration of the academic environment with the services. Students were immersed more broadly in the routine of services, strengthening ties with professionals, establishing new partnerships between universities and UHS services.

Finally, students were able to understand the relevance of interprofessional harmonic articulation and the need to include interprofessionalism in their practice, both as students and as future professionals, contributing to the formation of more capable professionals to work in multi and interprofessional teams.

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