Leadership and Interprofessional Collaboration

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Working across trauma, emergency, long-term care, and now the ICU has shaped how I understand effective leadership and its impact on interdisciplinary collaboration. In high-acuity environments, leadership is exemplified not only through formal titles but also by bedside nurses, who shape team communication and influence patient outcomes. My transition from LPN roles into my current ICU RN position has really shown me how directly leadership style affects interdisciplinary teamwork, particularly in the instance of rapid clinical deterioration.

One significant example of an interdisciplinary experience occurred during a critical juncture in the ICU care process for a patient suffering from respiratory failure. The intensivist, respiratory therapist, charge nurse, and bedside nurses worked well together. Each member's responsibilities were well outlined, representing a standardized communication pattern. The charge nurse's delegation of tasks was effectively handled, while communication helped the team achieve desired outcomes efficiently. This model represented some aspects of transformational leadership, including a vision, empowerment, and accountability (Huang et al., 2025). Because the situation was well understood and psychological safety was felt, all team members felt comfortable speaking up when they recognized slight changes in the patient's health profile. The patient was stabilized, and the family was kept updated.

However, in contrast, I have observed situations in trauma-adjacent settings where ineffective leadership might have impacted team collaboration. For example, during a rapid response, ineffective delegation of responsibilities and a lack of communication were witnessed, which caused team activities to overlap, impacting the administration of medication. For instance, there was a lack of team willingness to confront the leader, implying a lack of psychological safety. However, research indicates that the importance of psychological safety in teams can never be overstated, as it enables nurses to feel free to

participate in decision-making processes (Dietl et al., 2023). Without that foundation, interdisciplinary performance suffers, and patient safety may be compromised.

Based on my observations, effective leadership is quite different from ineffective leadership, as effective leaders remain calm, communicate well, and encourage input from different disciplines. Inclusive leadership has been attributed to enhancing work engagement as well as cooperative relationships among different health professionals (Wang et al., 2024). The leadership style that exhibits respect for each discipline contributes to cohesive teams that run effectively, even in a crisis situation.

Best practices in leadership strategies, as evidenced by recent literature, focus on transformational leadership approaches. Transformational leadership encourages the development of motivating factors that promote common objectives, which is vital in improving patient safety outcomes (Huang et al., 2025). Inclusive leadership strengthens teamwork by ensuring that all team stakeholders feel recognized and addressed in the process. In addition, the development of a psychologically safe environment is critical in boosting nurse and interdisciplinary performance (Dietl et al., 2023). Organized interdisciplinary rounds have been effective in improving communication in critical care settings, subsequently enhancing patient outcomes (Heip et al., 2022). This is consistent with my current practice in the ICU, which benefits significantly from the use of rounding and communication.

Reflecting on my learning process, I have identified the need to further enhance my transformational leadership skills by developing an inclusive character. While I am composed during emergencies, I have the potential to improve on effective team debriefing and mentoring newer nurses. Hence, by participating in advanced trauma and cardiac critical care courses, as well as mentorship programs from more experienced ICU nurse leaders, I can enhance my growth in transformational leadership skills to provide support for

psychologically safe working environments, collaboration, and improved teamwork for better patient results.

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