

13 May 2019

Media Release

APC and ANMAC interprofessional education Colloquium proves “together we can do more”.

Education for high quality and effective health services needs to shift its emphasis away from clinically siloed care and more towards the team-based care that can be shaped according to patient need.

This year’s Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) and Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council (ANMAC) Colloquium examined how interprofessional education and collaboration can make the difference to deliver culturally sensitive, empathetic and holistic care with the right combination of clinical experts.

APC CEO Bronwyn Clark said, as health professionals, our role is to bring together the right people, at the right time for the right condition to improve health outcomes for all patients.

“This one-day symposium enabled delegates to explore trends in interprofessional education and learning that ensures effective patient-centred care.

“Strong focus was placed on cultural safety, developing empathy, improving mental health systems, handling conflict and building effective teams, and consequently how we implement these components into health profession education,” Ms Clark said.

Indigenous health leaders Leanne Te Karu, (NZ) and Janine Mohamed (the Lowitja Institute) shared their stories and outlined the need for cultural safety to improve access and outcomes for their people.

“If we don’t collaborate, we don’t have all the pieces to the jigsaw puzzle and those gaps will continue to derail and undermine what can and should be achieved through team-based care,” said Ms Te Karu.

ANMAC CEO Fiona Stoker said the Colloquium endowed delegates with reflections on the way we must engage with our clients and recognise the whole person and their origins.

Other highlights included:

- The University of Queensland’s interprofessional learning session, where delegates learnt how to remove the narrow lens by which people perceive their own profession to break biases and enable collaboration;

[w pharmacycouncil.org.au](http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au) | [e admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au](mailto:admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au) | [p + 61 2 6188 4288](tel:+61261884288)

Level 1, 15 Lancaster Place
Majura Park, Canberra Airport
ACT 2609
Australia

ABN 45 568 153 354

- An interprofessional team from Monash University explained the correlation between empathy and effective patient-centred care. Anna Barwick from UNE presented her research on measuring empathy in the student cohort;
- Dr Alice Gilbert and Professor Wendy Cross examined the effects that technology is having on mental health and how that impacts on managing the health of others. Alice and Wendy gave delegates a wake-up call about the impact of “nomophobia” (the irrational fear of being without a mobile phone); and
- Professor Lisa Nissen from QUT presented a hypothetical on a poor patient outcome due to lack of inter-professional collaboration with Credential Diabetes Educator Alison Menzies.

“The prophetic demonstrated the impact of the last session on empathy. It was clear that the very first encounters that clients have with health professionals has a profound effect on the client’s course and outcome of care,” Ms Stoker said.

“This session highlighted why we need to ensure the patient understands the *why* as well as the how treatment is being provided because our services should be ‘patient shaped’ according to their needs, not the other way around.” Ms Clark said

APC and ANMAC plan to keep the Colloquium as a regular feature on the annual calendar and thank colleagues from across the sector for their attendance and engagement. As leading accreditation and education standard-setting bodies, the Colloquium format has been accepted as an excellent opportunity for conversations on health professional education.

Media Contact

Anna Turello
02 6188 4288

[w pharmacycouncil.org.au](http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au) | [e admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au](mailto:admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au) | [p + 61 2 6188 4288](tel:+61261884288)

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