# PHCAST MODULE VI
# INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAMWORK
### Instructor Guide

**Introduction**
Interdisciplinary teamwork is important to achieving both positive health results for people who receive home care and supportive work environments for nurse aides. This module defines interdisciplinary teams, identifies common challenges to teamwork in healthcare and provides tips for good communication among team members.

**Objectives:**
At the end of the module, the students will be able to:

1. Define what an interdisciplinary healthcare team is – Who, What, Where, When, How
2. Reflect on past experiences of teamwork
3. Talk about the important ingredients of good teamwork
4. Talk about the nurse aide's role on a healthcare team
5. Identify the benefits and challenges of teamwork in healthcare
6. Demonstrate how to communicate well with team members

**Instructional Resource Materials:**
Module VI Outline for students
Power Point for Module VI
Instructor Guide

**TEXT IN BLUE INDICATES INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTOR TO READ or ADD to WHAT IS ON THE SLIDE**
**TEXT IN RED INDICATES INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACTIVITIES**

| INSTRUCTOR GUIDE | NOTES |
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| **1 Title Slide: Interdisciplinary Teamwork** | |
| **2 Objectives:**<br>At the end of the module, the students will be able to:<br>1. Define what an interdisciplinary healthcare team is – Who, What, Where, When, How<br>2. Reflect on past experiences of teamwork<br>3. Talk about the important ingredients of good teamwork<br>4. Talk about the nurse aide's role on a healthcare team<br>5. Identify the benefits and challenges of teamwork in healthcare<br>6. Demonstrate how to communicate well with team members | |
| **3 What is an interdisciplinary team?**<br>An interdisciplinary team is a group of people with different skills, knowledge and information working toward a common goal<br><br>**WHO:** A group of people, or even just two people such as the nurse and nurse aide may or may not include patient and family<br>**WHAT:** With different skills and knowledge for example: doctors, nurses, PTs, OTs, dieticians, pharmacists, home care aides<br>**WHERE:** Gathered around a virtual or real table<br>cell phones, curbside, in home<br>**WHEN:** On a regular basis<br>agreed-upon frequency, location, time<br>**HOW:** With common goals typically, to improve patient care plans and the experience of care | |

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| **4 In healthcare, teams are most useful when the patient story is complicated.**<br><br>When diseases and treatments are complex, when people are complex, and when social situations are complex.<br>For example, the following circumstances would benefit from a team approach:<br>1. Care of people who are old or young<br>Usually the oldest old or youngest young<br>2. Care of people who are have life limiting illness<br>Such as those in hospice care<br>3. Care of people who have multiple illnesses and conditions<br>Where drugs can interact or treatments can work at cross purposes<br>4. Care of people who are transitioning between settings, such as from hospital to home, home to nursing home, etc.<br>Transitions in care are a time when patients can be vulnerable to relapse, and confusion about care plans can occur<br>5. Care of people whose health is complicated by the experience of grief, loss, family conflict or too little money For example, financial concerns can often explain patient's decisions to not take medications | |
| **5 Circumstances when a team approach might not be necessary**<br><br>1. An otherwise healthy child with a sinus infection<br>2. A high school athlete who breaks his arm<br>3. A couple that needs a doctor's examination to get a marriage license<br><br>Such circumstances usually require rather simple interventions to address straightforward issues | |

## 6 ACTIVITY #1: Introducing Teamwork

**The instructor asks the questions below, listening to answers from class members, then supplementing with answers in blue.**

**Think about a baseball team**

1. What makes the players a team?
   Interest in the game, practice together over time, common goals
2. What are important qualities of the coach?
   Coordinate schedules, listen to team members, provide overall vision, foster team spirit
3. What is important about the team members who sit on the bench? Provide back up and team spirit
4. What might need to change when the pitcher is sick?
   Requires others to have flexibility in roles
5. What happens with the first baseman only makes half of the practices?
   How can the baseman be accountable to his team? What do team members ask of the baseman?
6. What happens when the outfielder drops a pop fly and the other team wins the game?
   Support each other in the disappointment of losing the game. NO BLAME NO SHAME

Answers may include, but not be limited to the following:

- Common interests and goals
- Recognition of players strengths and weaknesses
- Understanding of other team members' roles
- Promotion of confidence in other members
- Flexibility in roles
- Mechanism for conflict resolution (besides fist fighting)
- Supporting each other

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| **7 ACTIVITY #2: Your Experience on a Team**<br>**Students pair up and talk about your experience being part of a team**<br>(Could be family, sports team, work team)<br><br>1. What was the purpose of the team?<br>Win the game, plan an event, care for a patient<br>2. What qualities were important for your teammates to have?<br>Listening, get things done, follow through<br>3. What qualities or contributions did you add to your team?<br>Optimism, new information, a new approach, curiosity) | |

## 8 Case Study #1: Mr. Smith

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate how the nurse aide can hold key information that no one else on the team may know about…information that is critical to the patient outcomes.

**Read Case Study out loud, clarify information and ask students to work in small groups to answer questions.**

Mr. Smith has Parkinson's disease.

Mr. Smith's healthcare team includes a doctor, social worker, PT and a nurse aide who helps him with his morning routines. Mr. Smith mentioned to his doctor that he missed going to church with his wife. His doctor thought his shuffling, slow gait was the problem, so the doctor increased Mr. Smith's Parkinson's medications and referred him to physical therapy.

The physical therapist evaluated Mr. Smith in the clinic and thought that he had all the needed physical abilities to go to church. For example, he could walk well enough, had good endurance, could come to stand from sitting, and had good balance. The physical therapist also thought Mr. Smith might be getting depressed so she referred him to the social worker.

The social worker talked with Mr. Smith and noticed that he seemed reluctant to go to church even though in the past, church was a meaningful part of his life. His wife was very excited about the idea and couldn't understand why her husband was reluctant. The social worker thought Mr. Smith might be depressed but she wanted to check this idea out with the nurse aide who had been working in the home for a year.

You, the nurse aide, had a chance to talk with the social worker about Mr. Smith. Based on assisting Mr. Smith daily with his morning routine, you had an idea that his leaky bladder might explain Mr. Smith's reluctance to go to church.

You have observed that Mr. Smith is very sensitive about his leaking bladder. You know this because he has asked you to wash out his underwear in the sink to prevent others from knowing he's had an accident.

YOU KNEW HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT LOSING HIS BLADDER CONTROL AND NOT BEING ABLE TO GET TO THE CHURCH BATHROOM FAST ENOUGH.

## 9 Case Study #1: Questions

1. As the aide on Mr. Smith's healthcare team, who would you tell about Mr. Smith's leaky bladder problem?
   Could be anyone else on the team, most likely, the nurse

2. Who else on the team would be likely to know the "leaky bladder" information you have about Mr. Smith? NO ONE

3. What new solutions could arise from the team knowing the "leaky bladder" information you know about? Suggest that Mr. Smith schedule a return visit to his doctor to discuss bladder leakage. Go to the church with Mr. and Mrs. Smith and find the pew closest to the bathroom, or suggest that Mr. Smith wear a Depends undergarment when he goes to church

4. In general, what kinds of things do you know about the people you care for that you think doctors might not know? Fears, family affairs, reasons for not taking medications, money troubles, sleep habits, eating habits, hygiene issues

5. Think about other times when you were a team member in another person's care. As a nurse aide, how would you describe your role on the healthcare team? Alert the team to unusual behaviors e.g. "He's never acted this way before", notice changes in function such as excessive sleeping or drinking, relate social issues that may be interfering with person's well-being such as family conflict or dissatisfaction with other caregivers

6. What do you see as your most important contribution to the people you care for? To the healthcare team? Helping people remain comfortable and safe in their homes.

## 10 Case Study #2: Mr. Jones

The purpose of this case is to point out that a team approach gives aides opportunities to learn more about their patients' diagnoses, enabling understanding of a patient's behaviors and ultimately resulting in better treatment approaches. Asking questions is an important contribution for any team member. Everybody learns!

**Read case out loud to the class.**

Three home care nurse aides dreaded their shift with Mr. Jones because he would occasionally lash out at them for no apparent reason. He even took a swing at one of the nurse aides as she brought his lunch to the table. The lashing out was always a surprise because usually Mr. Jones was very pleasant and easy to be with.

The home care agency wants to insure the safety of their aides as well as try to serve Mr. Jones. Before prematurely discharging Mr. Jones from the service, the nurse met with the three aides to see if there was a common pattern for when the lashing out occurred. The aides knew Mr. J was formerly a boxing champion. After talking to the aides and then doing an eye examination, the nurse discovered that Mr. Jones had homonymous hemianopsia.

INSTRUCTOR INFO: Homonymous hemianopsia is a loss of vision on the same side of both eyes. Example below:

It is usually caused by brain injury such as from stroke, trauma, tumors, or infection. Turns out, when aides came from behind Mr. Jones' left side, they suddenly "appeared" in his field of vision. He was startled and reacted to his fear by striking out. The aides and nurses figured out what was going on, and together worked out a solution that was communicated to all the caregivers working with Mr. Jones.

## 11 Case Study #2: Questions

1. As one of Mr. Jones' nurse aides, what information do you need to know from the nurse? What is homonymous hemianopsia?
2. **Who** needed to know **what** before solutions could be figured out? Nurse needed to know that Mr. Jones was lashing out. Aides need to know how homonymous hemianopsia affects people's vision, why it occurs (usually stroke), and how to change routines to work around it (e.g., don't approach Mr. Smith on his affected side without letting him know you are coming. Otherwise, you startle him by suddenly appearing in his sight.
3. In everyday work, what factors can prevent successful teamwork? Lack of understanding, time pressures, poor relationships
4. What solutions can you think of to decrease the barriers that prevent good teamwork? Learn respectful communications strategies
5. Next time, is there anything you would do differently to cut down on your fear of working with people like Mr. Jones? Tell the nurse immediately about your fear of Mr. Jones' behavior, then try to work with the nurse to solve the issue

## 12 Activity #3: MAGIC WORDS

Working in healthcare is challenging. To avoid burnout and frustration, team members can help each other weather the storms that seem to come along frequently. Offering support never hurts! Maintaining your natural curiosity will help you grow and ensure that your patients receive better care.

Because nurse aides provide the majority of hands-on care, they are often the first to learn about people's concerns, fears, and problems. Unfortunately, this important information is often hard to communicate to supervisors and other members of the health care team. Sometimes nurse aides can be uneasy about communicating what they know about the people they care for. **What are your ideas about why it can be hard to talk to supervisors or team members? Listen to ideas from the class and summarize.**

As a nurse aide, you may have information that is critical to your patients' well-being and unknown to other team members. Knowing how to start a conversation with a supervisor or other health care provider can improve the likelihood that unrecognized but important information is shared. To do a good job, think about what might make it easier to share information, ask tough questions, or receive direction about next steps from team members.

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| Pair up with a classmate and practice what you would say in the following situations. Write down the words that feel most helpful to you.<br><br>**After exercise, bring class back together, listen to student answers, and supplement with answers in blue below.**<br><br>1. When a supervisor seems distracted or pressed for time…<br>I SEE YOU ARE BUSY NOW SO LET'S SET UP A TIME TO TALK.<br><br>2. When a supervisor is not paying attention…<br>I HAVE IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO SHARE.<br><br>3. When the nurse seems overwhelmed…<br>WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT YOU?<br><br>4. When you need more detail or direction…<br>PLEASE TELL ME MORE<br><br>5. When you disagree…<br>I CAN SEE HOW YOU WOULD THINK THAT WAY, BUT I HAVE A DIFFERENT IDEA/OPINION.<br><br>6. When you want to know who to talk to about an issue...<br>WHO IS THE BEST PERSON TO COMMUNICATE THIS INFORMATION TO THE FAMILY?<br><br>7. When you need help writing up your ideas....<br>HOW SHOULD I DOCUMENT THIS INFORMATION SO IT WILL BE CLEAR TO OTHERS? | |
| **SHOW and DISCUSS VIDEO (12 minutes) Conclude class with brief discussion asking students to come up with 3 strategies they will implement (tomorrow) to improve their communication with members of their healthcare team.** | |