

Fellow Profile



Professor Maree O'Keefe The University of Adelaide

Professor Maree O'Keefe, a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, is currently Associate Dean Learning and Deputy Chair of the University Academic Board. She is an expert in academic governance and health curriculum development.

Fellowship title: Collaborating across boundaries: a framework for an integrated interprofessional curriculum

Year completed: 2015

Expertise key words: governance, curriculum, interprofessional

What did you achieve?: I had a clear and compelling vision for interprofessional learning to be embedded in the core health profession curriculum of every Australian university. Through the National Teaching Fellowship, I conveyed this vision to others, and gained the ideal platform to lead a national program of activities and collaborations.

Interprofessional learning describes a curriculum where students of different disciplines learn 'with, from and about each other'. Despite being widely held as important, embedding interprofessional learning into standard health profession curriculum remains a significant challenge. The Fellowship work led to a curriculum implementation framework and a set of achievable, assessable, interprofessional learning competencies that were applicable to all health disciplines.

National recognition has included citation of my work in influential reports such as the Health Professions Accreditation Councils' Forum (HPACF) position statement (2015) and the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) Independent Review of Accreditation Systems (2017). A requirement for interprofessional learning is now included in the professional accreditation standards for all individual health professions including medicine, nursing, dentistry, physiotherapy and pharmacy. Endorsement by national bodies, especially of the common interprofessional learning competencies, has ensured impact on accreditation practices nationally. Academics at other Australian universities are incorporating these competencies in their own curricula.

I continue to work nationally to realise a 'whole of system' approach to interprofessional learning including the establishment of a national governance framework to ensure leadership and promotion of interprofessional learning as a central component of all Australian health professional practice.

What does the sector need now?: Implementation of optimal governance models for Interprofessional Learning in health care curriculum that bring disciplines together in effective and sustainable curriculum development and delivery.



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