USU Audiology Program Participates in an International Initiative to Integrate Person-Centered Care in Graduate Training

Utah State University revamps their program with person-centered care in collaboration with the Ida Institute and other university audiology programs
https://idainstitute.com/ida_community/our_partners/universities/

Utah State University (USU) Department of Communicative Disorders and Deaf Education began 2019 with an ambitious goal: infuse person-centered care (PCC) throughout their curriculum and clinical practices. Inspired by the understanding that PCC improves patient outcomes and patient and clinician satisfaction alike, Karen Muñoz, Department Head, assembled a committee of two academic faculty members and one clinical faculty member to plan and implement this ambitious project.

“The future of clinical practice is person-centered. Since we are training future clinicians, we felt it was critical to add PCC to our training in a structured and systematic way,” explains Muñoz. Our vision is for person-centered care to be integrated intentionally throughout our curriculum and clinical practices in a way that our students are ready to provide PCC when they graduate”.

As part of the project, the committee will work to identify opportunities in existing courses where PCC content and skills can be added; modify university clinic intake forms to elicit person-centered conversations; and develop materials to evaluate students on their PCC skills in the clinic.

The committee has developed a “PCC at USU” student learning guide explaining the program’s commitment to person-centered care, outlining how PCC is incorporated throughout the program, how they will be evaluated, and how they will provide feedback to faculty teaching PCC via course and clinic evaluations. The guide also sets the expectation that students will strive to become self-aware about how they communicate and be open to feedback, recognizing that learning how to provide PCC is a process that takes time, and gradual improvement is expected.

Muñoz says that students thus far have been very positive about the initiative, including the Ida resources that have already been implemented, such as Ida ethnographic videos and the motivational
tools, but that person-centered care is not something easily adopted. Muñoz shared, “Students often feel somewhat vulnerable because changing the way you communicate can feel quite personal. It is important that we as educators facilitate a safe learning environment as students try out new communication techniques and explore person-centered approaches to counseling.”

A key component of the PCC implementation project is supporting instructors and clinicians as they develop their ways of teaching PCC. The committee is currently developing a guide for instructors.

The project is comprehensive and ongoing. “Our goal has been to keep the rest of the faculty informed while the committee does the legwork. We all recognize this will be a work in progress and will take some time to get it working well. As we go along, we plan to evaluate how we are doing, and we will keep our eyes on the prize — preparing our students to be competent person-centered practicing individuals.”

The Ida Institute partners with universities that demonstrate a commitment to prioritizing person-centered care in their curriculum and clinical instruction. With an interest in supporting the initiative at Utah State University, the Ida Institute and USU formalized their partnership in early 2019.

Inaugural Meeting

Stakeholders from university training programs, national patient organizations and national professional associations from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, South Africa, Australia, and Denmark met for two-days in August to discuss strategies to advance implementation of person-centered care in audiology.

Networks were created among stakeholder groups to build momentum and increase impact.
International collaborations were created to address important topics and projects.

Working groups were formed and will meet virtually over the next year to strategically address priorities.