

CHANGES IN GLOBAL HEALTH PRACTICES  
**FOSTERING INTERDISCIPLINARITY TO EDUCATE THE NEXT GENERATION OF GLOBAL HEALTH ACTORS: A KEY MISSION OF THE NEWLY CREATED I<sup>3</sup>H INSTITUTE**Hilde Stevens<sup>1</sup>, Marie Neunez<sup>1</sup>, Samia Laokri<sup>1,2</sup>, Michel Goldman<sup>1</sup>1. Institute for Interdisciplinary Innovation in healthcare (I<sup>3</sup>H), Faculty of Medicine, Université libre de Bruxelles  
2. Université libre de Bruxelles, School of Public Health, Health Policy and System Research – International Health**INTRODUCTION**

Collaborative innovation is pivotal to move global health forward. For this purpose, a number of public-private partnerships and philanthropic organizations were created but effective collaboration is often lacking. There is a critical need to develop among all stakeholders a holistic vision of the multiple factors that intervene in the translation of scientific knowledge into accessible and affordable care. This requires tremendous changes in the education of future health players, irrespective of their specific role in healthcare (1-6).

**OBJECTIVE**

Train the next generation healthcare actors to

- 1) translate scientific advances into innovative patient-centered standards of care,
- 2) help them understand the roles of different healthcare stakeholders, and
- 3) face the challenges and future transformations of medicine and healthcare systems.

**METHOD**

- > **Aim:** The I<sup>3</sup>H Institute (7) is dedicated to train the next generation of health actors by stimulating their interest for interdisciplinary approaches for healthcare challenges.
- > **Funder:** Our innovative program is supported by the Baillet Latour philanthropic fund.
- > **Organization:** The program is based on 15 half-day interactive sessions led by internationally recognized experts in the healthcare sector (from academia, private companies and public institutions, such as NGOs, patient organizations and regulatory agencies).
- > **Scope:** A wide range of topics are covered, from basic research to preclinical and clinical investigations, health economics, public health, business and management in health, ethics and patient-centric care.
- > **Learning and evaluation process:** In order to apply the acquired knowledge across these different domains, groups of students from different faculties and universities and having different backgrounds are asked to work on specific case studies and to jointly develop a concrete proposal that addresses a specific health challenge. After submission of their dissertation, students present their work in front of an interdisciplinary jury. The degree of students' satisfaction is evaluated through an anonymous survey which is completed on a voluntary basis.

**RESULTS**

> Course participants: Our educational program attracted 80 participants from various Belgian universities and faculties (medicine, pharmacy, public health, basic sciences, engineering, economics and business) as well as young healthcare professionals (e.g. EC trainees) (Fig. 1 and 2).

> Involved institutions in the learning process: the balance between academic and external experts (public health organizations and private companies) is safeguarded (Fig. 3).

> Participants' evaluation process: Students' performance assessed by the quality of their dissertations and oral defences clearly indicated that they gained the expected knowledge.

> Reported added value of the interdisciplinary education: The students' feedback was unambiguously positive. Several of them stated that they acquired valuable knowledge, that they learned so much from working in interdisciplinary teams and at the intersection of disciplines and would recommend colleagues to attend the program.



Figure 1: Background education of the participants in the interdisciplinary educational program

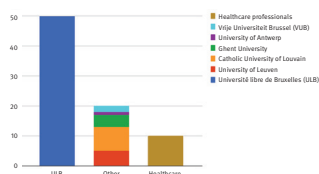


Figure 2: Course participants' institutional affiliations

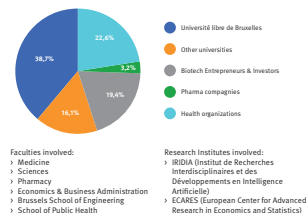


Figure 3: Course speakers' institutional affiliations

**DISCUSSION**

Although we had to overcome the challenge of bringing together teachers and students from different horizons, our experience demonstrated the feasibility and the added value of interdisciplinary education to foster collaborative innovation across the healthcare landscape.

**KEYWORDS**

Educating the next generation's health actors  
Interdisciplinarity  
Translational Medicine

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