

**POSTER ABSTRACT****Evaluating the Impact of the International Learner Program™ at SickKids: Enhancing Global Paediatric Healthcare Through Structured Immersive Learning**

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**Background:** The International Learner Program (ILP) at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), established in 2009, offers customized educational experiences for international healthcare professionals. Aligned with SickKids' mission to advance global paediatric healthcare and academically affiliated with the University of Toronto, the ILP strengthens the global paediatric workforce through immersive, evidence-based training. By enhancing clinical capability, leadership, and interprofessional collaboration, the program builds a skilled and inclusive workforce capable of advancing integrated, people-centred care.

The ILP addresses gaps in paediatric expertise by equipping healthcare professionals from over 80 countries with knowledge and skills that support integration across systems and contexts. Participants engage in multidisciplinary learning and child- and family-centred approaches, promoting the ability to deliver coordinated, holistic care aligned with the principles of integration and continuity across the child health journey.

**Approach:** Since its inception, the ILP has welcomed over 2,500 healthcare professionals worldwide, offering observational and practical experiences. Following its post-COVID-19 relaunch, 336 participants joined the program; 194 met the inclusion criteria, and 92 completed post-experience self-assessment surveys. Using a mixed-methods design, this study evaluated satisfaction, knowledge application, and the ILP's contribution to workforce capacity and capability within paediatric health systems.

The standardized survey combined quantitative Likert-scale questions assessing satisfaction, skill acquisition, and applicability with qualitative open-ended questions exploring implementation, challenges, and perceived impact. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while thematic analysis identified recurring patterns related to capability building and integrated care practices. Triangulation of data ensured reliability and a comprehensive understanding of the ILP's workforce improvement outcomes.

**Results: Findings:** demonstrated high satisfaction and significant knowledge translation into practice. Participants reported applying evidence-based protocols, advancing neonatal and paediatric intensive care services, and developing multidisciplinary, child and family-centred models inspired by SickKids. These changes improved clinical coordination, patient safety, and overall quality of care across the continuum. The ILP also strengthened interprofessional collaboration, facilitated complex decision-making, and promoted the adoption of innovative technologies, such as point-of-care ultrasound and continuous glucose monitoring.

These practices enhanced diagnostic accuracy, reduced hospital stays, and improved communication with families, which are core values of integrated, people-centred healthcare. Implementation success was supported by leadership engagement, institutional alignment, and structured mentorship, though participants faced challenges related to resource constraints and differing healthcare infrastructures. Despite these barriers, participants demonstrated adaptability and resilience, highlighting the ILP's role in fostering sustained workforce growth and capability.

**Implications:** The ILP exemplifies how structured international opportunities can enhance global paediatric workforce capacity and capability. Through immersive, interdisciplinary learning, participants develop advanced clinical expertise, leadership skills, and adaptive problem-solving competencies - critical for integrated care delivery. The ILP provides a transferable framework for translating specialized paediatric training into system-level improvements. Exposure to multidisciplinary models and coordinated care pathways enables the transfer of best practices across diverse contexts, promoting sustainable integration and quality improvement.

The growing ILP alum network extends this impact through global mentorship, collaborative research, and dissemination of integrated care innovations. Future priorities include strengthening alumni engagement to further the Program's contribution to a capable, connected, and integrated paediatric workforce worldwide.