

Episode: *Author Interview: “How to Use Improv to Help Interprofessional Students Respond to Status and Hierarchy in Clinical Practice”*

Guest: Anne Graff LaDisa, PharmD

Host: Tim Hoff

Transcript by: Cheryl Green

[Access the podcast.](#)

[bright theme music]

TIM HOFF (HOST): Welcome to another episode of the Author Interview series from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*. I'm your host, Tim Hoff. This series provides an alternative way to access the interesting and important work being done by Journal contributors each month. Joining me on this episode is Dr Anne Graff LaDisa, an associate professor of pharmacy practice at Concordia University School of Pharmacy in Mequon and a clinical pharmacist at Aurora St Luke's Medical Center in Milwaukee. She's here to discuss her article, coauthored with Drs Erica Chou, Amy Zelenski, and Sara Lauck, *How to Use Improv to Help Interprofessional Students Respond to Status and Hierarchy in Clinical Practice*, in the May 2023 issue of the Journal, [Interprofessional Education and Innovation](#). Dr LaDisa, thank you so much for being on the podcast. [music fades]

DR ANNE GRAFF LADISA: Thank you. It's great to be here.

HOFF: So, what's the main ethics point that you and your coauthors are making in this article?

LADISA: Well, we know that team-based care and shared responsibility of caring for patients can improve patient safety and outcomes, and we teach this in interprofessional health care education: so, things like good team communication; shared values of patient-centered care; high quality care that's conducted ethically; a mutual respect of our health care professional teammates; just an overall collaborative, shared understanding of each other's roles and the values of these roles. But we still see hierarchy and status and power differentials in health care practice, which can sometimes be a barrier to these interprofessional core principles. So, my colleagues and I have used an applied improvisation, or a medical improv, exercise in interprofessional education to acknowledge the status and really practice and discuss how status can be used to help the team and the patient.

HOFF: And so, what's the most important thing for health professions students and trainees specifically to take from your article?

LADISA: I think the most important things are some of the lessons my colleagues and I have discovered and discussed when doing the status cards exercise with our interprofessional learners. So, first, status is out there. We should recognize it, but it can be used for good. So, even though you can't maybe change your role on a health care team, you can decide to portray your status in a helpful way, whether it be middle or high or low status. You can do this by modifying your verbal or nonverbal demonstrations of status, which we do in our status cards exercise. So, we think it's helpful for health care professional students to know that status can be adaptable and that power can be shared or transferred among team members.

HOFF: And finally, if you could add a point to your article that you didn't have the time or space to fully explore, what would that be?

LADISA: I think maybe that our work with exploring status with health professions students may have an impact on their professional identity formation, since that's an internal process of sensing their professions' core values and beliefs. So, part of that can be the discovery of the benefits of this shared power and the impact that that can have, along with knowing your strengths and limitations and valuing what other roles can bring to team-based care. [theme music returns]

HOFF: Dr LaDisa, thank you so much for your time on the podcast today and thanks to you and your coauthors for your contribution to the Journal this month.

LADISA: Thank you for having me.

HOFF: To read the full article as well as the rest of this month's issue for free, visit our site, JournalOfEthics.org. We'll be back soon with more *Ethics Talk* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*.