

THE ROLE OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS: ROLES, SKILLS, AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COMMUNICATION

1. Abstract

This case study introduces students to the terminology, responsibilities, and communication styles of **allied health professionals** such as physiotherapists, radiology technicians, laboratory scientists, and dietitians. It emphasizes the importance of **interdisciplinary care**, correct use of **role-specific language**, and how these professionals contribute to the patient's care pathway.

2. Learning Objectives

- Recognize the roles and responsibilities of allied health professionals
- Understand communication protocols used in interdisciplinary teams
- Memorize key terms, abbreviations, and records used in allied roles
- Analyze a case that includes multi-role coordination

3. Allied Health Role Matrix

Role	Main Responsibility	Common Abbreviations	Reporting Tool
Physiotherapist	Restore movement & function	ROM, ADL, TENS	PT Progress Note
Radiology Technician	Imaging & scan operations	MRI, CT, USG	Imaging Protocol Report
Lab Technician	Perform diagnostic tests	CBC, LFT, PCR	Laboratory Result Sheet
Dietitian	Plan nutrition and monitor diet	BMI, RDA, TPN	Diet Chart + Assessment
Occupational Therapist	Aid functional independence	FIM, OT, Splint	OT Functional Assessment

4. Sample Patient Case – Stroke Recovery (Multidisciplinary)

Scenario

A 67-year-old male patient has suffered a mild ischemic stroke. He is admitted for post-stroke recovery with speech issues and right-side weakness.

Role-specific Involvement

Professional	Task Description	Notes
Physiotherapist	Mobilization therapy; track Range of Motion (ROM)	ROM improves from 30° to 70° in 3 days
Dietitian	Nutrition adjustment to manage diabetes and aid recovery	Prescribed diabetic renal diet
Radiology Technician	Conduct CT scan to assess post-stroke bleeding	No hemorrhage noted
Lab Technician	Run daily blood sugar and clotting profile	INR stable, Glucose fluctuates
Occupational Therapist	Assist with eating, dressing, writing skills	Custom-built splint applied

5. Interdisciplinary Communication Flow

[Physician]

↓ Orders

[Lab] ↔ [Radiology]

↓

[Nurses] ↔ [PT, OT, Dietitian]

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[Patient]

- Communication Format: **SBAR (Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation)**
- Coordination via **Daily Interdisciplinary Rounds** and shared EHR updates

6. Student Assignments

1. Fill in a PT progress note based on mock recovery data
2. Match roles with the correct terminology and abbreviations
3. Write an interdisciplinary summary using SBAR
4. Create a care timeline involving at least 3 allied professionals

7. Practical Tools Included

- **Printable Forms:** PT note, Diet Chart, Radiology report template
- **Glossary:** 40 key terms specific to allied health professions
- **Role-based Vocabulary Flashcards**

8. Learning Outcome Table

Outcome	Activity
Understand role distinctions	Matrix, chart exercises
Learn interdisciplinary tools	SBAR writing task, communication diagram
Terminology proficiency	Matching exercise, vocabulary flashcards
Practical application	Form filling and care timeline activity

9. Conclusion

Allied health professionals play critical roles in patient care. By understanding their unique responsibilities and the terminology they use, students can appreciate the depth of multidisciplinary care and prepare to function effectively within diverse clinical teams.

10. References

- WHO Framework on Allied Health Professions
- SBAR Communication Guidelines – Joint Commission
- Hospital Training Manual on Interdisciplinary Rounds

- National Health Service (UK) – Role-based Glossaries

