6.1: Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Describe the increasing complexity of health care needs in the community and the implications of that complexity within our current health system.
- Explore the need for interprofessional collaboration in community care.
- Examine the importance of client and family engagement in their care.
- Identify parallels between leadership characteristics or styles and interprofessional leadership within collaborative practice.
- Determine specific skills and practices that support interprofessional leadership and collaboration.
- Recognize cornerstone components that can lead to successful collaboration.
- Explore relational dynamics of positive teams.

The complexity of delivering effective health and social care means that not one profession can meet the needs of patients in the 21st century — a new and more flexible approach to the delivery of care is required. (Reeves, Macmillan, & van Soeren, 2010, p. 262)

Welcome to the world of teams and collaboration! In this chapter, you will begin to understand the importance of effective multidisciplinary relationships with respect to optimal client health outcomes in the community, and in turn, the necessity of interprofessional leadership in negotiating these relationships. No matter the population served, the need for collaborative practice is critical in our health system today.
Note: *Client* is used throughout the chapter when referring to an individual in need of health care. *Patient* may be used when citing another author’s work.