

Interprofessional Reflective Practice to Address Health Needs of Vulnerable Patients

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Background

- Disparities persist in quality healthcare among at risk populations.
- Health professions education designed to prepare students to care for the underserved must be increased
- Interprofessional models foster collaboration and facilitate patient-centered care.



IRP Curriculum

Goal

Build upon the pilot program successes to implement a 6 week interprofessional service learning experience for medical, pharmacy, and nursing students.

Learning Objectives

- Students will have opportunities to:
- provide care for at-risk vulnerable populations,
 - function as effective members of interprofessional teams, and
 - recognize and appreciate the unique role and contributions of each profession.

Students will learn about:

- factors impacting access to health care services, e.g., poverty, economic/insurance constraints,
- determinants of health-related behaviors, e.g., low literacy, language barriers, and
- special issues for racial and ethnic minorities.



Pilot Work - Medicine M2 Service Learning Program

Goals and Objectives

- Heightened students' commitment to service, social justice, & civic responsibility
- Broadened students' perspective about the physician's role in promoting patients' health and well-being

Components

- Site visits to community organizations serving underserved clients
- Individual guidance by family medicine faculty
- Reflective journal writings
- Service learning project aimed at helping students' respective community sites better serve their client populations

Evaluation

- Students, faculty, and collaborating community sites indicated that the program was perceived as very beneficial.
- More direct involvement with patients was suggested as necessary to enhance the program's meaningfulness and effectiveness.



Pilot Work - Pharmacy P4 Service Learning Program

Overview

- Involved the student, practitioner, older adults, and service agency specialists in an innovative, "hands-on" geriatric practice experience

Components

- Students interacted with older adults from various socio-cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds within the community
- Targeted services included: medication education, access, adherence and vaccinations
- Community-based programs (n=104, as of 2004) have been conducted in ten different languages.

Evaluation

- Students (n=220) reported that their involvement helped them communicate more effectively with older adults.
- 94% of elderly clients (n=1919) agreed that this program helped them understand how to obtain pharmaceutical assistance.



Target Populations

HIV/AIDS
Domestic Violence
Homelessness
Elder Care

Instructional Strategies

With the concept of *interdisciplinary reflective practice* as an overarching principle, students will work in interprofessional teams & engage in a community-based immersion and reflection experience that will include:

- visits to community agencies,
- providing services such as
 - basic health assessments,
 - facilitating system navigation to find a source of and access to quality healthcare, and
 - case management for identified health issues
- seminar-based discussions and presentations.

Program Evaluation Plan

- A pre-post self-assessment of knowledge, attitudes and skills related to caring for underserved patients, interpersonal and interprofessional communication, and self-confidence as a health care provider
- Faculty evaluation of students' performance: completion of site visits, quality of participation in discussions, reflective journal entries, final paper and presentation
- Peer evaluation from other team members specifically related to ability to function as an effective and collaborative team member
- Site personnel evaluation of students' performance at the community agency and the contribution(s) they make to their clients
- Patient evaluation of students' contributions to improving their quality of life by helping address patient-identified health and well-being issues

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Next Steps

