

Community Partnerships for Population Health Experiences

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Abstract

Background/Introduction

Academic nursing is moving toward a competency-based model, explicated through the AACN Essentials. Community-focused experiences are crucial for Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students to develop competence in population and community health. Our team uses innovative teaching methodologies to foster a deep understanding of community health by bridging experiences across semesters.

Purpose

To describe an innovative teaching approach used in a BSN program in North Central Florida facilitating competence in public health nursing by scaffolding community clinical experiences to nurture affective and cognitive understanding.

Methods or Processes/Procedures

During the first semester of their BSN program, students engaged in a foundational clinical experience through the lens of social determinants of health (SDoH) by conducting a windshield survey. During the final semester, students developed a community impact project, designed with community partners, to be relevant and sustainable. Nursing faculty met with community partners to confirm engagement. Small student groups were assigned to community partners and together they identified crucial community needs. Based on the community population in which they were involved, students developed sustainable educational products for implementation.

Results

Scholarly posters were presented to stakeholders during the final class of the semester, demonstrating student competence in community assessment and population focused concepts including SDoH, health promotion, risk reduction, and disease prevention.

Limitations

Recruiting and sustaining ongoing relationships with partners required dedicated faculty resources. Changes in faculty and community partners may impact availability and resources over time. Low attendance when students implement their educational activities may impact the outcomes.

Conclusions/Implications for Practice

Continuity of community-focused experiential learning led to community-based competence through bridging SDoH assessment to producing community educational products. Students learned the value of community collaboration to develop sustainable tools that meet community needs, leading to graduating socially responsible nurses capable of working in a variety of settings that may improve health outcomes for the communities in which they serve.

Biography

Shari Huffman is a certified pediatric nurse practitioner and nurse educator. She transitioned from clinical practice in a specialty pediatric clinic to teaching at the University of Florida in 2019, and has taught mainly undergraduate students for the past 5 years.

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