Caring for the Underserved Through Interprofessional Teaching, Clinical Service, and Scholarship

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THE URBAN SERVICE TRACK (UST)

- Goal: to develop a cadre of well-qualified health care professionals committed to serving Connecticut’s urban underserved populations & who are equipped to work in interprofessional teams
  - Secondary goal: to instill an interest in primary care as a career pathway
- Curriculum
  - All learning experiences done in interprofessional teams
  - “Add on” curriculum to mainstream curriculum in each school
  - Quarterly learning retreats
  - Each focuses on 2-3 competencies & 1 vulnerable population
  - Interactive: case-based problem-solving, learning new clinical skills, discussion with patients, clinicians, & community agency staff
- Interprofessional community outreach activities – 3 main focus areas (emphasis on urban, underserved populations)
  - Health promotion & education
  - Health careers awareness activities for grades K-16
  - Advocacy
- Community-based research projects
- Other professional development opportunities

INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION EVALUATION

- Intergenerational education is prized by many disciplines but robust evaluation of its effectiveness is still lacking
- Faculty from pharmacy, medicine, education, and educational psychology developed, and are validating, evaluation survey to assess effectiveness of interprofessional service-learning opportunities available for multiple health profession students
- Preliminary longitudinal data for pharmacy students

Some Examples of Community Outreach Activities

- From Wheeze to Breeze – Community education around understanding asthma and COPD triggers and medications.
- Health Careers Awareness – for K-16 students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Healthy Hartford Campaign – health promotion activities for residents of the Hartford area.
- Senior Centers Initiative – providing for health promotion activities at Hartford-area senior centers.
- National Kidney Foundation’s Kidney Early Evaluation Program – partnering with the NKF to provide over $800 of free testing services to each patient screened for kidney disease.
- Migrant Farm Worker Clinic – providing accessible health care to migratory workers by establishing mobile clinics at their worksites (farms).
- No Ifs, Ands, or Buts – smoking cessation education at community health events to a variety of age ranges.
- Pathways Sendaros Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program – working with the Pathways Sendaros staff to provide after school programming for 6th-12th graders on health careers awareness, healthy nutrition for teens, poison control/awareness for babysitters, smoking prevention, etc.
- Immunization Awareness Education – highlighting importance of vaccinations to urban, underserved populations

CROSS-CAMPUS INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE: THE URBAN SERVICE TRACK

- The Urban Service Track is a curricular collaboration between the UConn Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, Dental Medicine, Nursing, and Social Work and the Quinnipiac University’s Physician Assistant program
- Started with 4 health profession schools (medicine, pharmacy, dental medicine, and nursing) in 2005; first cohort of selected students (designated as Urban Health Scholars) officially enrolled in fall semester 2007
- No Ifs, Ands, or Buts – smoking cessation education at community health events to a variety of age ranges.
- Pathways Sendaros Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program – working with the Pathways Sendaros staff to provide after school programming for 6th-12th graders on health careers awareness, healthy nutrition for teens, poison control/awareness for babysitters, smoking prevention, etc.
- Immunization Awareness Education – highlighting importance of vaccinations to urban, underserved populations

- Curriculum based on 11 competencies identified by clinicians at Connecticut community health centers as those essentials for caring for vulnerable patient populations
  - Cultural and linguistic differences
  - Health policy
  - Advocacy
  - Multiple constituencies (focusing on 7 vulnerable populations)
  - Health care financing and management
  - Community resources
  - Quality improvement & patient safety
  - Professional and ethical conduct
  - Interprofessional teamwork & leadership

CLINICAL CARE and TEACHING

Collaboration with primary care physicians, nurses, physician assistants and other clinical staff to provide care for some of Connecticut’s most vulnerable citizens at a primary care clinic in Hartford. Teach pharmacy and medical students and residents on optimal drug therapy management in a limited-resource setting.

Health screenings in urban communities

Leading a clinical discussion during learning retreat

Pharmacy students practicing oral exam techniques taught by dental faculty during learning retreat

UST students & faculty provide 2000+ person-hours of community outreach activities to 4,000+ participants each year

Health education programs to all ages (elementary school children to senior citizens) in urban areas

Pharmacy & Dental UST Scholars with Surgeon General at Association for Prevention Teaching and Research conference

Health education programs to all ages (elementary school children to senior citizens) in urban areas

Self-Reported Empathy Toward Patients AY 2006-2007 vs. AY 2010-2011

Testing of Survey Patients

A Y 2006-2007

A Y 2010-2011

Intention to Work in Inter-Professional Teams in the Future AY 2006-2007 vs. AY 2010-2011

Testing of Survey

A Y 2006-2007

A Y 2010-2011

Study of care providers

p < 0.001

p < 0.001