A Student-Led Community Health Worker (CHW) Program- an innovative project to address community health needs and build capacity for an interprofessional workforce

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Objectives

1. Develop a CHW training model that aligns community need and interdisciplinary health professional education

2. Describe the impact of a student-led CHW program in addressing community needs

3. Describe the impact of a student-led CHW program on health professional education

4. Identify barriers and facilitators to the implementation of a student-led CHW program

5. Generate innovative ideas for aligning community need, interdisciplinary health professional education, and social accountability in health profession education for future initiatives
### Background and Setting

#### Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Persons in poverty, percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau  
https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/VA,winc hestercityvirginiaCounty,US/PST045216
Background and Setting

Lord Fairfax Health District received Chronic Disease Prevention Grant

Grant activities:

- Conduct health screenings in priority areas of the community (E.g. food pantries, congregations, etc.)
- Link individuals to community resources for health and wellness and follow up on referrals
- Plan and organize health fairs

CHW Definition: “A health worker who receives standardized training outside the formal nursing or medical curricula to deliver a range of basic health, promotion, educational and outreach services, and who has a defined role within the community system and larger health system”

Naimoli, Frymus, Wuliji, Fanco & Newsome (2014)
Barriers to the Health District’s CHW program success
• Updated state policies
• Movement to credential standards for CHW
• Negative impact on participation
A student-CHW Model: Alignment with Health Professional Education

Program goals

- Respond to community need to enhance CHW workforce

- Enhance interprofessional education by providing students with collaborative practical experience during their respective academic programs

- Promote in depth understanding of the social determinants of health, and strategies to overcome health inequities, by providing the opportunity for interaction with vulnerable populations early in the career of health professional students
Alignment with Health Professional Education

Social Accountability
“The obligation of medical schools to direct education, research and service activities toward addressing the priority health concerns of the community, region and/or nation they have a mandate to serve”
– WHO, 1995

- Connect students with the community and respond to the social needs of the community
- Expose students to health workforce priorities

IFMSA, https://ifmsa.org/social-accountability/
Implementation
Core Implementation Components

Five critical elements for consideration

**Influence:** all the factors that affect implementation of the innovation

*Alignment of health dept. (state and local), university and community organizations’ mission, values, policies, and procedures*

**Source** of the intervention – *health department and University*

**Communication Link:** champion to link the innovation with the destination - *students*

**Destination:** who adopts the innovation – *community groups*

**Feedback:** mechanism for regular flow of information – *students generate reports to health dept. project leader and faculty advisor*

Fixen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman & Wallace (2005)
Fixen, , Naoom, Blase, Friedman & Wallace (2009)
Core Implementation Components

- **Staff & program evaluation** (individual factors)
- **Facilitative Administration supports** (external factors)
- **System Intervention** (external factors)
- **Consultation and Coaching** (Individual factors)
- **Integrated and compensatory**
- **Selection** (contextual factors)
- **Training** (individual factors)

**Monthly generated outcome reports. Ongoing development of data collection tools.**

**Project leader and faculty advisor; leadership and staff of community organization**

**State health dept. regulations, local health dept. leadership, university leadership**

**Student leader and project director provide ongoing consultation. First group of student-CHW to serve as trainers for next group of students**

**Develop MOU**
- Select community organization
- Selection of students

**Online training and in-person orientation**

*Fixen et al. (2005)*
*Fixen et al. (2009)*
*Graff et al. (2010)*
## Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># students who received training and orientation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># student deployed into the community</td>
<td>4 (2 PA, 2 PT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># volunteer hours since September 2017</td>
<td>21 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># unique clients served at Hope Again Care Center (<a href="http://www.wincog.com/hope-again">http://www.wincog.com/hope-again</a>) out of the number of community members who presented to the center during this time period</td>
<td>26 / 95 = 27.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># prediabetes risk assessment completed</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of clients screening, # at risk for diabetes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># blood pressure screening</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of BMI calculations</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># clients referred to patient-centered medical home</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># referrals to community resources</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes

Health topics discussed with clients
• Prediabetes
• Hypertension/high blood pressure
• BP self monitoring
• Healthy lifestyle (daily activities like walking; the importance of eating a balanced diet)
• BMI and associated risks with higher BMI

Comments of community organization
• This is a good service to the community
• By providing education, screening and resources students are assisting those who have limited access to care or without a primary care provider
• Believe services helps to increase awareness
Impact on Student Learning

• “The project allows us to work with real people.”

• “It helps us to understand priorities people in the community have in regards to their healthcare and helped us as students refine how we talk to patients about their conditions and recommendations for lifestyle and care.”

• “We talk about these things in school day in and day out but finding ways to communicate clearly and concisely about health education is a skill that takes practice.”

• “Some of the people we talked to were excited to talk to use about their health, while others were not. We learned to adapt to that and give them the amount of information that they were comfortable with.”

• “We have the opportunity to hear a little bit about the struggles individuals face on a daily basis.”
Barriers and Facilitators

Facilitators
- University mission for service
- Sustainable academic programs in health professions

Barriers
- Limited linkage of students to local community
- Competing priorities of time as an extracurricular activity

Facilitator
Students can play role as trainers and mentors/coaches

Facilitator
Students can play role as trainers and mentors/coaches

Facilitator
Student motivation and genuine desire for service

Barrier
Limited connection to networks within health system

Facilitator
Shaping future healthcare workforce


Naimoli et al (2014)
Future Initiatives & Research

• Develop additional data collection instruments- consider output and outcome measures from CHW generic logic model to measure impact.

• Develop strategies to strengthen community partnerships and enhance networks (social integration construct within CHW generic logic model)

• Is the student-CHW model logical? Can it contribute to high quality CHW programming?

• How does the student-led CHW program align with the constructs in THEnet framework for social accountability?

• **Opportunity to build on social accountability for health professional education**

• Better understand indicators of social accountability and how students make meaning of the factors of THEnet framework.
  • Are there difference between professions?
  • Compared students exposed and not exposed

• Generate/develop ideas for community based research.
References


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