ABSTRACT:
Senior Community Centers, San Diego and the College of Health and Human Services at San Diego State University (SDSU) have established a partnership to support an interdisciplinary clinical site, the SDSU Clinic, to train students to deliver health and wellness services. The College of Health and Human Services is composed of the Schools of Nursing; Social Work; Nutrition and Exercise Science; Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences; and the Graduate School of Public Health. The SDSU Clinic is located at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center, the flagship center for Senior Community Centers.

In 2008, SDSU Adult-Gerontology nurse practitioner (NP) faculty envisioned opportunities for students to work with culturally diverse, low-income seniors with chronic health problems without the time constraints of the traditional primary care setting. Accepting an invitation from Senior Community Centers, NP faculty spearheaded a plan for the delivery of healthcare services at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center, scheduled to open in Spring 2010.

In 2009, School of Nursing faculty contributed to the architectural design of the SDSU Clinic. Early participation allowed faculty to project the space needed for student learning including exam, consultation, and conference rooms. Interagency and interdisciplinary meetings were held to identify the health services to be provided.

In early 2010, exam rooms and offices were equipped, the West Scholar Program was developed, and Service Learning and Consent to Participate Agreements were drafted. During Fall semester 2010, students from each School in the College engaged in clinical or non-clinical activities at the SDSU Clinic. An interdisciplinary referral system was instituted to foster collaboration; conferences were held to review cases, share information, and plan services.

The first cohort of NP students (N=12) initiated the delivery of health and wellness services in Fall 2010. Students conducted Health Assessment Clinics, delivered health and wellness presentations and held focused clinics to coincide with National Health Observances. The SDSU Clinic provided the environment for students to meet select core competencies delineated in the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Competencies, 2010 (American Academy of Colleges of Nursing). During Spring 2011, the second cohort of NP students (N=17) participated in Health Assessment Clinics. At the conclusion of the 2010-2011 academic year approximately 350 NP student/senior encounters had occurred.

During Summer 2011, Health Assessment Clinic data were entered into Senior Community Centers' electronic database; data analysis has commenced. Faculty from the School of Nursing and the University of California San Diego, Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences met to plan interdisciplinary activities for NP and pharmacy students. SDSU is scheduled to offer a Doctor of Nursing Practice and Doctor of Physical Therapy in Fall 2012. The SDSU Clinic will offer rich clinical practice and research opportunities to support doctoral education.
West Senior Wellness Center is a 17,000 sq ft, two-story, modern, wireless, center located in downtown San Diego and is the flagship center for Senior Community Centers, San Diego. Senior Community Centers is the leading provider of services for an ethnically diverse, vulnerable senior population in San Diego’s urban core and has achieved national recognition for its services. Services include nutrition, health and wellness services, affordable housing options and lifelong learning opportunities. The SDSU Clinic links seniors with students from the College of Health and Human Services including Adult-Gerontology nurse practitioner (NP) students from the School of Nursing and with students from the Schools of Social Work; Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences; Exercise and Nutrition Science and the Graduate School of Public Health. The SDSU Clinic provides opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary activities that provide quality health and wellness services to seniors. The approaches employed to operationalize this successful academic institution-community agency partnership are detailed below.

Approach: Develop new or enhance existing partnerships between community agencies or organizations and academic institutions. Respond to a need or priority central to each organization.

In 2008, Adult-Gerontology NP faculty envisioned opportunities for NP students to work with culturally diverse, low-income seniors with chronic health problems without the time constraints of the primary care setting. Opportunities for NP students to develop their advanced practice skills in an interdisciplinary setting, while providing health care services for seniors, were highly desirable. Accepting an invitation from Senior Community Centers, NP faculty spearheaded a plan to deliver health services at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center, scheduled to open in Spring 2010. NP students and faculty would partner with seniors to foster learning. Faculty from the various Schools in the College also envisioned clinical and non-clinical learning activities for their students. Hence, an interdisciplinary model, uniting students and faculty from the College of Health and Human Services in a clinical practice setting, the SDSU Clinic, was born.

Approach: Identify the resources needed including: physical resources (space, equipment, supplies), faculty, and staff early in the planning phase.

In 2009, faculty from the School of Nursing contributed to the architectural design of the SDSU Clinic. The SDSU Clinic was designed to house offices, three equipped exam rooms, and rooms for presentations and case conferences. Early participation in the SDSU Clinic design allowed faculty to project the space needed for student learning. Equipment was priced and "wish" lists were generated. NP faculty and students would be on-site weekly to work with seniors.

Approach: Develop goals that meet student-learning needs, are measurable and reflect achievement of educational outcomes for the discipline.

The overall goal for NP student education was to design learning activities to meet student-learning needs while providing quality health and wellness services for seniors. Services were designed to meet the specific learning needs of NP students. For example, beginning NP students need opportunities to develop and refine their history & physical exam skills with seniors who have chronic complex health problems. Consequently, a Health Assessment Clinic was designed and implemented to provide such opportunities. In addition, faculty designed focused specialty clinics to address the high volume chronic health problems of seniors. Focused clinics were offered in conjunction with health and wellness presentations delivered by NP students to celebrate National Health Observances. The educational opportunities at the SDSU Clinic provided the environment for NP students to meet select core competencies delineated in the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Competencies, 2010 (American Academy of Colleges of Nursing). Under the direction of NP faculty more than 350 student/senior encounters have occurred since the SDSU Clinic opened in September 2010. The
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preventive health services delivered by students and faculty are detailed in file: SDSU Clinic Health and Wellness Series. The clinical activities are detailed in the file: SDSU Clinic, Clinical Syllabus.

Approach: Collaborate frequently with key personnel including agency administrators, and College administrators, faculty, and staff. NP faculty convened a series of meetings during the 2009-2010 academic year with personnel from Senior Community Centers and College faculty to discuss and plan the initiation of clinical health and wellness services.

Approach: Identify potential funding sources and provide on-going information to development officers regarding the project. The SDSU Clinic is partially supported by a grant "San Diego State University College of Health and Human Services-Senior Community Centers Collaboration for Health Aging and Workforce Development (CHAWD)" from the Gary and Mary West Foundation.

Approach: Develop operational strategies that maximize the efficiency of the Clinic and senior participant involvement. Examples are as follows:

• Plan health and wellness services at opportunistic times as not to compete with other well attended services such as meal times, exercise programs, movies, and games.

• Develop an incentive program to encourage seniors to participate in health and wellness activities essential for student learning.

• Plan an orientation to the program and clinic for seniors, faculty, students, and staff.

• Advertise opportunities to participate in health and wellness activities in senior newsletters, local newspaper, websites etc.

• Develop a system to schedule appointments and send reminders to seniors who have volunteered to participate in the clinical activities. As in any setting, expect cancellations and no-shows.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Impetus for Project: In 2008, NP faculty envisioned opportunities for NP students to work with culturally diverse, low-income seniors with chronic health problems without the time constraints of the primary care setting. Accepting an invitation from the Senior Community Centers, NP faculty spearheaded a plan for the delivery of health services at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center, scheduled to open in Spring 2010. Faculty from the various disciplines in the College also envisioned learning activities for their students.

Integration and Sustainability: The SDSU Clinic is administered by the Director of Clinical and Academic Programs and Research under the direction of the Dean of the College. The Director provides support for faculty and students and coordinates field experiences and interdisciplinary team training. The clinical services provided by NP faculty and students at the SDSU Clinic are components of clinical coursework in the Adult-Gerontology NP curriculum and are partially supported by the instructional budget of the School of Nursing. The Adult-Gerontology curriculum is approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing for NP education and is accredited by the Collegiate Commission on Nursing Education (CCNE). Services provided by students from the various disciplines in the College are components of courses and internships in their disciplines. All academic programs are accredited by their respective accreditation bodies.

Success: Success can be attributed to multiple factors including the tireless involvement of NP faculty in the development, and implementation of the SDSU Clinic. The ongoing support from Senior Community Centers’ Executive and Health and Wellness Teams, and from the Dean of the College was essential for
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our success. The financial commitment and dedication of Gary and Mary West Foundation to this project is deeply appreciated.

The participation of seniors in NP student learning activities exceeded the numbers of seniors who normally attended activities at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center. SDSU NP faculty and students have embraced an interdisciplinary model of health and wellness care for seniors.

Collaboration: Health and wellness services provided at the SDSU clinic involve students and faculty from the College of Health and Human Services and include the disciplines of nursing; social work; speech, language & hearing; gerontology; and public health. NP students and faculty provide health services weekly at the SDSU clinic and initiate referrals to other disciplines. Interdisciplinary conferences are held to discuss cases, share information, and to plan services.

HEALTHY PEOPLE OBJECTIVE ADDRESSED:

HP Objective: Education and Community Based Programs (ECBP-12-16): Increase the inclusion of core clinical prevention and population content in health professions education. The SDSU Clinic provides opportunities for students from professional programs in the College of Health and Human Services to deliver clinical services that stress health promotion and disease prevention. The clinical preventive services delivered by students and faculty are detailed in file: SDSU Clinic Health and Wellness Series.

PROGRAM OR COURSE GOALS:

Number of students enrolled/participating in 2010-2011 school year: 55

To date, 29 Adult-Gerontology NP students and 26 students from various disciplines have participated in clinical activities at the SDSU Clinic. West Scholars are students selected by faculty from the disciplines in College to work with seniors. They apply knowledge and skills of their own discipline in the field of aging and participate in Geriatric Interdisciplinary Team Training and seminars. West Scholars meet with the Director of Academic Programs and Research to define and individualize learning and professional development goals relative to the interdisciplinary study of healthy aging. Ten West Scholars, including three NP students were chosen for the 2010-2011 academic year. Sixteen West Scholars will be chosen for the 2011-2012 academic year.

Did you conduct a needs assessment as part of your planning process? ☒ Yes ☐ No

A needs assessment was performed. Health assessment data from the Senior Community Centers' database was used to identify the high volume chronic health problems in seniors who received services at Senior Community Centers. Focused clinics and educational presentations were offered to address identified high volume health problems. Presentations focused on self-care with a chronic disease and prevention strategies. The goal for NP student education was to design learning activities to meet student-learning needs while providing quality health and wellness services for seniors.

PROFESSIONS INVOLVED:

A list of the professionals involved with SDSU Clinic can be found in the file: Professions Involved with the Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of the SDSU Clinic.

LESSONS LEARNED/EVALUATION RESULTS:

Greatest Successes: Our greatest successes and accomplishments include: the establishment of a clinical practice site that fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and is dedicated to the education of health professions who will care for seniors. We envision that the model of health services being developed at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center will serve as a model for projects nationally.
Greatest Challenges: San Diego is an ethnically diverse, multi-cultural city. This diversity is reflected in the senior population who seek health and wellness services at the SDSU Clinic. Developing health care services for our seniors that are culturally sensitive and reflect the varying literacy levels of our seniors is on going. Recruitment strategies are being developed by the West Scholars to provide adequate numbers of seniors to meet student-learning needs. "A Passport to Health" incentive program is currently being planned.

Evaluation: Under the direction of NP faculty more that 350 NP student/senior encounters have occurred since the SDSU Clinic opened in September 2010. Senior participation in NP student learning activities exceeded the numbers of seniors who normally attend other activities at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center. NP faculty spent approximately 240 hours at the SDSU Clinic during the 2010-2011 academic year.

**CONCLUSION:**
Teaching health promotion and prevention is central to NP education. Innovations in NP education can occur beyond traditional settings. Partnering with seniors can provide excellent learning activities for students and promote healthy lifestyles for seniors. Institutions seeking to replicate the SDSU Clinic model should seek a cadre of health professionals that are visionary and dedicated to interdisciplinary collaboration.

**COMPANION MATERIALS:** (Course syllabi, resource lists, tests, website, etc.)
Companion Materials: SDSU Clinic Health and Wellness Series; SDSU Clinic, Clinical Syllabus; Professionals Involved with the Development, Implementation and Evaluation of the SDSU Clinic.

**PUBLICATIONS:**
American Association of Colleges of Nursing (2010), Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Competencies. Washington, DC.

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