Threading Healthy People 2020 and Health Education Through an Undergraduate Nursing Program

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ABSTRACT:
This case study details the successful integration of the Healthy People 2020 initiative and Health Education concepts within four courses in an undergraduate baccalaureate nursing program. The components of integration include lecture, examination and six specific assignments across two theory and two clinical courses, using didactic face-to-face, web based and clinical application methods of education. Approximately 500 students, in basic (non-licensed), and accelerated second-degree (non-licensed), and licensed RNs in the RN to BSN programs participated in these courses. Practical application of the Healthy People 2020 initiatives and health education sessions were accomplished within 16 Community Nursing Coalitions established by the college. For example, UCF students worked with The American Lung Association to provide their Open Airways program for children with Asthma across 10 different elementary schools and two community programs. Outcomes include over 38,000 nursing student-community client encounters in over 100 organizations and over 60 health education programs/health promotion projects were provided by our seniors throughout a five county area.

EDUCATIONAL METHODS OR APPROACHES USED:
Three educational methods are used. The didactic/theory courses (occur in both face to face and web-based formats) introduce students to Healthy People initiatives and Health Education. Lectures, use of the Healthy People 2020 website, readings from a Community/Public Health text places emphasis on Healthy People Goals and Objectives and group activities. Reinforcement occurs through exam questions, group activities, and specific projects. In the accompanying clinical courses, students follow through and provide health education interventions with various community dwelling aggregates.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
The University of Central Florida's community based nursing curriculum was initiated in 1997 and has grown to include 16 Community Nursing Coalitions (CNCs) covering 5 Central Florida counties. Within the basic and accelerated pre-licensure programs, four courses have the Healthy People Initiative, prevention, health promotion and health education content and experiences threaded through them and include components of this project. There are 2 CNC based clinical courses, the first clinical course students take in their initial semester and the second, students take in their final semester. Students work within the CNCs' groups of 12 students guided by their faculty instructor providing hands on nursing interventions that focus on primary, secondary and tertiary prevention generally to vulnerable and underserved populations. There are two corresponding theory based courses taken as co-requisites in the same semesters to their corresponding clinical assignment. The focus of the first two courses is on Community Health Nursing Practice and the focus of the second two is on Public Health Nursing. The BSN completion program for RNs has a total of 3 community/public health courses, the identical theory based courses and then a practicum performed in the community (not discussed here).

To assure continued and consistent inclusion of the Healthy People Initiative, prevention and health promotion concepts and Health Education course objectives specifically address these outcomes. For example: a) Apply the principles of epidemiology and environmental health, nursing practice guidelines, protocols and national prevention initiatives in conducting a community health assessment and designing a community focused health promotion plan, b) Compare levels of prevention and analyze health promotion strategies throughout a disease trajectory and across the lifespan of varied aggregates.
in the community, c) Describe community-oriented health promotion, maintenance, and restoration models of intervention, d) Demonstrate critical thinking in the application of the nursing process, health promotion models, and levels of prevention in delivering nursing care to aggregates, e) Apply teaching-learning principles in providing health education, f) Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of selected primary, secondary, and tertiary nursing interventions with aggregates in the community, g) Conduct a health promotion project in the community in collaboration with community partners. Additionally, the college has dedicated a coordinator position to the Community Nursing Coalitions and has secured financial commitments from community partners to ensure that supplies and equipment will be available for health education in the community.

The content of the four courses sustains what was learned regarding these concepts. Assignments build on one another. For example the Health Promotion Plan Paper written in the Community Theory course is ideally carried out to some extent in the Public Health Clinical course through the Teaching Project. The consistency of focus on the Healthy People Initiative and Health Teaching allows the students to gain knowledge and confidence for their community/public health nursing practice. It also prepares them to be successful in the delivery of their Health Teaching projects to aggregates in the community. They have a clear connection between the identified community needs and the Healthy People Objectives. Subsequent feedback confirms that they are meeting mutually agreed upon goals.

Project Specifics by Designated Course:

NUR 3634 Community Health Nursing: In the first three weeks HP2020 Initiatives are introduced and the Web site is viewed, and Health Promotion Models and Levels of Prevention are covered. Testing of the concepts occurs on the first and final exams. Lectures in the remaining weeks all include health promotion activities and Healthy People Objectives specific to the aggregates covered in lecture.

In the fourth week, the Healthy People 2020 in class activity. Students complete this assignment in 3 groups of 4 students by CNC. Based upon the community assessment data gathered in their accompanying clinical course 3634L, students identify a target aggregate present in their assigned community. They then select a Healthy People 2020 Objective (using the website for reference) that relates to the target aggregate. Next they identify the family developmental tasks of this aggregates age group. Using the Environmental Triangle students identify the host, agent, and environmental factors they must consider in planning care for this aggregate. Then they state one problem/risk/need and write as a community health nursing diagnosis using the four-part Community Health Nursing Diagnosis format. To address this diagnosis they describe one primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention measure. This exercise provides excellent practice for the subsequent assignments they must complete.

For the Community Assessment Assignment in this course, each CNC as a group, presents the compiled community assessment data gathered in the corresponding clinical course, 3634L. It also contains one section where Healthy People objectives are linked. The group is to identify the four part (problem or need/among community aggregate/related to/as evidenced by) community diagnoses with the "as evidenced by" section coming from the Healthy People 2020 objectives.

The last assignment in the course is the Health Promotion Plan Paper. Each student per CNC is assigned a problem/need/risk drawn from community data and Healthy People: 2020. There are twelve topics in total, and each CNC covers the same twelve topics. For example: Health seeking behavior: Prostate cancer screening among African American men ages 40 and older as evidenced by the fact that African American men are almost 50% more likely to develop prostate cancer than any other racial or ethnic group in Orange/Seminole Counties in 2009. Students then expand on the specific data for this topic as well as linking to any HP 2020 objectives that may apply.
Students then develop a health promotion plan “as if” the plan would be implemented for a target group within the community. The plan paper is later used as a guide in the development of the senior project in Public Health Nursing Clinical. The format and components of this paper will guide them as they develop the teaching project they plan on carrying out in Public Health Clinical.

As explained earlier the community assessment performed in 3634L Community Health Nursing Clinical, is presented in the corresponding theory course 3634. The one assignment wholly in this course that supports the Education for Health component of this case study is the health promotion teaching project for an aggregate they are working with. Within the first 4 weeks of their nursing program they write a teaching plan and then carry it out with an aggregate. Although fairly basic, students take away from this that nurses play a vital role in providing health education to the public and that UCF views this as an important aspect of their nursing practice.

In the Public Health Course 4637 (offered only web based) students create a power point presentation pertaining to health care of an aggregate at risk. These aggregates are chosen from those identified in the Healthy People 2020 objectives. In addition to background information of the aggregates including demographics, health beliefs and behaviors, and health disparities, two main components of the presentation include an analysis of current research concerning the at-risk aggregate, including Healthy People 2020 findings and the formulation of three prioritized outcomes with intervention strategies at each level of prevention (primary, secondary, tertiary) for the at-risk aggregate. This assignment accounts for 25% of their final grade in the course and reinforces key concepts in community and public health nursing.

The co-requisite Public Health Nursing Clinical NUR 4637L is the course that the Health Promotion Plan Paper from NUR 3634 Community Health Nursing is linked to. The clinical project in this course involves working with the agency to plan and carry out and evaluate a nursing intervention project. Students must address what Healthy People 2020 National Objective will be met by the project as one of five key components to their plan.

In NUR 3634 Community Health Nursing the student is exposed to an AHEC educator and 4 online modules educating the student on Tobacco cessation. The student has identified through the community assessment project that the percentage of young smokers in that community is high. The student is then assigned the following topic for the Health Promotion Paper: Smoking Cessation among Adolescent Smokers Grades 9-12. The student then uses the Healthy People Objective TU-7 to outline a plan to increase smoking cessation attempts by adolescents. The plan they develop includes a budget with justification, a detailed teaching plan addressing the cognitive and affective learning domains and primary and secondary interventions such as screening for readiness to quit. Use of power points, websites, and available teaching supplies such as pig lungs and demonstration boards to show the effects of tobacco use are included. The student includes information about Florida’s free Quit Line. Once the student is a senior and is in NUR 4637, they have the requisite skills to carry out the intervention plan they created in their first semester of the program. The student is assigned to a local high school and works with the school nurse to carry out their intervention to a class of students. They must complete 45 hours in the community and follow up with those interested in quitting tobacco use.

There is an increasing integration of students at the baccalaureate and graduate levels as they complete clinical/practicum hours in the same community facilities and present at joint community poster days. Both the Community and Public Health Clinical courses are designated Service Learning courses. Our students are encouraged to and do present at the annual service learning day at the university level. UCF college of nursing through the developed CNCs partners with hundreds of community agencies including schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, homeless shelters, American Lung Association, Hispanic Health Initiative, Orange County Government. The college currently receives funding from Central Florida
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Health Education Center (AHEC), Aetna Foundation and the VNA (which is sponsoring a specific CNC). It is in the process of getting financial sponsorship of a second CNC. These grant funds enable the CNCs to purchase teaching materials and give away items pertaining to teaching such as tooth brushes, jump ropes, pedometers.

HEALTHY PEOPLE OBJECTIVE ADDRESSED:

This project has as its goal to address objective ECBP-12-16: Increase the inclusion of core clinical prevention and population health content in health professions education. Specifically it seeks to increase the number of baccalaureate prepared nurses who, upon graduation, will be able to plan and implement nursing interventions based upon HP 2020 objectives and focused on aggregates.

PROGRAM OR COURSE GOALS:

Number of students enrolled/participating in 2010-2011 school year: 780

There are greater than 1000 students in the BSN program. Specific to the number of students in the four courses discussed in the case study, there are 250 junior level and 250 senior level nursing basic (non-licensed) students and approximately 280 RN-BSN students (licensed) who took the courses outlined above in the past year.

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

A needs assessment specific to Healthy People 2020 and Health Education was not performed. Ongoing undergraduate curriculum review takes place against American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials of Baccalaureate Education, the Quad Council’s Public Health Nursing competencies and the Quality & Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) recommendations. Key elements of review are to ensure that Healthy People 2020, prevention and health education remain evident.

PROFESSIONS INVOLVED:

There are 47 full time nursing faculty members, and numerous adjunct faculty members. There is a dedicated faculty member who is the Coordinator of the Community Nursing Coalitions, and an instructor assigned to each group of 12 students functioning within each CNC. Additionally, the faculty members teaching the theory courses pertaining to Community and Public health have an educational and/or practice expertise in the field. Students in the BSN program total more than 1000 across 5 BSN programs. The students include traditional baccalaureate entry-level nursing students, accelerated second degree basic students, and RN to BSN students.

NUR 3634L and NUR 4637L are service learning courses and as such, the students do participate in service learning functions where they may share their experiences with students from other disciplines. In addition, UCF has a new College of Medicine, and there is an increasing interest in collaboration between the medical and nursing students in working on community projects. Recently, the College of Nursing has contracted to work with the local college of integrative medicine. Community agency professionals have requested collaboration with our students including pharmacy and dentistry as well as social work. Expanding such partnerships continue to be an area of focus.

LESSONS LEARNED/EVALUATION RESULTS:

Student successes include the ability to apply Healthy People 2020 and Health Education concepts to practice. Word of mouth has grown and faculty routinely receives phone calls asking to partner with greater numbers of community agencies. In fall 2010 and spring 2011, the CNCs provided a total of over 38,000 nursing student-community client encounters in over 100 organizations. Specifically, screening for children occurred in 76 schools with over 30,000 children screened or having participated in health education programs. UCF students performed 1,857 health histories, 5,722 adult blood pressure screenings, made 104 referrals for follow up and participated in 2 health fairs that together had more...
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than 800 participants. The University of Central Florida School of Nursing recently received a recognition award for its partnership with the American Lung Association, and several students were featured in the local paper for their collaborative teaching project in the community. In the spring students participated in a Community Poster Presentation day. Over 300 university and community partners were invited to view senior students’ posters pertaining to their Senior Community projects. Undergraduate and graduate posters numbered greater than 50 and the event was well attended by the partners.

Lessons learned include the importance of having students use the internet for information on HP2020. Textbooks are late in publishing newer editions with the update and Florida State law prevents us from demanding the newest edition of textbooks. Additionally, students can access the website from anywhere. Second is the importance of having students realize that the assignments are linked and later assignments reinforce earlier learning and should provide an expansion of application of those concepts. Students need to know they are not just repeating work at the same level.

CONCLUSION:

Using Healthy People 2020 as a basis for nursing interventions among aggregates in the community setting provides an easily located, evidence-based foundation for students to learn about and apply the concepts of health promotion and disease prevention. The resources that are web-based make it easy to incorporate prevention, population health and public health into classroom teaching/learning and for students to prepare community programming. Often their findings from their community assessment data gathered mirror the Healthy People 2020 Objectives. A major component of success is ensuring that Healthy People 2020 and Health Education are concepts central throughout the courses offered. It is critical to assign someone to coordinate the curriculum components and the corresponding application in clinical. The current economic situation for community agencies fosters a welcoming environment toward students, however partnerships require constant fostering and regular meetings. A contract with each agency with which students work should be obtained. It is important to have a presence in the communities and not to give the perception of dropping in and dropping out. Continuity of care is important to long term impact. Within nursing, the focus on prevention is supported and mandated by accreditation and practice standards at all levels of practice preparation. It is important when reviewing program curriculum to have an advocate who will champion the inclusion of Healthy People 2020 Initiatives and Health Education concepts.

COMPANION MATERIALS: (Course syllabi, resource lists, tests, website, etc.)
NUR 3634 Community Health Nursing: Syllabus, schedule and grading rubrics from summer 2011
NUR 3634L Community Health Nursing Clinical: Syllabus
NUR 4637 Public Health Nursing: Syllabus, schedule and grading rubrics from summer 2011
NUR 4637L Public Health Nursing Clinical: syllabus

PUBLICATIONS:

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