Healthy People 2020 and Education For Health
Successful Practices for Clinical Health Professions

Meeting the Goals of Healthy People 2020 Through a Longitudinal Service Learning Program in Pharmacy
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ABSTRACT:
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People initiatives outline health objectives for the nation and serve as the foundation for health promotion and wellness programs. The overarching goals of Healthy People 2010 were to increase quality and years of healthy life and to eliminate health disparities. Healthy People 2020 further defines the goals, objectives, and targets that focus on creation of environments that promote wellness and good health and objectives for health that span all decades of life. In 2006, the West Virginia University School of Pharmacy began a revision to its Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum to include introductory pharmacy practice experiences (IPPEs) that would provide students with experience in developing disease prevention and health promotion programming in the community. Thus, the School of Pharmacy began a three-semester longitudinal service learning program which focused on advancing the objectives of the Healthy People initiatives through service learning. In 2010, the scope of the student projects was expanded to meet the greater objectives and targets outlined in Healthy People 2020 and also to include an interdisciplinary component. The goals of the initiative are to: (1) instill the values of community service in student pharmacists; (2) apply didactic knowledge of health promotion and disease prevention to members of the community; (3) improve verbal and written communication skills; and (4) improve and enhance project development skills. The experiences and implementation of the School of Pharmacy service learning program from 2006 to the present are described.

EDUCATIONAL METHODS OR APPROACHES USED:
Service learning is the primary approach utilized throughout this initiative. A combination of didactic coursework and an experiential component is utilized. To coordinate the service learning activities, the School of Pharmacy partners with the WVU Center for Civic Engagement (CCE), a division of the University that strives to build sustainable relationships with local community partners and develop opportunities for WVU student learning. Student groups from the School of Pharmacy are paired with a community agency and assigned a community partner advisor from that agency and a group advisor from the School of Pharmacy.

Assessment methods for the service learning curriculum include: 1) reflective writing assignments; 2) peer, group advisor, and community partner evaluations; 3) final project plan, including an abstract; and 4) poster and oral presentations. Rubrics guide the evaluations of the reflective writing assignments and also the oral project presentations. The rubrics were developed by the CCE for all of the University’s service learning programs and were adapted to meet the specific needs of the School of Pharmacy.

A majority of the project implementations are attended by a group advisor, course coordinator, and/or other faculty members involved with the project or organization, so formative feedback is provided to the student pharmacists.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
The Service Learning program at the WVU School of Pharmacy was initiated during the fall semester (August) of 2006. This program is a component of the IPPEs that allows students to apply their didactic knowledge to “real world” activities. Although student pharmacists participate in traditional community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy, ambulatory and acute care experiences as part of IPPEs, a greater
opportunity for student involvement in disease prevention and health promotion in the community was sought. Thus, the School of Pharmacy partnered with the WVU CCE and began a three-semester course series in the first professional year (P1) and second professional year (P2) which focuses on advancing the objectives of Healthy People 2020.

The service learning program is made up of the following three courses: IPPE 2 which is taught in the spring semester of the P1 year, IPPE 3 which is taught in the fall semester of the P2 year, and IPPE 4 which is taught in the spring semester of the P2 year. A component of the IPPE 2 course for P1 students serves as an introduction to service learning through several in-class and outside-of-class experiences. Student pharmacists are simultaneously enrolled in a 2-credit hour course, “Disease Prevention and Health Promotion” which provides foundational knowledge, including an introduction to Healthy People 2020. Activities in this course include a panel discussion with community partners and current P2 students in the program, a service learning fair for students to meet the community partners, and an initial site visit once student teams are assigned a community partner based on their preferences. IPPE 3 and 4 in the P2 year are each worth one credit hour and are scheduled to meet one hour per week with a primary focus of service learning. Students spend the fall semester (IPPE 3) conducting a needs assessment at their site with their community partner and developing a project to meet the site needs and one or more objectives of Healthy People 2020. Student pharmacists keep an online journal to stimulate reflective thinking which is shared with the course instructors and also complete a final project plan at the end of the fall semester. Each activity requires students to relate the material to Healthy People 2020 and the mission of the community agency. The majority of the spring semester (IPPE 4) is spent finalizing project plans and implementing the health-related service learning project. Students again complete reflections throughout the semester to promote critical thinking. A final abstract and poster presentation is completed and displayed at the Health Sciences Center at the conclusion of the IPPE 4 course to display student project initiatives. Students use Healthy People 2020 as a basis for poster development. Evaluations are completed throughout the service learning courses by community partners and faculty advisors. Student pharmacists also complete peer evaluations of their team members.

The effectiveness and success of the program is primarily measured by the impact that it has on the community. The program has continued to be successful over the past 4-5 years as more community members have been reached through the initiatives as evidenced by the increasing number of community service hours earned by student pharmacists, the number of interactive programs offered, and the amount of health-related materials distributed to the community. The program has received significant media coverage via newspaper, radio, and television coverage over the years. The support of the administration of the University and School of Pharmacy and the faculty and staff of the School of Pharmacy has contributed significantly to the success of the program. The program has been highlighted at several events at the University level and has been exceptionally received and adopted by faculty and staff at the School of Pharmacy. Each year, approximately 15 faculty and 3 staff are directly involved in project planning and development.

**Curriculum** - The West Virginia University School of Pharmacy offers a four-year Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degree program following a minimum of two years of pre-pharmacy coursework. Students who complete the educational and internship requirements are eligible to sit for the national pharmacy licensure examination to become licensed pharmacists. The curriculum is based on a comprehensive set of educational outcomes and general abilities expected of graduates and broadly include the following: (1) provide patient care as a member of an interdisciplinary health care team; (2) manage and use resources of the health care system; and (3) promote health improvement, wellness and disease prevention.
The first three years of the PharmD curriculum at WVU are largely didactic in nature; the fourth year comprises a full year of advanced pharmacy practice experiences (APPEs) where students gain additional experiences in a variety of pharmacy practice settings. In addition to didactic courses in the first three years of the program, students are enrolled in IPPEs. The IPPEs provide students with early experiences in different practice settings, allow students to apply knowledge and skills that they are learning in concurrent didactic courses, and prepare students for APPEs. Students are enrolled in an IPPE course in each of the six, didactic semesters in the program (IPPE 1 – IPPE 6). The longitudinal service learning project includes an introduction to service learning in IPPE 2, while IPPE 3 and 4 comprise the entirety of the service learning project development and implementation. IPPE 3 and IPPE 4 span the entire second year of the PharmD curriculum.

Prior to beginning the IPPE courses related to service learning in the second year of the program, students complete three courses in the first year of the PharmD program that provide needed prerequisite background, knowledge, and skills for successful project development and implementation. Students participate in a 1-credit hour Pharmacy as a Profession course in their first semester which introduces students to health care in the United States, the scope of pharmacy practice in the US, and different areas of pharmacy practice where students can be employed. In that same semester, students complete a 2-hour patient communications course (Patient Health Education) where they learn to communicate with patients, their families, and other healthcare providers. In addition, course outcomes address cultural competency, health literacy, and health care disparities. In the subsequent semester, students complete a 2-credit hour public health course (Disease Prevention and Health Promotion course). Topics addressed in this course include the role of the pharmacist in promoting public health, Healthy People 2020, and topics directly related to public health such as smoking cessation. As part of these courses, students participate in a My First Patient Program, where students use themselves as their own first patient. Through the program, students take responsibility for their own health, understand the impact and process of behavior change and lifestyle modification, and recognize their role as pharmacists in patient wellness and disease prevention.

**Collaborations** - The School of Pharmacy partners with the WVU Center for Civic Engagement to coordinate the IPPE 3 and IPPE 4 courses that are directly focused in service learning. Student teams of 5-6 students are assigned to work with a community partner for project planning and implementation. All partners must complete training through the Center for Civic Engagement to take part in student service learning programs. Selected partners for the 2010-11 year include the American Cancer Society, American Liver Foundation, Alzheimer's Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Caritas House, Milan Puskar Health right, Kaleidoscope, The Shack Neighborhood House, Stepping Stones, WV Family Grief Center, and the WV Botanic Garden. Each team of student pharmacists is also required to collaborate with another discipline during project planning and implementation. The WVU School of Pharmacy is part of an academic Health Sciences Center (HSC) that includes the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, and Nursing, therefore, this allows students access to various other health professional students. All HSC students are required to complete community service hours as part of their graduation requirements, therefore, activities such as service learning, are part of their curriculum. Collaborations are developed by students who have attended classes with other HSC students, developed relationships through professional organizations, or have been referred to them through faculty mentors. These collaborations are part of an interprofessional education (IPE) initiative of the School of Pharmacy.

**HEALTHY PEOPLE OBJECTIVE ADDRESSED:**
ECBP-12-16, to "Increase the inclusion of core clinical prevention and population health content in health professions education." Each student group project must be healthcare-related, meet one or more of the goals of Healthy People 2020, and also meet a need of the community agency.
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PROGRAM OR COURSE GOALS:

Number of students enrolled/participating in 2010-2011 school year: 74

Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (IPPE) 2, IPPE 3, and IPPE 4 are required as part of the Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum at the WVU School of Pharmacy. Each course is worth 1 credit hour and grading is satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

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

PROFESSIONS INVOLVED:
Primarily, School of Pharmacy faculty and students are involved in the service learning projects.

LESSONS LEARNED/EVALUATION RESULTS:

One of our greatest accomplishments of the service learning program has been instilling a sense of service learning and community service into student pharmacists throughout their education. Many of the students utilize the projects developed during their P2 year to provide services to the community throughout rural rotations during the P4 year of advanced pharmacy practice experiences. Their reflections show that they often develop a true understanding of the relationships that exist between the mission of their agency and Healthy People 2020. They also understand the relationship that exists between service and learning and that it is a mutually beneficial exercise. During the 2010-11 academic year, 74 student pharmacists completed 15 projects partnered with 15 community agencies. They earned over 2200 hours of community service by conducting interactive programming and creating and distributing health-related materials (pamphlets, brochures, etc.).

Selecting community partners that can effectively work with student pharmacists to complete service learning project has been a primary focus over the past few years. Initially some agencies did not understand the requirements of the service learning program and requirements for student projects. Through community partner education and increased communication, a better understanding of the project requirements has been developed. Selecting the correct number of students to partner with each organization was also a challenge. Initially student teams varied in size, but this lead to some difficulties with the requirements of the course and students that left the program for various reasons (medical, academic, personal). Therefore, student teams are now assigned in groups of 5-6 based on student preferences.

CONCLUSION:

It is important to have the resources, including faculty time and funding, to develop and implement a successful service learning course. If the institution has a division that oversees the community service and service learning programs of the university, it is beneficial to partner with them to initiate a service learning program. They often have established relationships with community partners and can provide significant program support and guidance. It is important that administration, faculty, and staff within the college or school understand the program and their role in providing assistance and support, as significant resources are needed for the program to run effectively. Resources needed include personnel, time, and funding. Support of the program was received by regularly providing updates to the department and faculty at monthly meetings and soliciting suggestions for improvement. The success of the program and the positive feedback received from the community and students has led to continued support from the School of Pharmacy, the HSC, and the University.

We believe that this project is readily transferred to other Schools or Colleges of Pharmacy and other health professional schools if the institution is committed to service learning. Having a division which oversees the service learning mission of the university is extremely beneficial as they had already
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developed partnerships with community agencies. They articulate the needs of the School of Pharmacy, the goals of our courses, and trouble-shoot, which was an important component that cannot be underscored. Many colleges and universities, regardless of size, have a dedicated division focused on service to the community.

However, pharmacy schools often don’t take advantage of the opportunity to work collaboratively with such units. A large part of the success of the partnership between the WVU School of Pharmacy, the WVU Center for Civic Engagement, and our community partners is based on our ability to work together to capitalize on the strengths of each other. In addition, each partner in the project has responsibilities as outlined below:

School of Pharmacy
• Serve as a liaison between the student pharmacists and the Center for Civic Engagement
• Assist the student group in choosing/developing a service learning project
• Supervise the student’s academic work and communicate with agency to evaluate on-site work
• Recommend appropriate School of Pharmacy faculty mentors for group projects
• Assess student assignments including reflections, project plans, posters, and oral presentations
• Attend student project implementations at the various agencies and community venues
• Provide clinical support and guidance for project implementations Center for Civic Engagement
• Serve as a liaison between the School of Pharmacy and nonprofit agencies
• Determine the community partners to be present for the service learning fair
• Develop the topics and rubrics for the service learning reflections
• Gather community partner feedback regarding student professionalism and project progress
• Educate student pharmacists about the importance of service learning Community Partner
• Assist in the development of the project which meets course requirements and agency needs
• Contact the instructor or the CCE for assistance, clarification, or concerns
• Evaluate the student’s on-site performance

COMPANION MATERIALS: (Course syllabi, resource lists, tests, website, etc.)
IPPE 3 Syllabus, IPPE 4 Syllabus, Course Schedules

PUBLICATIONS:

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