

Title:

Development and Implementation of a National Service Learning Mission Trip

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Session Title:

Leadership Poster Session 2

Keywords:

Service Learning, Short Term Medical Mission and Undergraduate Nursing Students

References:

Long, T. (2016). Influence of international service learning on nursing students' self efficacy towards cultural competence. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 23(1), 28-33. Sabo, S., de Zapien, J., Teufel-Shone, N., Rosales, C., Bergsma, L., Taren, D. (2015). Service learning: A vehicle for building health equity and eliminating health disparities. *American Journal of Public Health*, 105 (S1), S38 - S43. Schofield, R., Allan, M., Jewiss, T., Hunter, A., Sinclair, N., Diamond, A., Sidwell, C. (2013) Knowing self and caring through service learning. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, 10(1), 267-274.

Abstract Summary:

Session will discuss the development and implementation of a national based medical mission trip to Appalachian region of rural Tennessee. An overview of service learning in nursing education and the current level of research studies will be provided. Successes and challenges encountered both the development and implementation will be shared.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learner will be able to describe at least two benefits of service learning activities for nursing students.	Definition of Service Learning Provide examples of various service learning formats used in nursing education Discuss results of research studies and evaluation results of service learning
The learner will be able to list examples of challenges and resources that may be encountered when developing and implementing a medical mission trip as a service learning activity	Outline of challenges listed in research and editorial references from nursing and other health profession literature Outline of potential resources that may help support the development and implementation
The learner will be able to identify at least 2 lessons learned from the development and implementation of a medical mission trip as a service learning activity	Review of student and faculty feedback Overview of research and editorial articles from nursing and other health profession literature

Abstract Text:

Nursing education has embraced the value of service learning, and numerous programs have integrated this pedagogy into their curriculum with a variety of approaches, ranging from offering international experiences to integration in clinical courses. This innovative educational pedagogy allows students and faculty to engage in activities that address a variety of needs, incorporate self-reflection, and embrace the

concept of reciprocity between students and the community receiving care (Schofield et al, 2013). Service learning activities must intentionally complement program outcome goals and/or course objectives, provide students contextual experiences for understanding abstract health/illness and nursing concepts, assist in the development of personal/professional values, citizenship and cultural competence through collaborative efforts to meet the needs of a specific community/population (Adegbola, 2013, Washington-Brown & Ritchie, 2014). Without service learning opportunities, programs and in turn students may be restricted in the variety of clinical experiences that provide exposure to diversity, health care disparities and social justice issues, dependant several on several factors, including geographic location, lack of availability of diverse populations and competition for clinical placements (Long, 2016).

Despite the evolving research base in nursing and other health professions demonstrating positive effects of various aspects/outcomes of service learning as well as the broad recognition in nursing education of its value and benefits for students as well as faculty, service learning in any approach/format requires an enormous amount of time and effort to develop, implement and maintain over time (Sabo et al, 2015). Numerous nursing research studies have been published on the impact of both local activities and international trips on student learning, yet none have been identified that document the impact of trips taken within the United States. The United States is one of the largest countries in the world, with five distinct regions (Northeast, Southeast, West, Southwest, Midwest), all of which have diverse cultural traditions. Short term mission trips do occur annually in both developing countries around the world, as well as the United States, however, currently no official or complete compendium exists to track the total number, dominant organizational structures used, or the quality/outcomes for the communities of interest (Maki et al, 2008).

There is value in providing students a service learning activity that is not embedded in one particular nursing course, especially since establishing a routine short term medical missions in the United States is a particular challenge. By offering a trip as an adjunct to the program curriculum experiences, students at different levels of the program (junior and senior level) are given an opportunity to travel to a different region of the United States and provide care to vulnerable populations that they may not have contact with in their region of the country. Students who are able to attend the trip are supported in achieving multiple program outcomes; including but not limited to the integration of liberal arts concepts into nursing practice, promotion of health and wellness to a variety of populations, including vulnerable populations.

This presentation will share and discuss the development, implementation of an annual short term medical mission trip based in the United States, along with efforts to build a sustainable model, which initially offered the opportunity for the traditional undergraduate baccalaureate students in the spring semester of 2016. The initial short term mission trip was to a remote area of Tennessee, which is part of the Appalachian Region. The county the clinic was hosted in has been designated as an at risk county by the Appalachian Regional Commission (www.arc.gov). Compared with the county that the undergraduate program is located in, the poverty levels rates and the amount of residents without health insurance of the county are significantly higher (www.census.gov). The presentation will discuss future goals and plans to expand offering the opportunity to RN-BSN students and alumni. Resources, benefits, challenges and lessons learned will be incorporated into the presentation.

Long, T. (2016). Influence of international service learning on nursing students' self efficacy towards cultural competence. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 23(1), 28-33.

Schofield, R. Allan, m., Jewiss, T. Hunter, A., Sinclair, N., Diamond, A., Sidwell, C. (2013). Knowing self and caring through service learning. *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship*, 10(1), 267-274.

Washington-Brown, L., Ritichie,A. (2014). The fundamentals of integrating service in a post-licensure RN to BSN program. *The ABNF Journal*, spring, 46-51.