

**Title:**

Utilizing Research and Policy Development to Address the Needs of Alzheimer's Patients and Their Families

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**Session Title:**

Interprofessional Health Promotion

**Slot:**

E 06: Sunday, 29 October 2017: 4:15 PM-5:00 PM

**Scheduled Time:**

4:15 PM

**Keywords:**

Academic-Community Partnership, Public Health Nursing Core Competencies and Service Learning

**References:**

Alzheimer's Association. (2016). 2016 Alzheimer's disease facts and figures – Alzheimer's Association. Retrieved from <http://www.alz.org/facts/>

Ezeonwu, M., Berkowitz, B., & Vlasses, F. R. (2014). Using an academic-community partnership model and blended learning to advance community health nursing pedagogy. *Public Health Nursing, 31*(3), 272-280. doi: 10.1111/phn.12060

Shannon, C. (2016). The power of one: Using service learning to promote community engagement. *International Journal of Health, Wellness, & Society, 6*(1), 23-33.

**Abstract Summary:**

The purpose of this presentation is to disseminate the effectiveness of utilizing service learning in nursing curriculum. Nursing students analyzed real-world data in a research course and then wrote and presented policy briefs in their community health course to address a real-world issue.

**Learning Activity:**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learner will be able to explain how an innovative community-academic partnership can be used to enhance student understanding of public health knowledge.	Describe the community-academic partnership and goals of the service learning project.
The learner will be able to examine benefits of using real world data in guiding policy development with their own academic service learning projects.	Nursing students' perceptions from narrative reflections and community data will be provided to explain the benefits of the service learning project.

**Abstract Text:**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this service learning project was to assess the effectiveness of a community-academic partnership in providing real-world learning opportunities for enhancing baccalaureate nursing students' public health knowledge.

**Background/Significance:** Service learning in nursing education provides opportunities for students to apply skills and knowledge to address real-world issues to meet individual, family, and societal needs (Shannon, 2016). The purpose of this community-academic partnership was to utilize research data and develop policy briefs to address the needs identified by individuals with Alzheimer's and their families. Worldwide, approximately 44 million people have Alzheimer's or another type of dementia (Alzheimer's Association, 2016). Globally, the cost of Alzheimer's and dementia is estimated at \$605 billion (Alzheimer's Association, 2016). When hospitalized, patients with dementia have higher risks of delirium, falls, agitation, new incontinence, untreated pain, and other adverse events (Alzheimer's Association, 2016). The service learning opportunities meet a community need and can facilitate greater understanding of one's roles as a public health nurse.

**Educational Improvement Focus:** A community action group-academic partnership was formed to analyze community health needs assessment data and identify family and population focused interventions. Through this partnership, students in an undergraduate baccalaureate research course gained hands-on experience with data analysis. The data collected was from local communities about awareness of Alzheimer's disease and development of dementia friendly communities. A need was identified to enhance hospital experiences as strongly expressed by patients and their family members. Students in a community health course identified an evidence-based intervention to help address the concern experienced by the families.

**Methods:** The project linked service learning and community health needs assessment with public health nursing core competencies. Forty nursing students analyzed real-world data and completed surveys throughout the 15 week research course. Survey questions reflected the students' perceptions of the learning activity. The following semester the same students developed and presented policy briefs to address the needs identified by individuals with Alzheimer's and their family members. Again, students completed survey questions that reflected the students' perceptions of the learning activity. Students' narrative reflections were analyzed qualitatively to evaluate student public health knowledge. Community data and student stories were extracted from this real-world, service-learning experience of students to provide meaningful data.

**Results:** Senior nursing students wrote and presented policy briefs to a rural hospital to encourage the implementation of The Purple Angel Project to improve the hospitalization experiences of those with Alzheimer's disease and their family members. Students developed Quad Council's core competencies skills for public health nurses.

**Conclusions:** Through community-academic partnerships students engaged in research and service learning projects that focus on families in communities. Service learning strengthens a student's understanding of their social responsibility and role as a public health nurse (Ezeonwu, Berkowitz, & Vlases, 2014). This particular partnership is on-going and continues to benefit not only the students but also those suffering from Alzheimer's disease, their family members, and the community. Outcomes for the students, university, and community suggest continued use of service-learning projects.