Student impact on health: Fresno State University mobile health program

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Statement of the Problem: Research has shown health disparities exist in rural populations that differ from inner cities. These disparities include limited access to health care due to a shortage of primary providers, limited clinic facilities as well as transportation issues getting to existing clinics. Rural populations also have a higher rate of poverty, lower educational levels as well as multicultural ethnic groups, which limits access to health information and information on preventative health care.

Aim: The purpose of the mobile health program has three goals; provide preventative health screenings, education and screening services to underserved populations; provide clinical training sites for nursing students; and to provide an opportunity for inter-professional collaboration among students.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: The program is guided by the essential curriculum elements developed by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing as well as the core competencies for inter-professional collaborative practice set for by the inter-professional education collaborative (2011). Curriculum elements include research, policy, organization and financing of health care, ethics, professional role development and theoretical foundations of nursing practice, human diversity and social issues, as well as health promotion and disease prevention. Competencies for inter-professional collaboration include values and ethics for collaboration, roles and responsibilities, communication and teamwork.

Findings: Despite health care reform in the United States, many still do not have access to health care due to an impacted system and adequate resources. Additionally, the burden of disease and access to care is significant in both rural and urban areas of Fresno.

Conclusion & Significance: The program's success is due to the engagement and collaborative efforts of students to provide services in rural and urban areas throughout central California. Evaluation of data continues however, statistics for the last three semesters reveal 25 site visits, 1,516 patients seen and 3,321 student service learning hours.

Biography
Kathleen Rindahl is an Assistant Professor and Lead Faculty of Community Health course at School of Nursing, Fresno State University, California. She is a Nurse Practitioner with passion for community health and wellbeing of underserved populations. She has 10 years of Clinical experience as a Migrant Health Nurse working on a Mobile Health Unit. In addition to teaching, she also continues to practice as a Nurse Practitioner in an urgent care clinic in underserved area of Fresno.

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