

Abstract: Exploring opportunities in rural, primary care nursing: The student nurse perspective.

Background: The demand for primary care services is outpacing the number of primary care providers in practice. This gap in primary care is projected to increase significantly within the next decade.

Local Problem: The enhanced primary care RN role is a progressive role that optimizes the role of the RN within an interprofessional care team. Page County is a health professional shortage area, and until 2019 did not have RNs working in primary care settings.

Purpose: This project aims to describe an innovation in nursing education and the outcomes of student engagement in the UPCARE program.

Methods: The Undergraduate Primary Care and Rural Education (UPCARE) Project is a federally funded program focused on giving student nurses the opportunity to immerse themselves in rural primary care settings within Page County.

Interventions: Student nurses in this program work side by side with RNs in the delivery of primary care nursing services. Scholars also participate in a variety of enriching clinical and co-curricular learning activities.

Results: There are 25 student scholars participating in the UPCARE Project. The preliminary impact of the project demonstrated new revenue of over \$78,000 for services generated by the primary care RNs. Through this collaboration, student scholars participating in UPCARE are able to help improve patient outcomes while gaining valuable experiences and education.

Conclusion/Implications: UPCARE is a promising academic-practice partnership that can build on existing BSN curriculum, and leverage the strength of RNs practicing at the fullest scope of their license to provide holistic care to patients in primary care settings.