

Title

Development of a pharmacy service-learning course about vulnerable and underserved patient care

Authors

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Objective

A one-credit hour service-learning elective course was developed to increase knowledge of challenges faced by vulnerable and underserved patient populations, and the role that healthcare providers, in particular pharmacists, can have in assisting patients in overcoming these challenges.

Design

The course structure is comprised of: 50% didactic lecture and 50% service learning. Topics covered in didactic lecture include characteristics of vulnerable and underserved populations, financing and delivery of care, engagement and effective intervention, and cost-effective prescribing strategies. Students are required to complete three, two-hour service activities, which include shadowing and participation in clinical pharmacy services at two rural federally qualified health centers. These pharmacy services aim to improve medication accessibility and optimize patient care outcomes. Additional opportunities include employee blood pressure screenings and smoking cessation counseling through a partnership with a local trailer manufacturing company.

Assessment

Reflection is a key component of the learning and assessment in the course with completion of two reflection papers at the beginning and end of the course and activity logs completed after each service learning activity. Activity logs utilize a reflective approach on each experience in which students answer three questions: What?, So What? and Now What? A retrospective pre-post questionnaire will be administered at the conclusion of the course to examine changes in student perceptions toward medically underserved populations and healthcare provider roles.

Keywords

Pharmacy, Medically Underserved, Patient Care, Rural Health Care, Service Learning, FQHC