CHLH 494
Rural and Urban Health Care: A Comparison

April 28th, 2011

Final James Scholar Presentation
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Leadership Track
The Idea

- Not only to introduce important issues in health care, but to provide a professional experience (students had opportunity to visit potential grad school and compare settings in which they could work in the future).

- Goal was to develop a program which would involve students from all majors, years.
The Project

Rural and Urban Health Care: A Comparison

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The Course

- Organized course meetings, assignments and discussions (see syllabus) so that students would have a background in rural and urban health issues, and also get to know each other before spending a weekend together.

- 11 James Scholar students
The trip (April 1st- April 2nd)

April 1st:
Rush University Medical Center
Chicago, IL

Met with university officials (Dean of the College of Health Sciences, Associate Provost for Multicultural Affairs, and professor of audiology)

Toured hospital

Sat down for discussion based on project objectives with VP of Operational Transformation, Administrative Fellow, and members of the Patient Satisfaction and Quality Department
April 2nd: Iroquois Memorial Hospital, Watseka, IL

- Toured hospital
- Met with Director of Marketing and Volunteers, VP of Quality, Certified Athletic Trainer, and ER Physician to discuss project objectives and issues in rural health

- Back in Champaign that afternoon
Project Objectives:

1. Identify differences in patient demographics, including, but not limited to, insurance status, age range, SES, and average length of stay between rural and urban hospitals.

2. Compare patient satisfaction results for both hospitals.

3. Compare hospital administration and resource structures (i.e. funding, program and service planning and overall day-to-day experiences of employees) between the hospitals.
Benefits of Urban

- Wider variety of resources available because of the breadth of services
- Very specialized jobs
- More diversity
Benefits of Rural

- Sense of pride and community in work
- Board of trustees very personally invested
- Employee empowerment
- Very strong community support
Common Challenges

- Both have similar resource structures, IMH is just on a smaller scale, so they face many of the same challenges.

Patient Transport

- IMH building is older and more complicated due to lack of funds to update.
- Rush campus is large (and expanding) and can be confusing for a patient.
Urban and Rural Challenges

- Rural
  - HIPAA
  - Funding
  - Physician recruitment
  - Multi-faceted roles

- Urban
  - Constant demand to improve (it is expected)
  - Funding
  - Increased demand for diversity
  - Very specific roles
Students at Rush University Medical Center with faculty advisors, Dr. Farner and Renique Kersh.
Students at Iroquois Memorial Hospital with Director of Marketing and Volunteers
Challenges

- All different majors
Evaluation
100% of the students said that they would recommend this learning opportunity to a friend!
Overall, this trip was a rewarding experience, both personally and professionally. Since I was born and raised in the city, I always thought that there was no way I could work in a rural environment. However, after comparing the two hospitals, my thoughts totally changed. The rural hospital was so warm and inviting.
Born in the city I was definitely biased towards rural health, however after this trip I feel I am a more informed future health care provider.

I thought it was beneficial to see these two settings firsthand and that it was touching to see just how proud these people are of their place of work.

Student Feedback
I think that by going out of the classroom to actually see the hospitals in person to compare them is the best way to learn about the differences between them.

I am very happy with the way the trip went because I was actually able to use some of what I learned when I was interviewing for a job in a rural area. I hope to be a rehabilitation technician at a rural hospital.
All students who completed our evaluation said they would recommend a course like this to a friend. If this were to continue as a ‘special topics’ course, the topic could change based on student interest (could be one option available each year for James Scholars in leadership track to organize the course/trip). Does not need to be limited to James Scholars. Plan for eight-week course (grading?).

Project Sustainability
Much like the students who participated, we all hope to work in a hospital setting at some point during our careers and this experience has broadened our knowledge of the health care system. We have also gained valuable skills in program planning, teamwork and communication which are essential in any work setting.

Connection to Career Goals

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Thank you to the College of Applied Health Sciences, Assistant Dean, Renique Kersh and Dr. Susan Farner for supporting this project!
Questions?
Our Leadership Portfolios

- http://esams.wordpress.com/
- https://sites.google.com/site/carasleadershipportfolio/
- https://sites.google.com/site/klbleadershipportfolio/home