

# **Community Engagement in the Age of COVID: A Public Health Perspective**

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# Community Health Nursing

- 5 credits
- 3 hours in the classroom
- 1 day/week clinical experience
- Didactic and clinical component
- First semester senior year

# Planned Clinical Learning Experiences

Community Harvest Project

Windshield Survey

A day in the life...

COVID-19 Testing

COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Flu Clinics

Virtual Simulations

**Food Pantry/Soup Kitchen**

**Homeless Outreach**





## **The Community Harvest Project**

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# Community Harvest Project

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*Synthesize knowledge of health promotion and disease prevention to promote and improve health of aggregates.*

- Food Insecurity
- Non-Governmental Organizations
- Health of Migrant Farm Workers



# Community Harvest Project

## Student Perspectives:

“Participating in the community harvest project was an extremely rewarding experience. It was great to be a part of something that would help those in need and it was a very fun thing to do as a clinical group.”

“It was rewarding to be involved with picking food that provided so many members in the community in need of nutritious foods. The experience itself helped put into perspective how many suffer from food insecurity.”

“...I really enjoyed seeing the other side of a local, nonprofit organization that was helping to support food insecurities in local communities.”

# Virtual Windshield Survey

*Evaluate the effects of healthcare policy, finance, and Regulatory environment in community health practice.*



# Windshield Survey

## Student Comments:

“The first thing that comes to mind is that this city is a poor city, it reminded me of last week's clinical experiences walking the streets of Fitchburg”

“being able to talk with the people helped gather information about the town and what resources were available, shelters, apartment units. I gathered that it wasn't the safest place to live, so I looked for resources available. Police were frequently called to the local bar and the city jail constantly had at least two people there overnight. But there were services: the hospital's clinic offered a sliding fee scale for hospital fees, and the elementary school had 90% of students qualify for free or reduced school lunches”

# A day in the life...



*Incorporate knowledge from the liberal arts and sciences into care of the aggregates*

# A day in the life...

## Student Perspectives:

“The “A Day in the Life” was an eye-opening experience, as we physically had to participate the entire time.”

“It allowed students/nurses to see first hand what members in the community face daily, from living conditions, and public transportation, to resources for food and medical care. I believe these experiences strengthened the ability to establish rapport with people of the community. It was beneficial learning to view life from another's perspective. I was able to use this experience to identify areas of improvement and disparities that others are facing. It is hard to help someone when you are unaware of their needs.”

# Fitchburg





## COVID-19 Testing

# COVID-19 Testing

*Synthesize knowledge of health promotion and disease prevention to promote and improve health of aggregates.*

- Coordination between departments on campus
- Screening
- Levels of prevention



# COVID-19 Testing

## Student Perspectives:

“The COVID-19 testing on campus was awesome to be a part of. We were able to assist our peers and faculty in getting tested, and also learn and implement important skills that will always be present in our future nursing careers!”

“Due to the current pandemic our clinical experiences were limited, however, participating in the on campus COVID testing was a great way for us nursing students to get involved.”

# Contact Tracing @ Nashoba Board of Health

## **Nashoba Associated Boards of Health Member Towns:**

Ashburnham, Ashby, Ayer, Berlin, Bolton, Boxborough, Dunstable, Groton, Harvard, Lancaster, Littleton, Lunenburg, Pepperell, Shirley, Stow and Townsend.

## **Nashoba Nursing Service & Hospice services the above member towns along with the following towns listed below:**

Acton, Carlisle, Chelmsford, Clinton, Concord, Fitchburg, Hudson, Leominster, Maynard, Sterling, Tyngsboro and Westford.

*Incorporate evidence-based practice into the care of aggregates in the community.*

# Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN)

- Quarantine
- Isolation
- Cold Calling
- 3 people; 2 full-time 1 part-time
- Refer for testing
- Monitor symptoms

# Students Reflections after Contact Tracing

“This experience opened my eyes to the current responsibilities of the nurses that work there. I had no idea the time and effort involved behind the scenes during COVID-19”

“I heard the nurse in the next office talking to a woman about her young child with a positive test. This client also had a newborn baby at home. The nurse was tremendously empathetic and calm, and had a professional demeanor about her. She spoke softly, was educational, and really appeared to care. As I listened, she told the client, “you are great parents and are doing such a great job. You have a newborn as well and are doing such a great job.” Those little words of encouragement must have made an impact. To me, in the background, it made an impact”

# Community Flu Clinics

*Deliver nursing care to the community using professional standards, public health ethics and legal regulations.*

- Drive through clinics
- Collaborated with VNA
- Safety

# Community Flu Clinics

## **Student Perspective:**

“Participating in a flu clinic was something I always looked forward to throughout nursing school. Being able to participate in the drive-thru flu clinic gave me great experience and was my favorite thing we did as part of our community clinical.”

Compose a letter to an elected or appointed official

Choose a public policy issue r/t community health

Choose appropriate audience-specific policymaker

Conclude with a recommended action

700-1400 words

Who, what, why

# Community Action Letter

*Integrate effective interprofessional and extra-professional communication skills in community health nursing for the Improvement of client outcomes.*

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# Student Examples

Bill H.R. 986- preexisting conditions

The Access to Birth Control Act

Bill S. 1463: An act relative to furthering the success of opiate intervention programs

Bill S. 1209 which will ensure abortion access is easier in Massachusetts

Bill H.614: An act to improve Alzheimer's and dementia care in senior care options programs

Bill S.244: An act relative to mental health education

## Community Action Letter

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# Disaster Management

Bus Accident-

triage

communication

Post disaster flood-

safety

resources

Psychological First Aid

*Integrated Systems, leadership, and management theories and providing safe quality care for clients in the community.*

*Incorporate information technology to improve client outcomes in the community.*

# Disaster Management: Student Comments

## Bus Accident:Triage

“I learned to base decisions on facts and make evidence-based decisions during the triage process. I found there wasn't time to doubt yourself and you need to make a confident strong decision”

## Post Flood: Recovery

“I think one of the most important lessons I took from today's class was that as health care providers we can approach the victims of a disaster using Psychological First Aid. This method helps to assuage not only the physical pain but the emotional needs of the population in despair. This method can also be used in any kind of post-disaster setting”

# Challenges



Limited opportunities



Last minute cancellations



Maintaining safety



Comfort zones

# Student Comments

"I really enjoyed the community clinical, it was a very valuable experience. It was a huge eye opener to the multiple populations within a community that often go unnoticed or are vulnerable."

"It was beneficial learning to view life from another's perspective. I was able to use this experience to identify areas of improvement and disparities that others are facing. It is hard to help someone when you are unaware of their needs. Overall the community health clinical was a semester full of great experiences as a nurse, (or any individual working in the community or public health). I think without this experience it would be difficult to treat the whole person. After All health is a state of overall well being."

"All of my clinical experiences and simulations during the community health clinicals helped me to grow as a nurse and allowed me to have a deeper insight into the lives of people of the community. The simulation allowed me to experience things that I may never experience during my career. I learned so many important concepts and values that inevitably have helped to prepare me to continue on my journey as a Registered Nurse."

# Thank You!

- Althea Aranda
- Teresa Finn
- Tara Mariolis
- Ann Scannell
- Tina Rusak

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