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Prevention and Wellness Across the Life Span

APHA 140TH ANNUAL MEETING & EXPO
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263409 Collaborative community service learning for public health research: A case study from border communities in the Dominican Republic

Monday, October 29, 2012 : 12:56 PM - 1:08 PM

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At the School of Medicine at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, the Center for Medical Humanities & Ethics has developed a nationally recognized Community Service Learning program that provides a bridge between ethics education in the classroom and the development of empathy and humanitarian values in the next generation of health care providers. In 2011, Health Science Center faculty and staff cultivated relationships and established institutional agreements with the Universidad Iberoamericana and the Children of the Nations organization in the Dominican Republic to implement and evaluate an innovative public health intervention to address the ongoing cholera epidemic affecting communities along the Haitian border. While we developed this program with the primary goal of addressing the underlying behavioral risk factors for cholera transmission and other diarrheal diseases in border communities, this program also aims to test the feasibility of a multi-institutional Service Learning site in rural Hispaniola. In addition to learning how to conduct public health research, students from both institutions will gain practical field experiences that will compliment their medical school and public health education. As this is the first international collaboration of its kind at the Health Science Center, the lessons learned during the development, implementation and evaluation of this site will be recorded and utilized to strengthen this program and assist in the development of future collaborative, international service learning programs.

Learning Areas:

Implementation of health education strategies, interventions and programs
Program planning
Public health or related education
Public health or related research

Learning Objectives:

1. Discuss the lessons learned during the development and implementation of a multi-institutional, international service learning program for medical and public health students.
2. Identify the ethical considerations and challenges associated with establishing an international collaborative service learning program.
3. Describe the ways in which this site encourages and makes available opportunities for collaborative scholarly activities for students and faculty from two nations.

Keywords: Service Learning, Professional Development

Presenting author's disclosure statement:

Qualified on the content I am responsible for because: As the Director for the Center for Medical Humanities & Ethics, I have led our nationally recognized community service learning program, acting as the principal or co-principal on multiple state and nationally funded community service learning and ethics education grants. Among my many professional interests has been the implementation and evaluation of infectious disease control programs and health disparities research, with an emphasis on the social determinants of health.

Any relevant financial relationships? No

I agree to comply with the American Public Health Association Conflict of Interest and Commercial Support Guidelines, and to disclose to the participants any off-label or experimental uses of a commercial product or service discussed in my presentation.

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