Innovative Ideas to Address Community Health Experiences

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Assignment
-Sr 2 semester: community clinical hours
-Group assigned to rural community chosen from theory class (windshield survey)
-Select an issue to further synthesize
-PP presentation to class outcomes of project
-Components:
  Overview of community/selected issue
  Identify services available/analysis
  Detailed recommendation/resources
  Peer review/journal/clinical log of hours

Cleanliness and Disease Prevention
- Cleanliness and disease prevention issues were identified for the homebound elderly
- Volunteer house cleaners (nursing students, college-wide service learning opportunities, other organizations) were recruited
- Planned fund raising to purchase cleaning supplies and gas

Emergency Preparedness
- Residents reported a 20 minute EMS wait
- No one in the community knew CPR or could provide first aid/no AED in this community
- Students set up CPR training, found resources for first aid kits, and searched for a grant for community to purchase an AED

Hazardous Materials in the Home
- Chipped paint, propane gas tanks & carbon monoxide identified
- Flyer mailed in water bills with critical safety guidelines
- City council collaborated with students

Transportation Needs
- Elderly residents were missing physician's appointments due to lack of family to take them
- Students displayed (in the post office) and handed out flyers listing 4 different transportation options with phone number, cost, and Medicare/Medicaid reimbursement information

Next semester faculty plan to pursue a grant to obtain money for students to implement their projects at no cost. Students learned to think differently regarding identification of health issues for communities in addition to enhancing individual leadership qualities and critical thinking skills. This experience provided a valuable learning experience for teaching community leadership skills students will need for future health care environments.

City of Ellis School Bond Issue
- Students were approached by city council to help pass bond issue for a new school/athletic facilities after 2 defeats
- Researched health-related issues to lobby as “new reasons” for passing bond
- Collaborated with city council to publicize and educate

Evaluation
“Overall the project was fun.”
“This assignment made me understand the minimal resources in smaller communities.”
“This assignment has really opened my eyes to rural community needs.”
“This project made me realize how neglected small rural towns might be concerning health.”