



## Building an Academic Assisted Living Center Interprofessional Practice & Education Program (IPEP) Partnership

### *Students Caring for Elders, Elders Caring for Students*

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#### Background

As our population ages and lives longer, we need to train health professionals to care for elders. Future providers need to be comfortable caring for people with complex chronic conditions, and to be skilled in providing person-centered care supporting quality-of-life and independence, while working in a highly functioning interprofessional teams.

Providing authentic elder-centered interprofessional (IP) geriatric training to Health Sciences and other students within an Assisted Living practice setting, can result in enhanced elder health and well-being, and future providers who are collaboration-ready and prepared to care for older adults.

St. Luke's Home, an Eden Alternative registered community, is an innovative Assisted Living setting, providing elder-centered wellness and health promotion opportunities to health sciences and other students. Nursing, pharmacy, public health, medicine, and other students benefit and contribute while learning vital aging-related team-based practice skills.



#### Methods/ Findings

The AHSC IPEP faculty and student planning committee in collaboration with the St. Luke's Home Elder Council have conjointly designed and developed several competency-based learning activities including:

- 1) Monthly Screening Clinics which provide student healthcare teams an opportunity to build vital geriatric and interprofessional team based skills.
- 2) Informal Health Promotion Presentations to educate residents about important aging-related health topics by local experts.
- 3) Social Events to foster engagement between elders, students, and care partners; and 4) Community Engagement Projects that enrich elders and promote socialization and well-being.
- 4) Special activities, including pet therapy, permaculture and art activities, involving faculty from across the campus are in the planning stage.

Evaluation activities (not presented here) are being collected including:

- Geriatric knowledge, attitudes and skills (baseline and end of year)
- Post clinic knowledge of geriatric screening topic content and team based skills
- Elder benefits of activities
- Faculty assessment of effectiveness of activities, suggestions for improvement, and team based faculty knowledge and skills.

Students and faculty report: a deeper understanding of aging-related person-centered care; Increased knowledge, skills, and abilities of other health professionals; Improved communication and problem-solving skills; and Greater satisfaction with real-time, hands-on interprofessional exercises.

Elders experience a greater sense of self-worth by contributing to students' educational experiences., and enjoy working with IPEP teams who respectfully consider elders' preferences and values; teach elders self-care skills; share social activities.



#### Conclusion

St. Luke's Home – Academic Assisted Living Center IPEP model can be readily adapted by other academic centers and partnering assisted-living facilities.