

INTRODUCTION

Background: Addressing social determinants of health is an important aspect of improving the health of an individual, as clinical care is only a small aspect of improving an individual's health. As such, there is a push in health care to integrate social work into patient care teams, and - if student run free clinics are to meet their goal of improving community health by providing free medical services - it is important for student run free clinics to address social determinants of health as well. While social workers have been integrated into three other student run free clinics, there has been no research into if this integration has improved patient experience at student run free clinics, though University of Minnesota found working on interdisciplinary health care teams improved medical student attitudes towards their interdisciplinary team members.

History of Partnership: To better address social determinants of health in individuals seen at the UR Well clinics through provision of concrete resource referrals and support, I started a partnership with Leanne Charlesworth at Nazareth Dept of Social Work in summer 2019. This partnership brought social work interns from Nazareth College into the UR Well clinics to complete their internship hours. We started fall 2019 with St. Luke's UR Well clinic and expanded spring 2020 to Asbury UR Well Clinic. After a leadership transition summer 2020, the partnership expanded to include St. Joseph's UR Well Clinic and Street Outreach. This partnership reflection aims to reflect on the partnership's impact on patients, medical students, and social work interns to ensure the needs of all were being met and necessary improvements could be made.

Target population: This project aims to provide improved resource administration and social support to the individuals seen at the UR Well Student Run Free Clinics. Prior to implementation of this partnership, 7% of patients seen at St. Luke's UR Well Clinic disclosed a social need on our intake form, most commonly food or housing insecurity.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

The UR Well Social Work partnership and this specific reflection project partnered with the Nazareth College Department of Social Work. They have been a strong community partner for the past three years, and were selected as an avenue to provide improved resource administration and support to individuals seen at UR Well.

In 2019, a social work partnership was deemed important to have at UR Well, as we were meeting upstream health needs with well intentioned resource guides compiled by medical students who did not have expertise in local organizations or how best to connect patients with increased supports. In order to ethically ask individuals if they have a social/resource need as we were doing on patient intake, we needed a more concrete way to provide assistance.

Therefore, I contacted Nazareth Dept of Social Work to see if we could designate UR Well clinics as an internship site for their students. The benefit received by Nazareth is having clinical placements for social work interns interested in clinical social work, while the benefit for UR Well is improved support for patients and exposure to the benefits of interdisciplinary care teams for UR medical students.

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

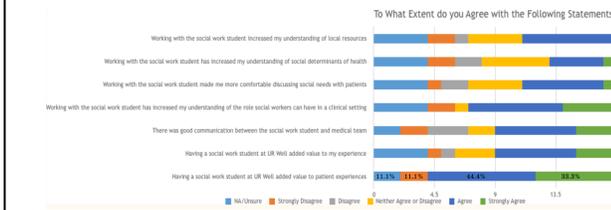
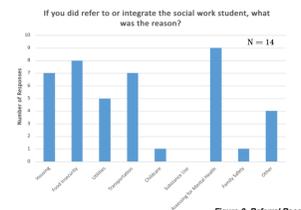
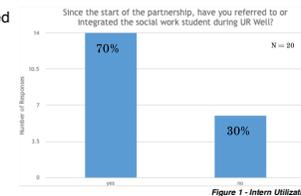
This project involved three parts to ensure efficient, well-integrated interdisciplinary care by evaluating the experience of social work interns, medical students, and patients:

Part 1: Social Work Intern Interview

- Performed Zoom-based informal, standardized 8-question interview of 3 current/prior social work interns
- Goal: Improving integration, support, and educational experience of social work interns
- Identified Needs: Improve social work intern understanding of UR Well and medical student understanding of role of clinical social work

Part 2: Medical Student Survey

- Developed IRB-approved survey of multiple choice, Likert scale, and short answer questions
 - 20 medical students responded, with responses from all three clinics
 - 95% had volunteered as a health team senior/junior, and 30% had volunteered as a leadership member
- Goal: Understanding impact of partnership on learning at UR Well
- 70% of respondents had referred to the social work intern, primarily to assess mental health or provide referrals for food, housing, or transportation needs
 - Most common reason why they did not: "I was not aware we had a social work intern"
- Received variety of responses on Likert scale and short answers,
 - Short answers included:
 - Not knowing there was a social work intern at clinic
 - Concerns regarding knowledge base of social work interns
 - Positive responses about providing holistic care at UR Well, professional behavior of interns, and perceived added value to patient experience with examples of resource connections made by social work interns
- Only 50% agreed or strongly agreed having social work interns added value to their UR Well experience
- Areas for educational improvement include learning about local resources/ Area for program improvement include improved communication social determinants of health, and comfort discussing social needs with Patients
- Most successful area is increasing understanding in role of social work in clinical setting



- Identified Needs: Wide range of responses may be due to the issue of consistency in experience across the clinics identified by Nazareth Staff, particularly in regards to consistency of supervision for social work interns across the clinics and between years

Part 3: Improved pt Data Tracking

- Could not assess pt experience as previous data collection attempts were inconsistent
 - 77.8% of medical student survey respondents agreed/strongly agreed social work intern added value to patient experience, with examples given in short answer responses
- Obtained access to RedCap for social work interns and developed pt data tracking form with assistance of social work students for them to complete after each pt encounter
 - This form includes information on pt needs addressed by intern as well as follow-up provided

CONCLUSIONS

The main identified needs from this 3-part reflection include:

Integration of Social Work Interns at UR Well: A lack of knowledge about the partnership or how to integrate social work interns into clinic flow was identified by both the social work and medical students. Steps were taken to improve social work integration into UR Well. To improve social work intern knowledge of UR Well prior to starting, I developed orientation powerpoint slides regarding UR Well structure. To improve medical student understanding of the role social work interns can have at UR Well, I identified four key roles of social work interns with assistance of Nazareth Dept of Social Work. These roles were placed on posters hung in each clinic and included in yearly the UR Well orientation powerpoint. This will improve medical student knowledge of the partnership and how to integrate social work into the flow at UR Well clinic.

Social Work Intern Supervision: Improved social work intern supervision is needed to address concerns about social work intern knowledge base brought up by medical student responses, wide variety of medical student responses, and inconsistency in experience of social work interns identified by Nazareth staff. Given these concerns, improved supervision will likely improve service provision to individuals seen at UR Well. Options proposed have included: a monthly support group for social work interns hosted by the social work liaisons, having MSW peer mentors, continuing the use of Nazareth-provided field supervisors, or a shift in program model for outside supervisors. Initially, supervision was provided to interns by Person-Centered Housing Option, which served as the pilot interns' primary site. However, this model was stopped as the partnership grew. As of 1/7/2022, the plan will be to return to model initially used in 2019 where the social work intern is placed at a different community organization (Ex: PCHO and MC Collaborative) with time at the UR Well clinics. This will be combined with use of a monthly social work liaison-led support group for the interns. The aim of these changes is to improve robustness of educational experience and consistency in intern experience, thereby improving resource administration and support for individuals seen at UR Well.

Pt Data Tracking: In order to ensure this program is having the intended impact of improving resource administration/social support of individuals seen at UR Well, improved pt data tracking is needed. To address this need, social work interns have been granted access to RedCap, and a form was developed for them to begin filling out starting spring 2022 to better track services provided and - on follow-up - the pt reported impact.

Limitations: The major limitation was a lack of ability to know the impact on the individuals we are hoping to help by integrating social work interns into UR Well with the goal of improving resource administration. Program changes made due to COVID-19 also made consistency of social work intern and medical student experience difficult in the setting of UR Well clinic closures and decreased patient volumes at some UR Well clinics.

IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Impact: While we were unable to directly assess the patient impact, 77.8% of medical student survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed there was positive impact on patients. The intended impact of this partnership is to improve resource administration and support of patients seen at UR Well through use of a holistic, interdisciplinary team model. The partnership also aims to provide a positive interdisciplinary experience for medical and social work students, thus encouraging future medical professionals to continue addressing social determinants of health through interdisciplinary patient-centered care. By developing concrete data tracking methods, we hope to better understand the patient impact in the future.

Sustainability: The creation of a "social work liaison" role in the UR Well leadership structure ensures each clinic has a medical student designates as a point of contact between UR Well and Nazareth as well as a support person for the social work interns. By transitioning leadership each year, the partnership can continue to improve with new ideas. This reflection will be repeated in 2 years by the current social work liaisons to ensure continued improvement. Finally, the strength of the relationship built with Nazareth will ensure sustainability of the partnership.

