

# The Deaf Health Pathway at URSMD

**Director: Jason Rotoli, MD**

MEDICINE *of* THE HIGHEST ORDER



# The Deaf Community

## Rochester Deaf in the Rochester Area

- ~5,000 adults
- Highest *per capita* in America

## Deaf Community is socially and medically marginalized

- Little awareness by health providers
- Few sources of accessible health information
- Low literacy
- Low health literacy
- Inclusion in national datasets is unclear (linguistic exclusion)

# The Deaf Health Pathway: Goals

- Appreciate the health disparities between the Deaf community and the general population
- Increase awareness of unique Deaf health needs within a medical system
- Introduce successful community engagement strategies
- Increase knowledge of resources available to Deaf patients
- Provide opportunities for linguistic and cultural immersion
- Prepare students to care for Deaf patients (and other minority groups)

# Why You Should Join the DHP

## Culture Competency & Language Immersion

- Cultural awareness of Deaf Community
  - History, Conflicts, Achievements, Challenges
- American Sign Language
  - Linguistic conduit into cultural appreciation
  - Learn a new language (or improve your fluency)

## Care for underserved population

- Develop skills that can be applied to other minority populations

## Become a community health advocate

- Work with Deaf organizations on a variety of health issues

# Years 1 & 2

## Medical Humanities Seminar Series: Three Parts

### **Deaf Health, Part 1**

An Introduction to Deaf Language and Culture  
Seminar in Spring of 1st Year

### **Deaf Health, Part 2**

Immersion into Deaf Language and Culture  
Seminar in Fall of 2nd Year

### **Deaf Health, Part 3**

Medical Experience in Deaf Language and Culture  
Seminar in Spring of 2nd Year

- *Completion of all 3 seminars is necessary to enroll in the Pathway*
- *Each Part is 2 hours weekly (1pm – 3pm) for 8 weeks*

# Years 3 & 4: DHP Elective

- Four weeks (total); can be split (2+2) if needed
  - Focus on issues relating to disparities in Deaf health
  - Provides and experience in collaboration and interaction with the Deaf community
- Focus on single domain or combination of several domains
- New project or build on previous work
- May work independently or in collaboration with other DHP students

# Deaf Health Pathway: Project Elements

## Community Involvement

- Partnership with Deaf organizations (e.g. projects, health education programs, community service)

## Research Project

- Supervised by a faculty member
- Community Education (Deaf Health Talks)
- Develop and implement an educational healthcare module for a specific medical condition or circumstance relating to the Deaf population

## Interpreting Observership

- Coordinated with URMC Department of Interpreting Services

# Year 3 & 4: Elective Domains

## Clinical Experience

- Work with physicians who treat Deaf patients
- Develop clinical and cultural skills and knowledge about interactions with Deaf patients

## Supervised Community-based Project

- 10 – 15 pages or equivalent OR Presentation & Summary
- Build on work done in Deaf electives
- Submitted by February 1 of final year

## Medical Sign Workshop (optional)

- Provide more in-depth communication approaches in ASL
- Schedule two meetings with DHP director for medical case based ASL instruction



# DHP Elective Deliverables

## Proposal & Calendar

- Identify a Mentor
  - Each student can identify a community or health mentor to meet regularly or use the director as their mentor for the project
- Submit a Project Proposal to **Dr. Rotoli and Katie Libby** *8 weeks prior* to start of elective
  - Should include:
    - Schedule with completion dates
    - Goals/Objectives
    - Contacts
    - Required resources (administrative support, materials, etc)

# DHP Elective Deliverables

## Final Report or Project

- Content will depend on nature of elective--agreed upon at start of elective
- Due by **February 1<sup>st</sup>** of Year 4

# What will continue?

## ASL Classes and Training

### Field Trips

- Rochester School for the Deaf
- National Technical Institute for the Deaf
- National Center for Deaf Health Research

### Precepting Opportunities at Various Health Settings

- Deaf Friendly Clinics
- Audiology
- ENT Surgery
- Health Clinic at RIT
- URMC Urgent Care
- SMH Interpreting

# Silent Dinners

**In addition to Year 1/2 Seminars and Year 3/4 elective, DHP students will have the option to participate in "Silent Dinners" \***

- Monthly "voice-off" meals
- *Subsidized* dinners in various settings
  - home, restaurant, community center, etc.
- Interaction with members of the Deaf Community
- Develop linguistic and cultural proficiency through environmental immersion
- Expected participation of >50% of events

**\* Developed in 2013 in response to student feedback**

# Deaf Health Pathway Certification

**Those who complete all elements of the Deaf Health Pathway prior to graduation will be recognized in several ways:**

1. Provision of certificate upon graduation
2. Dean's Letter
3. Transcripts

Also: Skills you develop during your elective  
Residency Interviews – Diversity Milestone  
Curriculum Vitae

# Interested?

Please enroll in the Deaf Health Seminars when requested by the Medical Humanities Office. Students will be required to complete all 3 seminars to enroll in the Deaf Health Pathway.

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**Contact the DHP Coordinator:** Katie Libby

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**Deaf Health Pathway Website**

<http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/education/md/admissions/elective-pathway.aspx>