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Integrating social determinants of health into pathophysiology and pharmacology courses

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Advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in health sciences education, Classroom/didactic teaching

Abstract

PURPOSE: Disseminate the idea of integrating social determinants of health (SDoH) concepts into specific course topics rather than treating SDoH as a separate topic.

BACKGROUND: Social determinants of health (SDoH) are "conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life" (WHO, 2022). Although SDoH are recognized as contributors to the development and outcomes of various diseases (Grant, 2022; Havranek, 2015) and as influential in the outcomes of pharmacologic therapy (Wilder, 2021), they traditionally are not integrated into specific topics in pathophysiology and pharmacology courses. For example, teaching regarding the anticoagulant warfarin emphasizes the importance of periodic monitoring of INR, but usually omits mention of SDoH such as access to transportation or childcare that are necessary to travel to laboratory appointments. The Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) establishes the undergraduate nursing curriculum for 17 member schools, including OHSU. Recently, OCNE updated the course outcomes for pathophysiology and pharmacology courses. SDoH now is stated explicitly in course outcomes with regard to assessment of SDoH with specific disease processes and SDoH barriers to adherence to drug therapy with specific drug classes. OCNE students are introduced to SDoH in other courses, but discussion with faculty revealed lack of understanding of how to address SDoH specifically within the context of pathophysiology and pharmacology.

OBJECTIVES: 1. Integrate topic-specific SDoH content into at least 60% of the topics in undergraduate clinical pharmacology and pathophysiology courses taught by the project director. 2. Assist other faculty to integrate topic-specific SDoH specifically into their courses.

METHODS: 1. Search current professional literature for SDoH journal articles specific to pathophysiology and pharmacology course topics. Revise teaching materials, incorporating SDoH into each topic where appropriate. 2. Make pathophysiology-specific and pharmacology-specific journal articles available to all faculty and assist with skill-building in their use. Explain to other faculty the difference between topic-specific application of SDoH and treating SDoH as a separate topic.

RESULTS: Topic-specific consideration of SDoH now involves 86% of topics in the author's pathophysiology courses and 70% in their pharmacology courses. Collections of pathophysiology and pharmacology-specific SDoH journal articles now are available to all OCNE faculty through the OCNE Basecamp platform. Wider accessibility for anyone is planned. To date, the pathophysiology collection includes 16 topic folders containing over 75 articles. The pharmacology collection includes 15 topic folders containing over 55 articles. Workshops and presentations to faculty are in planning.

IMPACT: This project will improve health sciences education by helping participants view topics through an inclusive lens that facilitates effective care for all, including people with limited resources and those who do not live in safe supportive environments.

Learning Objectives

1. Utilizing Social Media in Nurse Practitioner Education Through a Twitter Journal Club
2. Describe methods for utilizing social media in healthcare education.
3. Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of integrating social media into healthcare curriculum.
4. Identify opportunities for utilizing an online journal club utilizing alternate platforms

References

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