Addressing Social Determinants of Health in a Pre-Entry Immersion to Nursing Program to Cultivate Success and Acclimation to the Nursing Profession

The Academy for Academic and Social Enrichment and Leadership Development for Health Equity (Health Equity Academy [HEA]), Nursing Workforce Diversity Program, Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, represents an innovative conceptual multilevel/multidimensional approach to addressing the social determinants of health at the individual, social, and structural levels. The aim of this program is to increase the number of high-achieving/high-potential underrepresented minorities in nursing from economically disadvantaged backgrounds by achieving the following goals: (1) cultivate the next generation of minority nurse leaders who are committed to health equity; (2) strengthen the extent to which the Accelerated Bachelors of Science in Nursing (ABSN) curriculum prepares graduates who fully understand, appreciate, and are committed to addressing the interrelationships between and among social determinants of health, health access, and health disparities (health equity concepts); and (3) continue to advance as an academically and socially responsive center of excellence in the development of nursing workforce diversity.

HEA offers a summer pre-entry program to expand understanding of nursing as a career, promote the role of nursing and its interface with health equity concepts, continue to expand the health equity threads as adjunct experiences concurrent with enrollment in the ABSN program, and influence readiness for the ABSN program. HEA incorporates a focused assessment of individual-level social determinants of health in order to match financial, social, and academic interventions or strategies with need. These strategies include the following:

- A pre-entrance webinar informs participants of the infrastructure of the HEA program.
- An initial social determinants of health individual assessment is administered in order to identify individual social determinants that may be potential barriers to student success. Surveys are administered by the HEA social worker, and debrief is held afterward to address any potential distress caused by the sensitive nature of the questions. Surveys are reviewed and evaluated by the program director and social worker. Based on the HEA Scholars’ responses, a Prescription for Success is created which incorporates individualized strategies and goals designed to enhance success. Individual and group sessions are held by the social work and project director quarterly to determine the efficacy of interventions, identify new barriers, and develop additional strategies if needed.
- Seminars are held to provide an understanding of individual and community social determinants of health, including Introduction to the Pathophysiology of Disease Related to Social and Environmental Determinants of Health. This seminar addresses social determinants of health as a precursor to alterations in biological processes that affect the body’s dynamic equilibrium or homeostasis and the development of language to describe those alterations. The seminar also examines the pathophysiology, social determinants, risk factors, and clinical
manifestations of common disease states, as evidenced by completion of critical
thinking questions and clinical cases.

- The *Unnatural Causes* documentary series facilitates discussion of inequities and
  influences on health outcomes. • HEA Scholars complete a thorough assessment and
  windshield survey of the local community and present results in an open
  forum at the end of the immersion program.

- HEA Scholars participate in community engagement, such as working with local
  nonprofit agencies that serve underserved populations.

- Other components include journaling to encourage reflection and a budgeting
  program to minimize financial barriers.

Additional strategies to influence awareness, understanding, and commitment to health
equity concepts among nursing faculty and communities of interest are provided
through a Health Equity Colloquium. HEA collaborates with faculty to strengthen the
ABSN curriculum by planning for the integration of health equity concepts throughout
the curriculum and related learning experiences, and to implement the curriculum in a
manner that will increase the capacity of all nurses to address health inequalities
competently. The sense of diversity and inclusiveness of the academic and social milieu
of the school is heightened by identifying and institutionalizing several evidence-based
interventions congruent with environmental satisfaction among underrepresented
minorities.

SOURCE: Based on a presentation by Brigit M. Carter, Ph.D., R.N., CCRN, Duke
University School of Nursing, at the committee’s open session on September 15, 2015.
(National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016. pp.44-5).

Description from pages 44 and 45 of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering,
and Medicine (2016). *A framework for educating health professionals to address the
The Academy for Academic and Social Enrichment and Leadership
Development for Health Equity

Scholar Social Determinants of Health Assessment Tool

The answers to these questions will be kept confidential and used for the planning of your success in completing the program

1. What is your primary spoken and written language?

2. How would you describe your income level?

Think of this ladder as representing where people stand in the United States.

At the top of the ladder are the people who are the best off – those who have the most money, the most education and the most respected jobs. At the bottom are the people who are the worst off – who have the least money, least education, and the least respected jobs or no job. The higher up you are on this ladder, the closer you are to the people at the very top; the lower you are, the closer you are to the people at the very bottom.

Where would you place yourself on this ladder?

Please place a large "X" on the rung where you think you stand at this time in your life, relative to other people in the United States.

3. Which of the following categories best describes the highest education level of your mother?

4. Which of the following categories best describes the highest education level of your father?

5. Have any of your sibling’s college? If yes, what was their highest education level obtained?
6. Are you responsible for physical care or financial support of your parents, siblings or another person? If yes, please provide additional information about the person/people and your responsibilities.

7. Are there any other competing demands that you anticipate may impact your time in the program? If yes, provide more detail about these demands.

8. Who do you count/rely on for emotional and social support?

How would those you count/rely on for emotional and social support talk about your enrollment in the ABSN program?

In what ways will those you count/rely on support you during the ABSN program? (Please be specific)

9. Describe the most stressful experience you have encountered in your life?

How did you cope with this most stressful experience?

Describe a recent stressful experience you have encountered?

How did you cope with this recent stressful experience?

With the intensive 16-month ABSN program, there come potential challenges (i.e. rigorous curriculum, living away from home, roommates). Identify some potential challenges you anticipate during the ABSN program.

10. How comfortable are you with seeking help when problems arise?

1- Uncomfortable
2- Somewhat uncomfortable
3- Somewhat comfortable
4- Comfortable

If you rated your experience as 2 or below, please provide more detail below.
11. How would you describe your ability to complete coursework in high school and college?

1- Experienced extreme difficulties
2- Experienced mild difficulty
3- Moderately completed
4- Completed with slight ease
5- Completed with ease

If you rated your experience as 3 or below, please provide more detail below.

12. What behaviors do you exhibit when you are stressed?

13. Describe some of your challenges with completing coursework. Provide some of the strategies and supports you implemented through the process? Discuss the outcome (was it positively resolved or left unresolved)

14. Below is a list of events, which you may or may not have experienced in the past year. If you have not experienced an event, please circle 0. **If you have experienced the event, please circle the appropriate number to indicate how stressful each event has been for you.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN THE PAST YEAR HAS THE FOLLOWING HAPPENED?</th>
<th>Did not happen</th>
<th>Not at all stressful</th>
<th>A little stressful</th>
<th>Somewhat stressful</th>
<th>Quite Stressful</th>
<th>Extremely Stressful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Death of someone close to you.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Living in a neighborhood with high crime, drugs and fighting.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Not getting a promotion due to race.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Friend or family member is seriously ill.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Unsure you can pay rent, utilities and buy food.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Unable to afford necessities for your children.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
g. Being ill/having a health condition for yourself. 0 1 2 3 4 5
h. Living in overcrowded housing. 0 1 2 3 4 5
i. Trying to make ends meet. 0 1 2 3 4 5
j. Family member(s) or friend(s) with personal/financial problems. 0 1 2 3 4 5

15. What strategies have you used to integrate into a majority group setting? If so, how did you accomplish that and was it successful? If not, what are your thoughts and feelings about integrating into a majority group setting?

16. Please circle (or select) a number to indicate how much you disagree or agree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. In general, being an underrepresented minority is an important part of my self-image.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I have a strong sense of belonging to underrepresented minority groups.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Please read each of the following statements and circle the number that best describes how you feel about people in your neighborhood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. In general, being an underrepresented minority is an important part of my self-image.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. People in my neighborhood are willing to help each other.

b. People in my neighborhood do not get along with each other.

c. People in this neighborhood can be trusted.

d. People in this neighborhood do not share the same values.

e. Many people in this neighborhood are afraid to go out at night.

f. Many people in this neighborhood know each other.

g. This is a close knit neighborhood

18. Thinking about your neighborhood as a whole, how much of a problem do you feel each of the following is in your neighborhood?

19. Is there any additional information that you would like to share about your home?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not a problem</th>
<th>A serious Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Too much traffic.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Excessive noise.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Trash and litter.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Smells and odors from factories or farms.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Smoke from fires and burning.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Too much crime and violence.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Drug use or distribution.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>