

BACKGROUND

- The “Active Living Study” is part of a multi-site international study that explores physical activity, exercise, and physical fitness of HIV-infected people in the context of the social determinants of health including neighborhood environment, self-image, stigma, insurance status, among other variables.
- HIV positive status is associated with earlier onset and frequency of co-morbidities, such as type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity, which are also associated with sedentary lifestyles.
- A commitment to the principles inherent in team-based science is at the core of all “Active Living” Study team activities.
- Team-based science is defined as a collaborative effort to address a scientific challenge that leverages the strengths and expertise of professionals trained in different fields (National Cancer Institute).

AIM

To build the capacity of “Active Living” team members from diverse educational and professional backgrounds to function as a productive and successful research team.



DESIGN

We engaged in a formal team design and development process.

Team Construction Strategies

1. Considered the project purpose and project-related needs for disciplinary expertise.
2. Analyzed strengths of potential team members; a) disciplinary perspective, b) knowledge, c) skill-set, and d) prior experience with interprofessional team-work.
3. Reflected on professional needs of potential team members; a) potential professional trajectory, b) gaps in knowledge and skills, and c) current rank in the academic setting.

Process Strategies

1. Conducted standardized training for all team members.
2. Instituted regular team meetings; a) to build capacity for collaboration, b) keep energy up, and c) facilitate commitment.
3. Regularly communicated contributions of team members regarding ; a) efficiency, b) productivity, c) collegiality, and d) overall effective team functioning.
4. Established systems for; a) coordinating data collection calendars, b) performing data collection, and c) balancing the developmental needs of team members.

RESULTS

- Team members include undergraduate and graduate students and faculty representatives from athletic training, biology, health services research, medicine, nursing, physical therapy, and public health.
- Team completed eligibility screenings and/or collected data from 72 participants.
- Presented at 4 meetings with 2 upcoming meetings.
- One student was nominated and selected for the Sigma Theta Tau International “Rising Star” award.
- Manuscripts planned and/or in progress on study results, interprofessional collaboration, team building, and geographic specific barriers to participant recruitment

CONCLUSIONS

Students and faculty were interviewed regarding their overall interprofessional experience including the achievement of their personal goals and future plans. All four student team members graduated from their disciplinary programs.

- **Student A:** I’m proud of our outcomes. We accomplished what we set out to do.
- **Student B:** This experience prepared me for coursework in nursing research class. It helped to make it real. It helped change the way I think... how to improve practice.
- **Student C:** I had no previous experience in clinical interactions or research. I learned the procedures involved with clinical research, such as the IRB process, conducting participant visits, obtaining various measurements, and practicing general interactions with participants in clinical settings.
- **Faculty A:** The utility of an interprofessional approach to addressing complex challenges such as social determinants of health was really illuminated for me.
- **Faculty B:** I had the opportunity to engage in team writing, collaborative problem-solving, and development of relationships with faculty. Most importantly, I highly value the opportunity to engage with undergraduate students and watch them accomplish something they didn’t previously believe was in their wheelhouse.
- **Faculty C:** I really appreciated being part of an interprofessional team. The different disciplinary perspectives helped us to produce a better quality product.

Students expressed that they would have liked more time for reflection especially during the process of preparing posters for dissemination.

National Cancer Institute
<https://www.teamsciencetoolkit.cancer.gov/public/Home.aspx>

*Funding to support this project was received from the ODU Office of Research
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