



# SERVICE LEARNING FRAMEWORK: ENHANCING INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN AT A MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

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## INTRODUCTION

Academic partnerships between medical schools with hospitals and health care agencies for authentic learning have become a major focus of medical education (Cohen, Leung, Oriuwa & Wright, 2019; Playford et al., 2017).

Liaison Committee on Medical Education (Element 6.6) recommends that medical program provides sufficient opportunities for participation in service-learning and community activities to students ("Standards, Publications, & Notification Forms | LCME", 2020).

## PURPOSE

We attempted to create a framework to provide an opportunity to medical students to learn about priority health conditions in community and incorporate or align these topics in the medical curriculum.

Additionally, we wanted to recognize competencies students are achieving from this activity.

## METHODOLOGY

This research used a qualitative methodology to learn the occurrence of priority health conditions in the community. We interviewed medical students who participated in the yearly health fair organized by school and local health agencies. Two focus groups of 7 and 8 students were interviewed using a set of open-ended questions. Audio recorded responses were hand-coded and categorized. The results were shared with the SMU curriculum committee, which recommended enhancements in the curriculum.

## RESULTS

Prime health conditions identified were '**Diabetes**', '**Hypertension**' and '**Nutritional imbalance**'. These topics are allocated additional teaching time. The analysis of student responses revealed that they learned to understand competencies like '**Communication skills**' '**Civic responsibility**' '**Professionalism**' and '**Interpersonal education**'

*"I learnt how to explain it to the patients, and then we saw the patients, and interacted with them"*

### Communication

*"I think seeing and being able to identify what the patient is going through and addressing it with them is something important"*

### Civic responsibility

*"I learnt how to explain it to the patients, and then we saw the patients, and interacted with them"*

### Team work

*"I think seeing and being able to identify what the patient is going through and addressing it with them is something important"*

### Academic development

## CONCLUSION

The benefit of service-learning projects on community partners and populations receiving the service is largely unknown primarily due to the lack of structure for identifying and measuring outcomes.

Current project guided development of a universal framework that provides structure for reciprocity between community healthcare requirements and medical curriculum.

Service-learning pedagogy can lead to a continuous promotion of societal wellness along with improving a medical student's competence.

## REFERENCES

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