WELCOME!

Resources for Developing an Understanding of Health Disparities

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1:00pm-2:00pm
ACU is a nonprofit, transdisciplinary organization of clinicians, advocates and health care organizations united in a common mission to improve the health of America’s underserved populations by enhancing the development and support of the health care clinicians serving these populations.
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Ask Questions

Have Fun

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Dr. White is the Director of Didactic Education and a founding faculty member of the Boston University School of Medicine PA Program. She has been a full time faculty member in PA education since 2007. Her education and research interests are in curriculum development and novel approaches to medical education and these resources were developed over the past three years for a course in Preventive Medicine. She currently serves on the Exam Development Board of the PA Education Association and was a 2014-2015 Gold Humanism Scholar at the Harvard Macy Institute Program for Educators. Having practiced Ob-Gyn in New Hampshire for over 20 years, she now practices gynecology at Boston Medical Center and Upham’s Corner Health Center.
Learning Objectives

Following the workshop, the learner will be able to

1. Locate and use the following resources for understanding disparity: Spent, Dartmouth Health Atlas, Food desert map, bias testing, Google Maps.

2. Use the food desert maps and google maps resources to develop an activity to foster understanding of the barriers and challenges for healthy food choices in a community.

3. Use the Dartmouth Health Atlas to assess differences in healthcare and outcomes in a location.
The Origins

PA program at Boston University School of Medicine (N=56 students)

The mission of the Boston University School of Medicine PA Program is to educate physician assistants who will provide exceptional patient care for diverse populations of patients, including those from vulnerable communities, and to cultivate leaders.

We value excellence, integrity, social justice, service, and are committed to developing a successful model for interprofessional education and clinical practice.

Teaching hospitals:
- Boston Medical Center
- Boston VA System
- Roger Williams Medical Center, Providence RI (to improve the health status of the communities it serves)
Defining Health Disparities

Food
Shelter
Transportation
Income
Insurance
Activities for Awareness

Medication and Lifestyle Change

Income Challenges

Food Access

Facing Our Own Biases

Regional Differences in Healthcare
Medication & Lifestyle Change

Purpose: to raise awareness of taking medication and making a lifestyle change

Procedure:
- Tic Tacs in placed in prescription bottle with 4 times a day dosing
- Emailed prescription ready for pick up
- Limited pharmacy hours; only I can dispense
- Must email me with their lifestyle change
- Medication and lifestyle change is for 3 weeks
- Reflection piece
Medication & Lifestyle Change

“I kept forgetting to take the medicine with me so I could take it on time. Good thing my life didn’t depend on it.”

“I could never remember to take my birth control pills. I was terrible at this! I found some pill reminder apps which helped and will help my patients maybe too.”
“I feel relieved that I can stop walking once this is over. On the other hand I know I should continue to do it but it is nice to know I don’t have to do it.”

“Harder than I thought to do this [eat 5 vegetables] everyday.”

“I decided to draw how my ‘transformation’ went with my lifestyle change of cooking ....at least 1 meal a day. Overall my lifestyle changes have been manageable and realistic.”
Activities for Awareness

Medication and Lifestyle Change

Income Challenges

Food Access

Facing Our Own Biases

Regional Differences in Healthcare
Income Challenges

Purpose: Raise awareness of the challenges of a low income

Procedure:
- Play the game Spent (http://playspent.org/) at home before coming to class
- Play it at least three times and make different choices each time.
- Class discussion
Income Challenges

Over 14 million Americans are unemployed. Now imagine you are one of them.

Your savings are gone. You’ve lost your house. And you’re down to your last $1000.

CAN YOU MAKE IT THROUGH THE MONTH?

FIND A JOB  OR  EXIT

SPENT
Spent

YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF MONEY FAST

It's time to get a job – any job. Here's what's available. Choose one:

WAREHOUSE

2ND SHIFT

Looking for dependable, punctual, and hard-working warehouse associates. Must be able to lift 20 lbs and have reliable transportation.

$9/hr.
12p-7p
Income Challenges

Student comments about Spent.

“OMG”

“I could not win.”

“I am surprised that I can be a bad person. I put my dog down because I couldn’t afford medical care for it.”

“Partway through I realized that this isn’t a game – it’s probably someone’s real life.”
Activities for Awareness

Medication and Lifestyle Change

Income Challenges

Food Access

Facing Our Own Biases

Regional Differences in Healthcare
Food Access

Purpose: to raise awareness of the food availability in the vicinity of an urban safety net hospital (Boston Medical Center), challenges of following a specific diet and the notion of food deserts and food swamps.

Procedure:
◦ Students are paired and assigned a case
  1. Research the diet
  2. Research the neighborhood
  3. Research food desert data
  4. Go shopping in a local convenience store

Class Discussion
◦ Food deserts
◦ Food swamps
◦ Food access
Food Access – Activity 1

Diabetes

You are a 27 yo living at 727 Tremont St, Boston MA who does not have a car. Your son, age 11, has just been diagnosed with Type I Diabetes. You are a single parent with two other teenage children. You have just been laid off and are collecting unemployment. Your son has been placed on a 2000 cal ADA diet and needs daily insulin and blood sugar levels.

Hypertension

You are 54 yo living at 128 Intervale St, Boston MA who does not have a car. You have a long history of hypertension but never took it seriously until you had a stroke last month. After physical therapy at the rehabilitation hospital, you can now walk about 1000 feet with a walker. You are living on disability income. On discharge from the hospital you started on a DASH Diet and two new medications for hypertension.

Obesity

You are a 38 yo living at 29 Richfield St, Boston MA who does not have a car. You have been looking for work for the past 4 months and are living off unemployment. You were recently admitted to the hospital for cellulitis of the left ankle. On admission you weighed 274 lbs and were 5’ 2” tall. You met with a nutritionist who suggested a low carbohydrate diet like Atkins or Paleo for weight loss. On discharge you were given a prescription for oral antibiotics.
Food Access
Activity 2 – Research your Neighborhood

• Using Google maps (www.google.com/maps) locate the address of your patient.
• Use Google street view and map view to check out the neighborhood.
• Find the following:
  • Nearest store that sells food
  • Nearest pharmacy
  • Numbers and types of restaurants available in the neighborhood
  • Closest full size grocery/supermarket (this would be a name brand store like Shaws, Stop & Shop, Market Basket etc)

• Neighborhood Search Tips
  • Try different search terms like food store, grocery, supermarket, market, pharmacy or drug store
  • Try using terms such as restaurant, café, fast food or food type (pizza, burgers) or brand name
Go back to this web page. The scale on the right side offers several colored layers with different options for LI and LA communities.
Food Access – Activity 3

Data is based on the US Census Tracts

- **low-access communities (LA)**
  - at least 500 persons and/or at least 33% of the census tract's population live more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store
  - For rural areas, 10 miles is used.

- **low-income communities (LI)**
  - poverty rate of 20 percent or greater
  - median family income at or below 80 percent of the area median family income

The USDA Food Environment Atlas has options for looking at LA and LI communities with varying distances from supermarkets and without vehicle access.
Food Access – Activity 3

Use the toggle on the left to zoom into the Boston Area. Try turning on and off layers.
Food Access – Activity 3

Type in your home address OR the place where you grew up.
Activity 4 – Shopping for Food

Using the new diet in the case and what you know about their neighborhood, let’s go food shopping.

- Find a convenience store or small corner store near you
- Find a day’s worth of food that meets *your diet* requirements. You should have breakfast, lunch, dinner and two snacks.
- You don’t have to purchase the food but try to calculate how much it would cost.
- Take a look at the choices and types of food available
- Fill out the sheet and hand it in
Assignment: shop in a convenience market near you. Develop a menu for a day which meets the dietary rules and answer the following questions.

1. How many types of fresh fruits and vegetables were available?
2. How many types of frozen fruits and vegetables were available?
3. How many types of canned fruits and vegetables were available?
4. What’s for Breakfast? Lunch? Dinner? Snack?
5. Could you find a full day of food? Was their enough variety to extend to a full week of meals?
6. How did you feel about your shopping experience?
Food – Deserts, Swamps and Eating Well

Class Discussion

◦ Each group shares their diet
◦ Discuss how many and types of fast food places around their patient
◦ How could you as a PA help your patients who live in a desert or swamp?
◦ Deserts versus swamps
  ◦ Which do you think would be more challenging to live in? Why?
  ◦ How could a community make a swamp healthier?
    ◦ Farmers markets
    ◦ EBT cards
    ◦ Delivery services
Food – Deserts, Swamps and Eating Well

How to set up your own


Find food desert in your area

On google maps find addresses for the cases
- Search for convenience markets and locate your cases near a convenience stores
- Using street view can help you determine the size of the store

Additional items
- Using public transit have them figure out how to get to the nearest full service grocery store – how long does it take?
- Does the grocery store offer delivery? How much does it cost?
- Green space/Activity space – where can your patient go to get exercise?
Activities for Awareness

Medication and Lifestyle Change

Income Challenges

Food Access

Facing Our Own Biases

Regional Differences in Healthcare
Facing Our Own Biases

Purpose: to explore hidden or inherent bias which may affect our ability to give care

Procedure:
- Class discussion before activity
  - Bias definition
  - Bias in research
  - Overt bias vs inherent bias
- Activity (home assignment)
  - Inherent bias testing (Project Implicit)
- Class discussion after testing
Facing Our Biases

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/
Facing Our Own Biases

- Class discussion after testing
  - Index cards
    - Hand out 2 index cards and have everyone write down one bias they have on each card
    - No names
    - Include yourself and other faculty (and let them know you are doing this)
  - Collect cards
    - Give data back to class
    - Were you surprised at your implicit biases?
    - How does this affect patient care?
    - How can you use this information to provide better care?
Activities for Awareness

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Food Access

Facing Our Own Biases

Regional Differences in Healthcare
Regional Differences in Healthcare

Purpose: to demonstrate and increase awareness of disparities in healthcare based on the region of the US

Procedure:
- Small group work in pairs. One person is A and other is B.
- Assigned to look up specific issues
Regional Differences in Healthcare

Dartmouth Atlas of Healthcare
http://www.dartmouthatlas.org/

Person A:

For Data by topic
- Variations in the Care of Surgical Conditions
- Topic: Diabetes and PAD
- Indicator: Leg Amputation by Race
- Bring up Map view

Person B

Data by topic
- Quality/Effective Care
  - Topic: Ambulatory Care Quality
  - Indicator: Diabetic Testing
  - Go to Table
    - Choose Hgb A1c > HRR under Region type > Refresh > Map
  - Bring up Map view
Lower Extremity Amputations, 2003 - 2005

Appropriate HgA1c Screening, 2003 - 2005
Regional Differences in Healthcare

Discussion

◦ What did you find?
◦ Why are amputations more frequent in the south?
◦ Why is HgbA1c important?
◦ Do you think there is a correlation between the two maps?
◦ Why are there regional differences?
◦ How do you as a provider keep current regarding screening for patients?
  ◦ This is an introduction to the use of the smart phone app ePSS USPSTF recommendations
Regional Differences in Healthcare

ePSS USPSTF recommendations  [http://epss.ahrq.gov/PDA/index.jsp]
Defining Health Disparities

- Food
- Shelter
- Transportation
- Income
- Insurance

- Education
- Immigration status
- Language
- Green space
- Activity space
- Provider bias
- Patient bias
- Region of country
- Time (work, travel)
Tools, Resources and References

Medication and Lifestyle Change
◦ Bottles, Tic-Tacs available on Amazon
◦ Labels: Avery

Income Challenges
◦ Spent http://playspent.org/

Food Deserts, Swamps and Eating Well
◦ Google maps https://www.google.com/maps

Facing Our Own Biases
◦ Project Implicit https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/

Regional Differences in Healthcare
◦ ePSS USPSTF recommendations http://epss.ahrq.gov/PDA/index.jsp
Questions?

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