

POSTER PRESENTATION

Healthcare for Underserved Populations: Using American Indian Elders as Mock Patients to Help Students Understand Medical Needs in A Cultural Context

Supported by a three year HRSA grant, the University of North Dakota Physician Assistant Program addressed the need for culturally sensitive and geographically appropriate health care education concerning the needs of American Indian elders residing on the Spirit Lake Nation and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa reservations of North Dakota.

A focus group took place with a total of 13 mixed gender participants representing the elders from the two reservations. Five questions gave direction to the process and helped minimize the amount of time needed to identify and prioritize issues. Responses to each question were written on newsprint. When all the questions were answered, each participant prioritized the top five issues for each question. This information was combined, coded, and analyzed for common and emerging themes.

The faculty used the resultant information as the major issues for the OSCE scenarios that were developed. Each scenario addressed both cultural issues and those health care problems that had been identified as major issues by the focus group.

The focus group participants were invited to be trained as mock patients for these scenarios. 8 American Indian elders were trained and utilized during the past two years.

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