The collaboration between North Dakota State University (NDSU) School of Nursing and Essentia Health, a large regional health system covering most of eastern North Dakota and northern Minnesota, is better preparing new NP graduates for primary, rural care practice through enhanced didactic content, simulation, and immersive clinical experiences.

The first cohort of residents (see page 4) began their residency in October. This newsletter highlights the current projects underway and achievements thus far.

“The residency program is doing what we expected it would do, which is better preparing new graduate NPs for primary care rural practice. The program is also expecting to decrease new graduate turnover, enhance practice competencies, and ultimately improve patient outcomes and access to care,” said Mykell Barnacle assistant professor of nursing practice at NDSU who directs the team implementing the program.
ANE-NPR Program Priorities Include:

1. Opioids and Mental Health Emergencies
2. Rural Clinical Readiness
3. Telehealth
4. Childhood Obesity

Transforming the workforce through rural clinical readiness is one of the program objectives. Therefore, based upon need assessment surveys, providing training focused on procedures, emergency care skills, and emergency-preparedness was identified as a top priority. In February, residents, along with four other newly graduated Essentia nurse practitioners and one Essentia mentor, attended a 2-day intensive training in Baxter, MN on skills and procedures. Adam Hohman, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC and the grant’s Health Education Coordinator planned the educational content for the training. The first day focused on ortho exams and joint injections. Aaron Lindstrom, DNP (pictured below demonstrating an ortho exam) led the first day of the intensive training. Aaron is an orthopedic specialist at Lake Region HealthCare in Fergus Falls, MN. The second day included basic suturing, fish hook removal, radiology interpretation, IUD placement, and Nexplanon insertion training. “There was a marked improvement in one of the resident’s ortho exam documentation after the 2-day intensive training,” said Deb Steen, APRN, CNP and Essentia Health Clinical Liaison for the ANE-NPR grant. Most of the resident interactions are done remotely because the residents are located at four different rural Essentia clinics; therefore, “qualitatively, one of the best aspects of the 2-day intensive training was being able to connect with the residents in person and have them collaborate with each other and other novice Essentia NPs,” said Adam Hohman, the grant’s Health Education Coordinator.
9/9 attendees said the 2-Day Intensive Training met their educational needs.

9/9 attendees said the information presented reinforced and/or improved their skills.

8/9 attendees said the information presented provided new ideas/information they expect to use.

Ortho Exam Joint Injection Ortho Exam

Fish Hook Removal Basic Suturing

IUD Placement Nexplanon Insertion
In addition to the 2-day intensive training in February, residents attended a three hour remote EKG presentation in March led by Steve Palmer (pictured below), a PA at Essentia who practices emergency medicine in Ada, MN and urgent care in Baxter, MN. Eight other providers, primarily Essentia employees, also attended the remote presentation.

“Steve’s presentation was helpful as it gave greater insight into the components of EKG lead meanings, providing insight into heart positioning, nuances of making clinical diagnoses, conducting further evaluation and guiding treatment,” said one resident.

“Steve has graciously given his time and expertise to this grant twice. He demonstrated fish hook removal during our 2-day intensive training in Baxter and then planned and led an EKG presentation. We are grateful to have expert providers stepping up and investing in our grant and the residents”, said Dani Bohnsack, project manager on the grant.
ANE-NPR GRANT AND COVID-19 RESPONSE

We have modified the residency due to COVID-19. The mental health conference scheduled for April 3rd will be held entirely remotely. For the immediate future, residents won’t be able to complete clinical rotations. However, residents were trained in telehealth and are starting to conduct telephone and video visits with patients, which is a grant objective.

Resident mental health is a priority for our grant team. Deb Steen, APRN, CNP and Essentia Health Clinical Liaison for the ANE-NPR grant is offering weekly check-ins with the residents to provide a safe space to express concerns and ask questions. In addition, the next April journal club will focus on mental health and resiliency for providers during pandemics, emergencies, and natural disasters.

“Journal Club allows faculty to connect with residents monthly with clinical discussions to enhance decision-making and evidence-based research into patient cases,” said Heidi Saarinen, DNP, RN, FNP-C and the grant’s Health Information Technology Coordinator.
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https://www.ndsu.edu/nursing/outreach/ane_npr/