Teach 100: Teaching Aggregate Education in Public Health Curriculum

Teach 100 is an applied learning activity designed to facilitate understanding of public health principles and to promote professional skill development among undergraduate nursing students in an upper level public health course. Using the frameworks of the nursing process and the public health intervention wheel, students assess the health status of a community using principles of surveillance, identify an aggregate health need, and engage in outreach to deliver an educational intervention targeting at least 100 members of the aggregate.

Foundation

Teach 100 is an applied learning activity based on models and principles of public health practice and the framework of the nursing process, which include population assessment and surveillance, outreach, and health teaching (American Nurses Association, 2016; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014; Keller, Strohschein, Lia-Hoagburg, & Schaffer, 2004). Teach 100 was designed using tenets of adult learning theory, specifically problem-based learning, which “is intended to equip students with hands-on learning strategies to help them meet their future responsibilities and establish a lifelong knowledge-seeking habit which is self-directed learning” (Zhang, 2014, p. 1).

Goals and Objectives of Activity

Teach 100 was developed to facilitate student understanding of the principles of population education through practical application. The didactic content of the public health course includes population health promotion and prevention, population health assessment and identification of health deficits using principles of epidemiology, principles of health education, and evaluation of health literacy. In this applied learning activity, student groups (i.e., 4 to 5 individuals) were asked to (a) identify an aggregate of interest and an evidence-based health promotion or prevention knowledge deficit; (b) use a standardized proposal form to develop a plan to address the deficient knowledge for an aggregate of 100; (c) implement the plan; (d) evaluate measurable outcomes (i.e., process outcomes and educational outcomes); and (e) engage in professional reflection and critique of the project, focusing on barriers and facilitating factors.

The proposal form requires students to document basic proposal information, a process plan, an educational plan, and an evaluation strategy. First, they provide a topic. For example, using the standardized form, one group identified their topic as “educating kindergarten-age children about nutritional and physical activity,” based on data gleaned from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization. This part of the proposal also includes a brief course description, an evidence-based statement of need, and a problem statement (in this example, because this is a nursing course, the students used a three-part nursing diagnostic statement).

The same group then used the form to describe their specific aggregate, delivery method (i.e., presentation and activity), materials and resources needed, responsibilities of each group member in organizing the process, and their process objective: to deliver the intervention to 100 kindergarten students at a local school.

The form also requires groups to describe their educational plan, beginning with objectives. The example group developed four educational objectives, one of which was: “When presented with [two] food items, 80% of participants will be able to identify the healthy item.” Another objective was: “Eighty percent of participants will be able to state one exercise activity that can be done at home.” The students also used the form to develop a topical outline and lesson plan, document the sources they used to develop the content, and document the responsibilities of each member in delivering the teaching intervention.

Finally, the form is used to describe the process and educational evaluation strategies. In this example, these included: “Teach 100 students through various elementary school classes on designated dates. If 100 students are reached, we will have met our process goal” and “group members will work with small groups of students after the activity to evaluate knowledge. If 80% of participants achieve the desired outcomes, we will have met our educational goals.”

Implementation

In the spring 2016 semester, a total of five student groups representing 27 students used a variety of strategies to meet the requirements of the assignment. For example, one group developed a YouTube video about posttraumatic stress disorder for health care professionals and sent it out via Listserv®; followed by a SurveyMonkey® for evaluation purposes. Another group developed a drowsy driving presentation and poster and delivered one-to-one and small-group teaching in a busy college student center for several hours. A third group arranged a series of hand washing activities in several classrooms on a single day at an elementary school.

Groups delivered their presentations at the end of the semester, in which they describe their intervention, describe successes and barriers, and report their outcomes. The outcome of this applied learning activity was that a total of 599 individuals received health promotion education on a variety of topics. Student and community partner feedback about the assignment was overwhelmingly positive. Teach 100 is an engaging and effective applied learning experience that facilitates student understanding of the principles of population education and development of professional skills through practical application. Students are always surprised at how much they enjoy this activity once it is completed. This enthusiasm demonstrates the value of problem-based learning. Comments in their written reflections suggest that students perceive this activity as building skills they will use in practice and helps them appreciate the successes, barriers, and challenges associated with reaching an aggregate and evaluating outcomes.

References


Rebecca Green, DNS, RN, NCSN
rgreen8@ggc.edu
Georgia Gwinnett College

The author has disclosed no potential conflicts of interest, financial or otherwise.
doi:10.3928/01484834-20170619-12