



SHIELD

School Health Institute for Education and Leadership Development

**BOSTON
UNIVERSITY**
SCHOOL of
Public Health

September Focus Groups: Summary and Directions

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Method

- September 9: 2 focus groups
- 1 moderator, 1 note-taker each
- Series of questions regarding where group is, and wants to go
- Notes summarized
- Themes and highlights reported

Topics

- Pressing student health concerns
- School Nurses as Stakeholders
- Past Research Experience
- Current relationship with data and research
 - Why we like data, why we don't
- How to disseminate
- Research needs and possible solutions
- What is wanted!
- What is coming!

Pressing Student Health Concerns

- Increase in acuity (*intensity* of nursing care required by a patient)
- Behavioral/mental health/trauma history
- Others:
 - Diabetes
 - Immigrants (language barriers)
 - Co-morbidities
 - Students with no insurance
 - Cystic fibrosis
 - Time pressure on kids (eat, play)
 - Violence and bullying
 - Having to teach kids/family how to manage chronic conditions
 - Growing number of homeless population
 - Food allergies
 - Asthma
 - Food insecurity
 - LGBTQ issues

School Nursing Concerns: Stakeholders

“Not all school nurses think what they do will be used in research, because they aren’t experienced school nurses. So what is important is ensuring school nurses are aware of their value. They are stakeholders as well.”

“We have to think of the audience (town, state, district) we want to reach and make sure the information gets there. ”

School Nursing Concerns: Data

“Data collection stalls out sometimes, so the next thing is, what kind of dissemination is most important? What can we do to move forward?”

“Data can also be used to evoke behaviors in family and correct feelings/attitudes families have”

Past Research Experience

- Wide range of skill and experience working with different types of data
 - Care coordination training grant program
 - Masters degrees
 - A course in research or statistics
 - On-the-job exposure
 - 'We like numbers and the story they tell'
 - Several detailed examples of + research experiences
 - "we don't know what we don't know"

Past Research Experience

- **Takeaway**: There is a wide range of experience in the group from no formal training to a current DNP student, on-the-job research experience and undergraduate and graduate level academic experience.
- Most to all had **enthusiasm** about learning how to collect data in a standardized way to better tell the story of their work

Role of School Nurses in Research

- **Takeaway:** The major physical and mental health concerns related to various social determinants, are not just a problem for the big city. Small suburban towns and rural areas are heavily impacted as well.
- School nurses are therefore in the perfect position to make big impacts within their communities

Role of School Nurses in Research

- **Takeaway:** School nursing practice is rooted in public health, which places an emphasis on prevention.

“If we can prevent adverse outcomes with practitioners who are already in communities that need health resources, and these practitioners know the needs of that community, then they are effectively bridging the gap between medical practice and public health.”

Why we like the data we have

- All participants have access to data reports from each school nurse they oversee.
- This data includes information on # of visits, what the visit was for, what was done/treatment administered, # of dismissals that resulted of visit, etc. and is compiled for DPH

Why we'd like better data

- Data helps to answer questions to both educators and to advance the profession
- Enable us to submit reports to DPH monthly
- Used data to advocate for staff positions

Why we like data

- Takeaway: Data is a valuable tool to demonstrate impact of school nurses.

“Time spent in the nurse’s office has been used to communicate with administrators and educators about the time lost in the classroom for those students that frequently visit, whether for medical reason or not medically related reason”

Dissemination of Results

Goal: Provide evidence to funders and educators on how nurse data improves children's learning

Locally (within MA)

- A toolkit to take back to the districts
- Report on something feasible to implement that helps build buy in

Nationally

- Conference presentation

Target specific audiences

- School nurses
- School administrators
- Educators

Research Needs

- How do we design a study to address a question over time?
- We need consistent and accurate data collection across the state
- Want to work Early Warning Indicating System (EWIS)
- Use data to show the broad scope of the nurse practice

Research Needs

- Data is documented differently across regions and districts
- Concerns about accuracy
- Discomfort with data
- Need increased connection, communication across emergency room, physician offices

Research Issue Solutions

- Make changes easy to implement
- Keep any new data collection simple and standardized
- State mandated screenings help to prioritize what is important

Wanted! Research Skills

- Using qualitative data
- Being able to use data to:
 - Improve safety of student and staff
 - Provide justification for staffing
- Develop or better use a tool to screen younger kids for high risk

Wanted! Research Skills

- A crash course in the entire process of research
 - How to formulate a research question and design a quality study
 - How to conduct a lit review
 - How to design a survey that does not include leading questions,
 - How to design a rigorous evaluation plan and tools to track data (eg, excel – SBIRT).
 - How to communicate to different audiences: the community, physicians, educators, administrators
 - How to write testimony for legislature

Wanted! Research Skills

- How to take (raw) data, figure out what the questions/answers are, and proper reading of data (prevention Needs Assessment)
- Assistance to motivate and guide us to formulating an article
- Disseminate so that our research can be read by more than just nurses (e.g., physicians, superintendents)
- Assistance to motivate and guide us to formulating an article

Future Goals

- Collect better standardized data and create buy-in across the state.
- Use data for improved safety of students and staff, provide justification for staffing, demonstrate impact of school nurses on wellness of the students
- Create a tool to screen younger kids for high risk status
- Increased connections and communication across emergency rooms, physician offices, and school nurses to help build understanding and better coordinated care for the child

Rolling out a custom-built research curriculum

- What is meant by "best practices"
- How to develop tools
- Use of online learning modules
- Help administering a project
- Possible CNEs and maybe graduate level credit