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Purpose

Demonstrate commitment to the health of the community by developing a hospital-based community outreach program targeting agencies that serve vulnerable populations.

Foster nurses' understanding of the impact of mental illness beyond the hospital through participation in consumers' lived experiences.

Mentor and support nurses in the creation and dissemination of evidence-based psycho-educational classes and other volunteer activities.

Preparation

Assess the needs of the community.

- 50% of homeless persons have a mental illness or co-occurring substance use disorder (Paquette, 2011)
 - Nashville homeless population in 2013 was approximately 2,300 (MGND, 2013)
- Continued lack of adequate resources lead to consistent need

Enlist administrative support.

- Gain support by creating awareness of the benefits of employee volunteer activities, such as increases in employee morale, job satisfaction and decreases in turnover (Amendolair, 2012)
 - Vanderbilt's shared governance structure facilitates participation
- Link with other departments to identify existing volunteer programs and opportunities
 - VPH Outreach and Development Department

Establish Community Outreach Taskforce.

- Utilize approved communication channels
 - Vanderbilt's *freemform*, social media for internal use

Establish connections.

- Where are nurses currently volunteering?
 - Nurses conducted a bottled-water drive for Room in the Inn



Practice

Community Outreach provides nurses a lens through which to understand vulnerable individuals' lived experiences in their own environments. It also demonstrates organizational commitment and caring connection with the community. Classes address the psychosocial toll of homelessness, trauma, addiction and other issues faced by those served. At a foot clinic, nurses teach foot care and illness prevention while forming connections through human touch during the humble experience of washing another's feet. With a holistic approach, psychiatric nurses are uniquely skilled to promote the health of a community's vulnerable populations.



Volunteering Promotes Altruism AND the Professional Development of Nurses

Example: Development and Dissemination of Psycho-education using Nursing Process

Assess the population that you have agreed to serve

Diagnose the educational needs of the population

Plan the group material using evidence based research

Implement your group material using evidence based therapeutic group techniques

Evaluate the group and the feedback you have received

Examples of class topics:

Boundaries, Trust, Medication Education, Unmet Emotional Needs, Resilience, Positive Affirmations, Conflict Management, Motives & Consequences

Participation

Encouraging participation in community service not only impacts the professional development of the individual nurse but also broadens the organization's community footprint.

Our Examples:

- Foot Clinic and classes at Room in the Inn
- Renewal House classes
- NAMI meetings and NAMI Walk
- AHA Heart Walk
- Soles 4 Souls
- Runnin' to Beat the Blues with Mental Health America
- Project Homeless Connect Nashville

Perspective

Presented is an organized way of establishing a hospital-based community outreach program. Involvement in community outreach programs provides opportunities to support growth of nursing core values of altruism, human dignity, and autonomy, while developing the role of the nurse as teacher.



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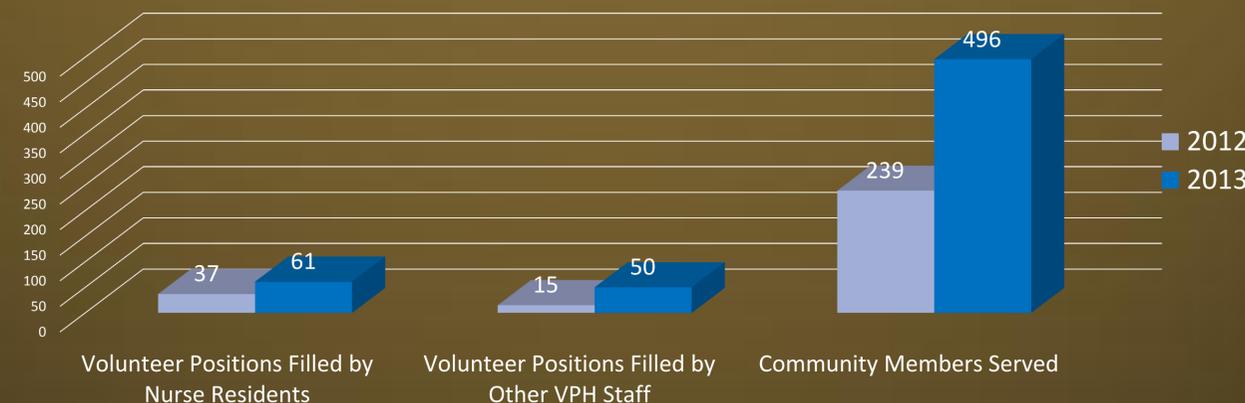
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VPH Community Outreach Impact



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