Growing Our Interprofessional Family Tree to Introduce Learners to the Social Determinants of Health

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Background

The Office of Interprofessional Curriculum (OIPC) serves as a central resource for all eleven schools across our academic institution.

Moving away from adhoc development of learning activities, we sought a family-based competency-informed structure to meet diverse program needs.

Methods

Our family tree was developed by bringing together fictional “patients” currently used in individual IPE case-based activities. Building from an activity centered around a ‘grandfather’ Carl family members span four generations.

**SMITH FAMILY TREE**

- **Connie Smith** (Deceased)
- **Carl Smith** (Age 80)
- **Daisy Jones** (Age 58)
- **Iris Golden** (Age 60)
- **David Smith** (Age 56)
- **Andrew Smith** (Age 54)
- **Stacey White** (Age 35)
- **Tony White** (Age 30)
- **Leslie White** (Age 4)
- **Steven Golden** (Age 19)
- **Jack White** (Age 3)
- **Andrew Smith** (Age 54)

**Case Study Example**

**EXPOSURE LEVEL**

Ms. Stacey White recently moved her family to Birmingham so her son Jack could be assessed at UAB for health problems.

- Stacey moved in with her mother (Iris Golden) for financial reasons. Iris receives disability benefits due to chronic mental health problems. Iris has been a heavy smoker for 40 years.
- Her daughter, Leslie (4), whose father is ex-husband Tony White, suffers from asthma. Jack (3) was born after Tony was imprisoned, has a different father to Leslie. Jack suffers from a rare genetic disorder that affects his cognitive and motor development.
- Stacey was recently hired as a teacher’s aide at the local Head Start program. Stacey’s job is located within three blocks of a major interstate.
- The home neighborhood is urban and densely populated with high crime rates. Leslie, Jack and Stacey walk to their Pre-K school each day. Stacey thinks the school building has mold because Leslie’s asthma has been much worse lately.

**Results & Conclusion**

Our living and adaptive Family Tree links learner IPE activities across the institution to a framework of competency development.

- This allows for the identification of gaps at each learner level, facilitating strategic planning of future programs.
- The Smith “family” could be adapted for any profession’s learner group on campus and beyond.

Learners work in IP teams to navigate interactions within the family and social context, addressing how the Social Determinants of Health influence outcomes.

As each new case is needed, a family member is featured to address each level of the OIPC framework for IPE.

Activities begin at “EXPOSURE” move through clinical or community “IMMERSION” towards achieving IP “COMPETENCE”