

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

## Telehealth Simulation for FNP Behavioral Health Course: Transforming Care to Meet Needs in Rural and Underserved Area

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### Objectives

By the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

- ▶ Identify the challenges that primary care providers navigate while serving in rural or underserved communities.
- ▶ Describe behavioral health course content that enhances the skills and knowledge of family nurse practitioner (FNP) students.
- ▶ Discuss the effectiveness of a comprehensive telehealth simulation with a behavioral health focus for FNP students.

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## The Problem

- ▶ Mental health specialist shortage limits access to behavioral health care
- ▶ High rates of mental health comorbidities.
- ▶ Mental health disparities exist between rural residents and urban dwellers.
- ▶ Management and treatment of behavioral health mirror stepped care approach that of physical chronic illnesses.

## The Challenge

- ▶ Increase the primary care workforce prepared to work in rural and underserved areas
  - Establish academic practice partnerships with clinical sites in rural and underserved areas
  - Select a cohort of students with interest in serving rural and underserved communities
  - Enhance the FNP curriculum to meet this need

## The Strategy

- ▶ Collaborative Academic Practice (CAP) program
- ▶ HRSA funded trainee program
- ▶ Recruits 12 – 15 students annually
- ▶ Program components:
  - Longitudinal clinical experience at a rural/underserved practice site
  - Competency-based innovative learning experiences
    - Telehealth
    - Social determinants of health
    - **Behavioral health**

## The Strategy

- ▶ Behavioral Health Curriculum
  - Two consecutive courses
    - Behavioral Health for Primary Care I (spring semester)
    - Behavioral Health for Primary Care II (summer semester)
  - Informed by SAMHSA-HRSA Core Competencies for Integrated Behavioral Health
  - Enhanced behavioral health skills for FNP students

## The Strategy

### Behavioral Health for Primary Care I

- ▶ Introduction to behavioral health
- ▶ Common behavioral health disorders
- ▶ Content
  - Models of care
  - Systems based practice
  - Therapeutic communication
  - Biopsychosocial approach
  - Overview of the DSM-5
  - Screening of common behavioral health disorders
  - Recognizing psychiatric emergencies

### Behavioral Health for Primary Care II

- ▶ Management of common behavioral health disorders
- ▶ Content
  - Trauma-informed care
  - Non-pharmacological interventions
  - Pharmacological interventions
  - **Comprehensive telesimulation experience**

## The Intervention

- ▶ Comprehensive telehealth simulation experience



### Prebrief

- Chief complaint
- Vital signs
- Tasks
- GAD-7 screener
- PHQ-2 screener
- EKG



### Simulation

- 25 minute encounter
- Assess patient
- Diagnose
- Develop treatment plan
- Student checklist



### Debrief

- PEARLS debriefing tool
- Discussion:
  - Challenges
  - Diagnosis
  - Plan

## The Outcome

- ▶ Direct outcomes of the telehealth simulation
  - Students effectively completed focused mental health assessments.
  - Students were able to differentiate between physiologic and psychiatric symptoms to arrive at a diagnosis.
  - Students were able to formulate individualized evidence-based treatment plans.

## The Outcome

- ▶ Behavioral Health Course
  - Student reflections
    - Mirrored complex behavioral health scenarios experienced during clinical immersion
    - Increased confidence with screening tools and communication strategies
    - Fostered interest in learning more about complex behavioral health conditions
  - Course evaluations
    - Appreciated FNP specific focus of courses
    - Learning activities and telehealth simulation invaluable
    - Suggested more case-based learning

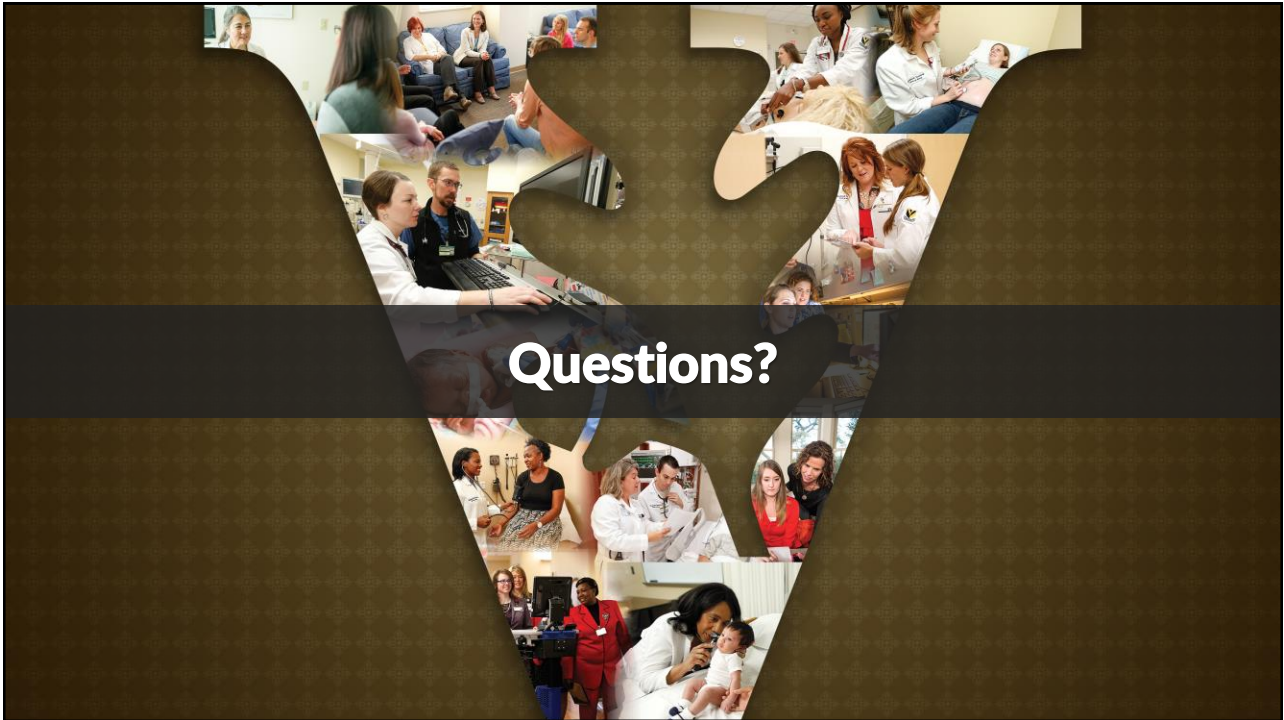
## The Outcome

### ▶ CAP Program Evaluation

- Two cohorts have successfully completed the telehealth simulation experience
- Improvements between pre- and post-program assessments
  - Competence
  - Knowledge
  - Communication skills
  - Clinical decision making
  - Documentation
- Gap
  - Selecting evidence-based interventions that simultaneously address patient concerns and social determinants of health.

## References

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