

Improving International Student Health literacy at A research Enhanced University in the Midwest

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Introduction

- International students are one of the critical components of a diverse university. At University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (UWO), international student represent 0.5% of the total student population.
- Both federal and institutional regulations mandate international students have health insurance.
- Research indicates international students report the following four main barrier when seeking healthcare in the United States (US): language, culture, personal belief, and financial.

Problem Statement

- International students receive minimal information regarding accessing the US healthcare system, obtaining health insurance, and utilizing health insurance when attending UWO.
- For the international students of the UWO, how will a healthcare information toolkit affect the utilization of primary care healthcare resources at UWO campus by the end of 2020?

Purpose of the Project

The aim of this project was to help facilitate healthcare literacy, as well as teach and improve health insurance/resource utilization for international students at UWO in order to increase the number of international students utilizing the student health center (SHC) or local healthcare.

Objectives

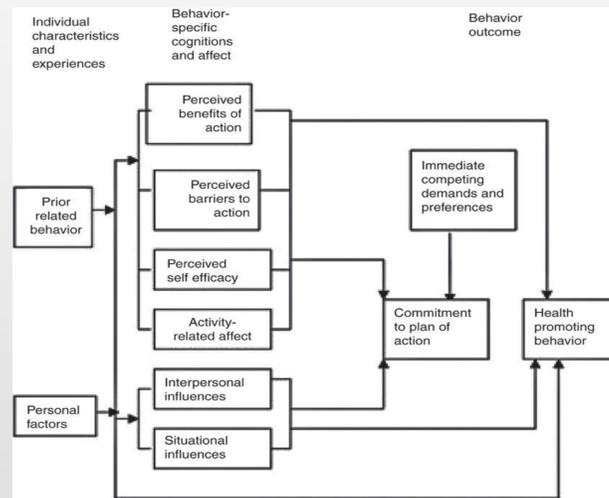
- Toolkit development included:
 - U.S. healthcare system presentation
 - Local healthcare resource map
 - International student's insurance pamphlet
 - SHC flyer

Literature Review

- Barriers of international student in seeking medical care**
- Culture Barrier:** Healthcare system differences, culture differences, and trying to adapt to new environments could be cumbersome for international students.
- Language Barrier:** English language competency level may be associated with health literacy level, and communication issues are one of the biggest struggles for international students.
- Personal-Belief Barrier:** Research identified some cultures have strong beliefs that Western medicine is toxic and would only be harmful to their own bodies, they reserve seeking western medicine as last resort.
- Financial Barrier:** The high-cost of health services and an unexpected health bill is a significant barrier that prevents international students from seeking healthcare in the U.S.
- Research shows in order to overcome the barriers to successfully navigate the healthcare system, offering healthcare workshops and distribution of healthcare information should be initiate.

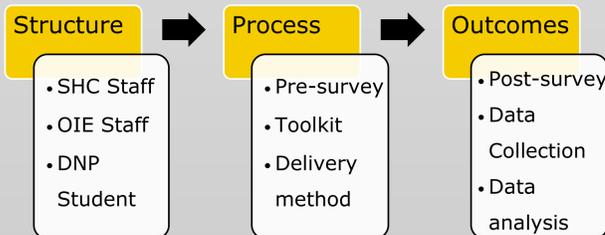
Theoretical Model

- Nola J. Pender's Health Promotion Model (HPM) was adopted in this project. Three phases of HPM model represent international students assessing their own perception, promoting and utilizing healthcare resources, and increasing the utilization of on-campus and local healthcare services.



Design:

- Donabedian Model was used and adopted for this project.
- Structure: identify shareholders and participants
- Process: a 5-question pre-survey and healthcare resources toolkit distributed September 2020
- Outcomes: a 6 question post-survey collected November 2020 for data analysis



Setting & Population

Setting: international student orientation, Canvas platform orientation course.

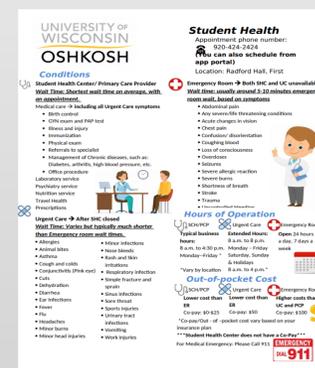
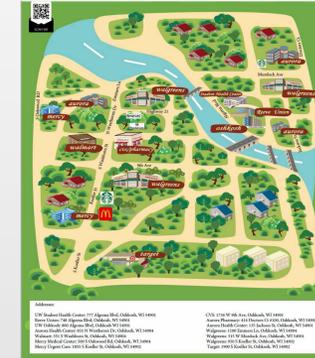
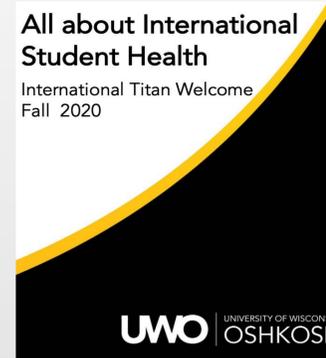
- Time: August 2020 – November 2020

Study population: Convenience sample of 63 international students (39 male; 24 female)

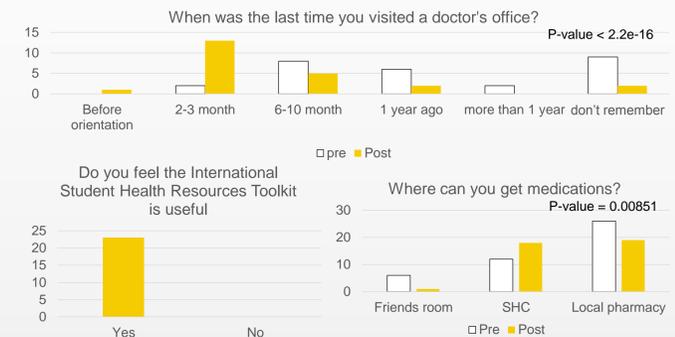
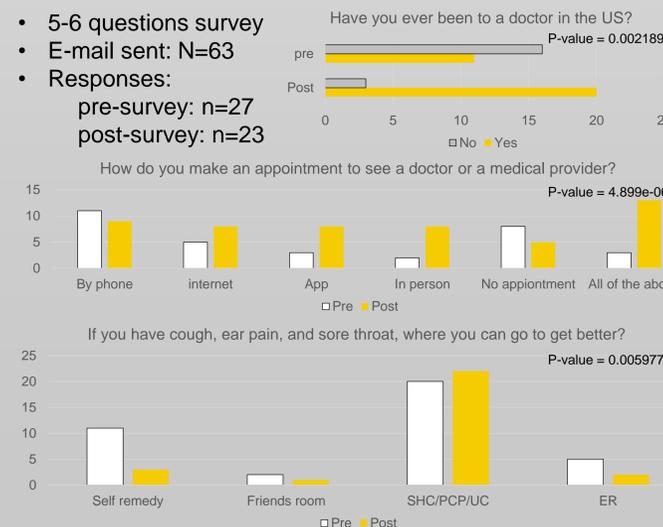
Quality, Ethics and Human Subjects Protection: Exempt status obtained from UWO Institutional Review Board recommendations based on evidence-based practice.

Methods

- Collaborated with the SHC and Office of International Education (OIE) staff regarding the purpose of this project, process, and goal of this quality improvement project.
- The U.S. health Care Presentation
- Local healthcare resources map
- International student's insurance pamphlet
- SHC flyer



Data Analysis and Results



Conclusion

The international student toolkit has positively impacted our international student community at the UW Oshkosh campus based on the survey results. The number of students who visited a healthcare provider in the past 2-3 months was increased, the proper level of care knowledge was improved by using the student health center flyer.

Recommendations

- Extend utilization of the international healthcare resources toolkit at all three UWO campuses (Oshkosh, Fond Du Lac, Fox Cities).
- Translate into different languages.
- Include the toolkit into welcome packet for new international students

Limitations

- Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the number of international students on campus dramatically decreased due to travel ban. Multiple U.S. consulate locations were closed, and no student visas were issued during that time.
- The SHC & OIE operation hours were limited by the pandemic, which prevented international students from having a face-to-face conversation about their health questions
- Many international students also expressed their own concerns about getting COVID-19 when going to a healthcare provider office.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to many wonderful supporters who help make this project possible!

- Dr. Karlin, DNP, APNP, FNP-C –Scholarly Project Chair
- Dr. Shawn Ekstrom, MD – Key stakeholder
- Karen Sanchez, RN, MSN, FNP-BC –Key stakeholder
- Amy Jacobson- Key stakeholder
- Theresa Anderson – Key stakeholder