



Pillsbury House Integrated Health Clinic

A Model for a Student-Run Integrated Free Clinic

Dale Healey BS DC, Michael Wiles DC MEd FCCS,
Debbie Miller LPN, Wendy Maslowski
Northwestern Health Sciences University, Bloomington, Minnesota



Project Overview

Pillsbury United Communities is a social service organization that serves 30,000 people annually. The target population is attempting to transition out of poverty and often homelessness. Their needs are complex and multifaceted. The population is diverse and includes individuals from all stages of life.

This project is based in one of nine Pillsbury House Communities located in south Minneapolis within a particularly impoverished neighborhood. This project serves the disadvantaged population of the south Minneapolis and southern suburbs of the metropolitan area by providing basic health care services. In an environment of skyrocketing health care costs and increasingly unaffordable insurance options, the needs of this population are great and well established.

Individuals dealing with the stress of poverty combined with additional responsibilities such as raising a family are often not able to seek or afford proper health care. Access to massage therapy services fall far outside the reach of this population (Lim, Andersen, Leake, Cunningham, & Gelberg, 2002). This is unfortunate as the anxiety and depression that occurs with high frequency among the homeless and indigent could be better managed if massage therapy services were available to them (Lever, Pinol, & Uralde, 2005).

It is our hope that the mitigation of some these symptoms will give these individuals the edge they need in their struggle toward self-sufficiency. The alleviation of these conditions through the integration of massage therapy into their basic health care would be a wonderful way to encourage these individuals back toward hope and encouragement (Quattrin, et al., 2006).

By partnering with health care educational institutions specializing in a variety of fields (massage therapy, chiropractic, acupuncture, medicine, psychology, nursing and health coaching), we have been able to create a unique student-run integrative health care model and provide no-fee health care to this population.

Objectives

Educational Objectives

1. Students will be able to articulate the value of contributing to the community in a service learning environment.
2. Students will improve communication skills through the participation in the Pillsbury Community Clinic experience.
3. Students will be able to articulate the value of providing massage therapy services to the population being served.
4. Students will gain experience related to the management of an integrated community clinic.
5. Students will be able to identify how personal and cultural values, attitudes, and ethics influence professional values, attitudes, and ethics.

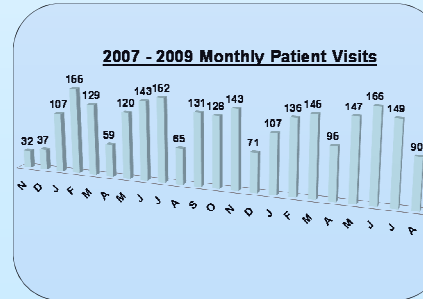
By having students participate in this clinic, we hope to instill in them a sense of value for the project such that they will be motivated to initiate similar projects after they have left Northwestern.

Integrative Health Care Model Objectives

Our goal in this area is the development a model of integrative health care that includes a variety of health care professions (massage therapy, chiropractic, acupuncture, medicine, psychology, nursing and health coaching). This may be the most challenging of our goals and perhaps the most difficult to measure. However, it is a high priority at Northwestern. The future of health care will most certainly involve stronger partnerships among these health care professions. This project is allowing us to further pave the way for that future.

Population Served

First 10 weeks of operation		
New Patients	36	
Patient Visits	77	
Gender Distribution of patients:	Female	58%
	Male	42%
	White	44%
Race Distribution of Patients:	African-American	14%
	Hispanic	19%
	Native American	3%
	Other	20%
Sample Musculoskeletal diagnoses	Chronic strain/sprain, lumbar disc degeneration, subluxation, fibromyalgia, muscle soreness and tension, muscle spasms cervical strain, wrist sprain)	
Sample Non-musculoskeletal diagnoses	AIDS, chemical dependency, anxiety, depression, stress, diabetes, hypertension, anemia, dermatofibroma, urinary tract infection, obsessive-compulsive disorder, recurring sexually transmitted disease, toe fungus, plantar wart, cerumen impaction, irritable bowel syndrome, flu	
Patients seen by discipline	Chiropractic	27
	Massage therapy	18
	Acupuncture	16
	Medicine	16
	Psychology	4



Clinic Operation

At the core of clinic operation are two important elements – the Patient Advocate and the Integrated Care Unit (ICU) The Patient Advocate may be a student from any of the disciplines represented at Pillsbury House.

Role of the Patient Advocate

- To be with the patient throughout their clinic experience.
- Gather a brief health intake to facilitate selection of proper ICU team members for the patient.
- To advocate the needs of the patient to the ICU team
- To answer patient questions about the clinic, treatment, paperwork, etc.
- To provide patient education as needed.

Role of the ICU

The ICU consists of three student practitioners from separate disciplines as well as the pt. advocate and the faculty supervisor. With one student as the lead, this group shares responsibility for the examining the patient and developing the initial treatment plan. Patient preference plays a critical role in the development of the plan. Typically the plan will include a combination of two or more disciplines depending on the presenting complaint.

Discussion

By all measures, the Pillsbury House Integrated Health Clinic has been tremendously successful. As of August 2009, the clinic has had over 2500 patient visits.

One challenge is keeping the focus on true integration among the disciplines. A parallel practice model is in many ways more efficient than a model that provides significant interaction among the student practitioners. The level of integration we strive for in the clinic may prove impractical in a fee for service clinic. However, our continued focus is on students learning from each other while providing the highest level of patient centered, integrated care.