

# Community Connections Newsletter

## Department of Family Medicine and Community Health

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### Join Our List

### Learn more!

Tomorrow,  
November 7, 2014:  
[CCTS Community Engagement and Research Annual Symposium](#), 8am-5pm, Sherman Center, UMass Worcester

Monday, November 10, 2014:  
[Population Health Clerkship](#) Poster session, 3-5pm, Sherman Center, UMass Worcester

**Making the Most of Summer**

Issue: #8.2 Focus on Service

Fall 2014

## Signature Service in Family Medicine and Community Health

A Message from Suzanne Cashman, Director for Community Health

In this issue of the newsletter, we return to highlighting our medical students' recent community-based work. This year, the summer service-learning assistantship program ensured that 20 rising second year students would be able to work with a wide variety of health and human service agencies. Those placements ranged from community health centers to Planned Parenthood, to the Worcester Health Department, and the YWCA.

Continuing our school's commitment to ensuring that all students have community-based experiences, in October, second year medical and nursing students were able to fan out across the state in 30 different small groups to learn elements of population health. Working with community and academic preceptors, students described and characterized a population, and were challenged to contribute to improving the health of members of that population. Population health has been defined as "the health outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within the group." As they examine outcomes distribution, students are faced with exploring reasons for health inequities among different population groups. In working not only to understand the policies that give rise to these inequities but also to help effect change in the social determinants of health that are expressions of these policies, students deepen their understanding of the social contract that has long existed between medicine and society.

We invite you to join us for the clerkship poster session to see what the students have achieved and learned. This year, it will be held on Monday, November 10th from 2:30-5:00 in the Sherman Center Learning Community Suites. Please join us for this wonderful event.



**Highlighting Students in Service to Community Health**



Several of our most community-engaged students, upon completion of their first challenging year of medical school, chose to spend their "last summer of freedom" building relationships with community partners and providing valuable service to residents across the state.

The Summer Community Service-Learning Assistantship has grown from 11 students in 2013 to 20 students this year, working in a range of settings including at the Worcester Division of Public Health, Pernet Family Health Services, and Family Health Center Worcester. Placement sites ranged from Lawrence to New Bedford and as far north as Hyannis, though the majority were placed in the city of Worcester.

Posters detailing the work they have done are available [on the website](#).

### **Working with Incarcerated Teens to**



Third year student Israel Molina can be seen connecting with community members while staffing the UMass Medical School table at this year's Latin American Festival in downtown Worcester, August 16, 2014. Israel and other students from the Latino Medical Student Association spent the afternoon reading blood pressures and talking with local residents. Activities included a "sodium game" to help festival-goers remember to read labels and make heart-healthy food choices.

## **News from the 2014 Population Health Clerkship**

### **Learning from and with community partners**

Every fall, UMass medical and graduate nursing students make their presence known in the community through participation in the Population Health Clerkship. This year, second year medical students and nurses in their first year of graduate study worked together in 30 different small teams, using a service-learning pedagogy to make the most of their brief time spent in community settings. Part of the Determinants of Health course for medical students, this experience helps our students

## Improve Health Decision-Making

Many of us remember tumultuous teenage years, pushing boundaries and discovering our identities. Imagine how much harder it might be to develop within a correctional setting. A group of UMass Worcester students have reached out to partner with the local Department of Youth Services Correctional Facilities with just this group in mind.

Winners of the Martin Luther King Semester of Service Student Awards in 2013 and 2014, these students have developed a health education curriculum featuring topics of concern to the teenagers housed within - anatomy and puberty, healthy relationships, STIs and contraception, drugs and alcohol, and nutrition and exercise. They've documented some improvement in teens' understanding of these topics following their time spent together, and also reported increased comfort working with adolescents and a better understanding of the juvenile justice system. Their 2014 report notes that "we have all gained a new perspective on the stigmas, classism and racism attached to

- gain experience in working collaboratively
- appreciate the value of looking at populations and communities as units of care rather than just individual patients
- become aware of available and needed resources for the population
- become aware of the need to work in teams and collaborate with different professions and disciplines providing care and services and value the role of provider as population advocate

We have several new teams this year, including a student-initiated team working with Melissa Rathmell at Family Health Center Worcester to learn about integrative therapies used by cancer patients, a team investigating falls and injury prevention among elders on the Outer Cape, and a team hosted by the South County Connects Community Coalition focused on patients with asthma. Jonathan Delman and colleagues from the Psychiatry department hosted a new team highlighting recovery-oriented peer supported services for people with serious mental illness, and community partners at the YWCA worked with a team to study burnout among their direct service employees and its effects on client care.

Several returning host sites have changed the focus of their teams this year. Students at the Barre Family Health Center are still focused on the rural adolescent population, but with attention shifting based on local needs assessment from obesity prevention to sexual health education. Our colleagues in public health in Carlisle were very pleased with last year's teamwork with patients on long-term oxygen therapies, and asked for this year's team to help them raise awareness of testicular cancer in adolescent populations.

## Sharing our Progress



### Want to hear more about student work in the community?

On November 10 from 3-5pm, the Population Health Clerkship teams will present posters highlighting the service projects they have completed,

incarceration and have a better appreciation of the needs of this population."

complete with data-driven definitions of the population being studied and information on the inter-professional networks serving the population.

Please join us for this event, which will be held in the Learning Community Suites on the second and third floors of the Sherman Center. Interested in serving as a poster scoring judge? We could use a few more volunteers. Get in touch with [Heather-Lyn Haley](#) for more information.