

Project iFLOSS: Integrating Oral Health and Primary Care through an Interprofessional Service Learning Module

Gerald Kayingo PhD, PA-C

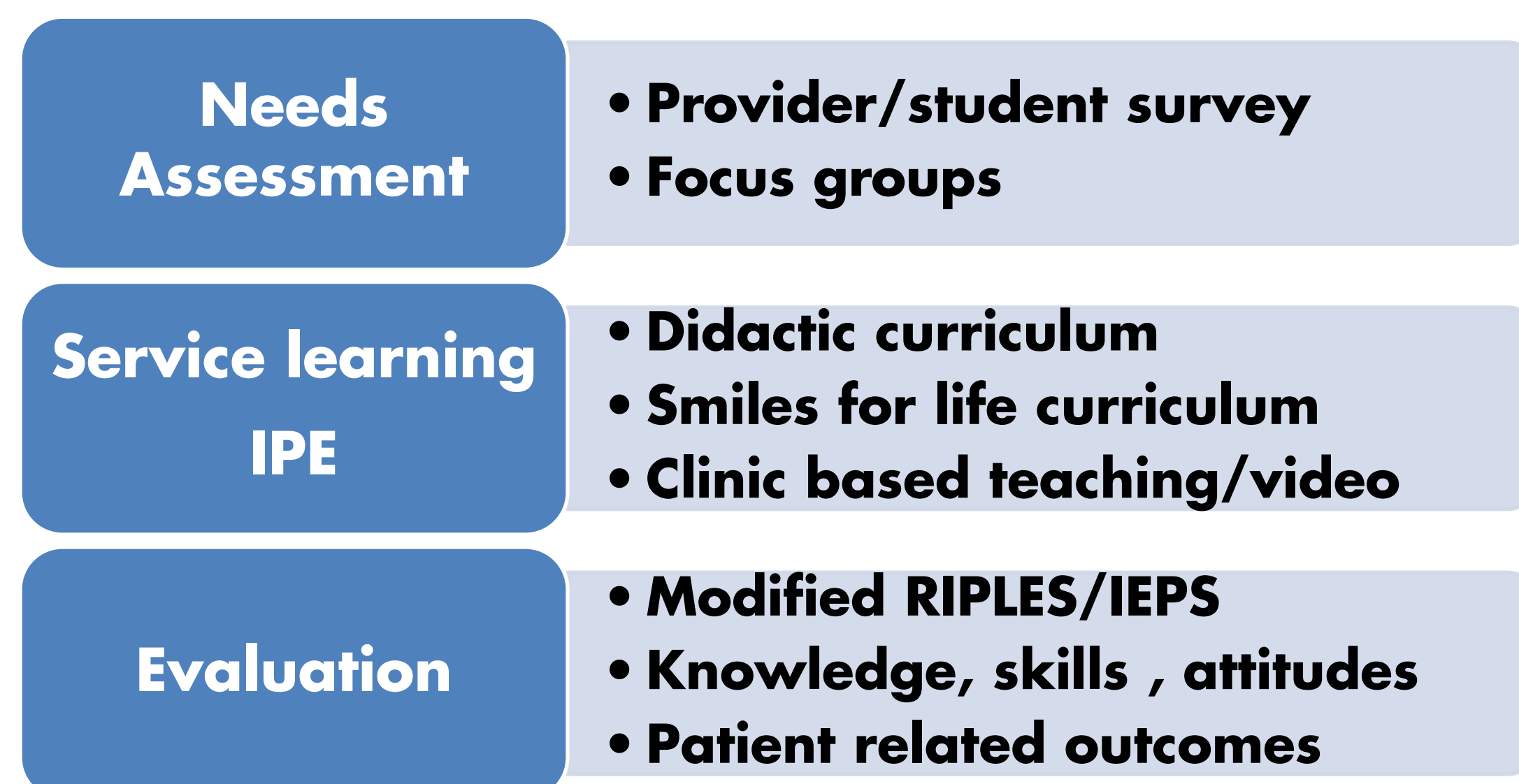
Introduction & Purpose

- Oral health services are scarce despite a growing epidemic of oral diseases world-wide.
- Patients and practitioners are generally not equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to manage oral health problems.
- The primary goal of project *iFLOSS* is to integrate oral health and primary care through an interprofessional service module. This is a student led community outreach project that educates patients, providers and the general community on oral health through a network of student run clinics in underserved Sacramento.
- It involves PA, NP, MD and undergraduate (Pre-Health) students.

Methods

- This longitudinal module involves didactic oral health seminars and service learning (Dental Days) at student run clinics in Sacramento.
- We adopted the Smiles for Life curriculum. Student's knowledge, skills, and attitude on oral health were measured via focus groups, skill observations and SurveyMonkey software before and after exposure to the module.

iFLOSS Conceptual Framework



References

1. Ebrahim, R., & Julie, H. (2017). Developing a service-learning module for oral health: A needs assessment. *African Journal of Health Professions Education*, 9(1), 13-16.
2. Berkowitz, O., Brisotti, M. F., Gascon, L., Henshaw, M., & Kaufman, L. B. (2017). The Impact of an Interprofessional Oral Health Curriculum on Trainees. *JPAE* 28(1), 2-9.
3. Phillips, K. E., & Hummel, J. (2016). Oral health in primary care: a framework for action. *JDR Clinical & Translational Research*, 1(1), 6-9.

Preparation for Oral Health Education activities



Interprofessional students practice oral health physical exam skills (above) and use models to demonstrate to patients (below)

Results/Project Outcomes

- Forty-eight student volunteers participated of which only 17% were comfortable recognizing oral diseases.
- After the oral health course, 90% of the respondents indicated that they were less apprehensive about examining a patient's mouth.
- About 45% reported improved confidence in skills when performing a basic oral exam and 80% reported improved confidence in managing a patient who presents with an oral complaint.
- Community members and patients who have been served by project *iFLOSS* report improved knowledge and attitudes about oral health.
- Referrals to community dentists also improved as a result of this intervention.

Qualitative Themes

- Oral health education is very important for primary care providers
- Include more oral health topics in the Curriculum
- Project *iFLOSS* changed "my attitude about oral health"

<17%

• Student volunteers were comfortable performing oral exams prior to *iFLOSS*

45%

• Reported improved confidence in performing oral health skills post *iFLOSS*

80%

• Reported improved confidence in managing a patient who presents with an oral complaint.



Summary & Conclusions

- The mouth is the gateway to the gut. Oral health is critically important for systemic health and general wellbeing.
- Most students and primary care providers are not familiar with oral health diseases; they are also not comfortable taking history and performing basics oral health exam.
- Project *iFLOSS* improved students' competence, skills and attitudes towards oral health. It also improved patient and community attitudes towards oral health. Service learning modules on oral health may be effective in improving provider oral health competence and can have a positive impact on community health.

Recommendations/Next Steps

- Reach out to other primary care clinics
- Recruit more health professions students
- Partner with dental programs and local dentists
- Utilize dental simulators, standardized patients and pre-recorded videos
- Develop case scenarios to ensure consistency
- Utilize newer methods of assessing IPE
- Develop database of local dentists /accepted insurance plans

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- Operation Smiles at the University of California Davis- President- Ms. Tooka Zokaie
- Co- Investigators Dr. Virginia Hass and Dr. Kris Srinivasan

"I had never imagined how oral health is connected to systemic health until I attended this workshop. -Premed Student, Class 2017"