

The SHARP Program: Students Helping At Risk Patients To Promote Health and Reduce Disparities

Allison Shorten, PhD, S. Danielle Baker, MSN, Peter Bosworth, MBA, Sherita Etheridge, MSN, Laurel Hitchcock, PhD,

Michael Mosley, MSN, Lynn Nichols, PhD, Matthew Pate, MBA, William Meador, MD.

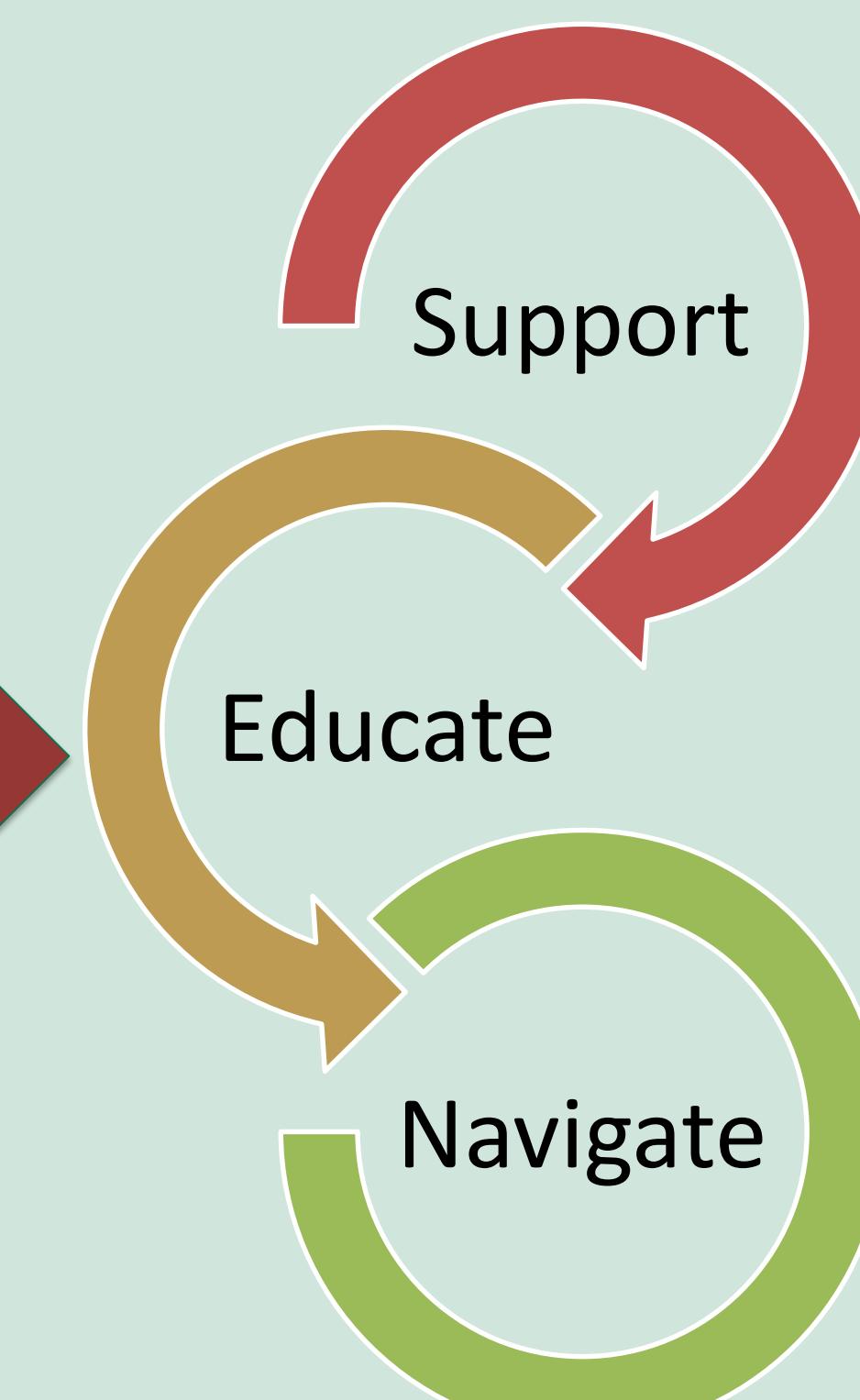
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Background

Research demonstrates that Interprofessional (IP) care teams can improve transitional care, reduce readmissions and improve patient health status, contributing to reduction in health disparities.¹ This is particularly important for patients with chronic illness from underserved and vulnerable groups. It is important to expose students to IP teamwork and team-based learning early in their education as healthcare providers, to contribute to improving patient-centered experiences for patients 'at-risk'.

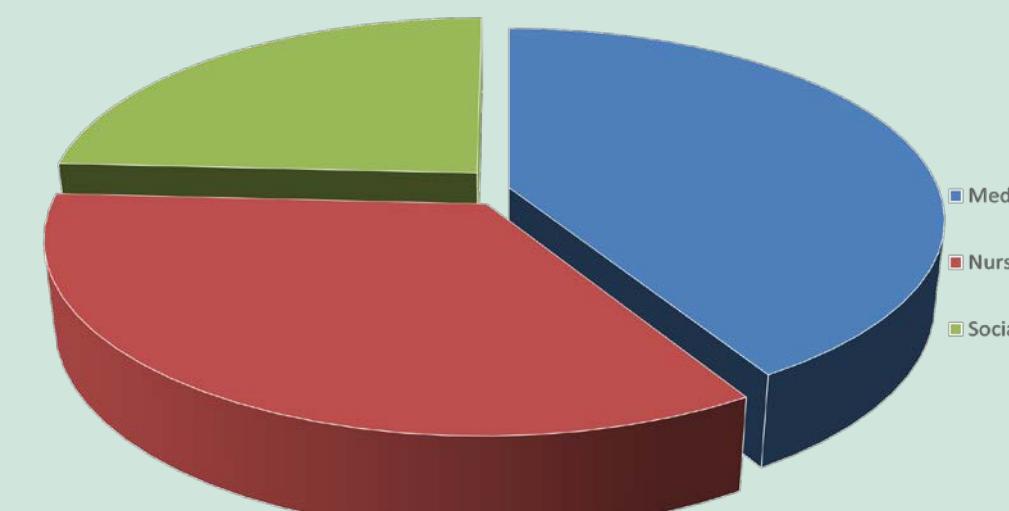
Purpose

Students of nursing, medicine & social work will learn about working in IP teams while supporting patients with chronic conditions through their healthcare transitions & complex care experiences.



Participants

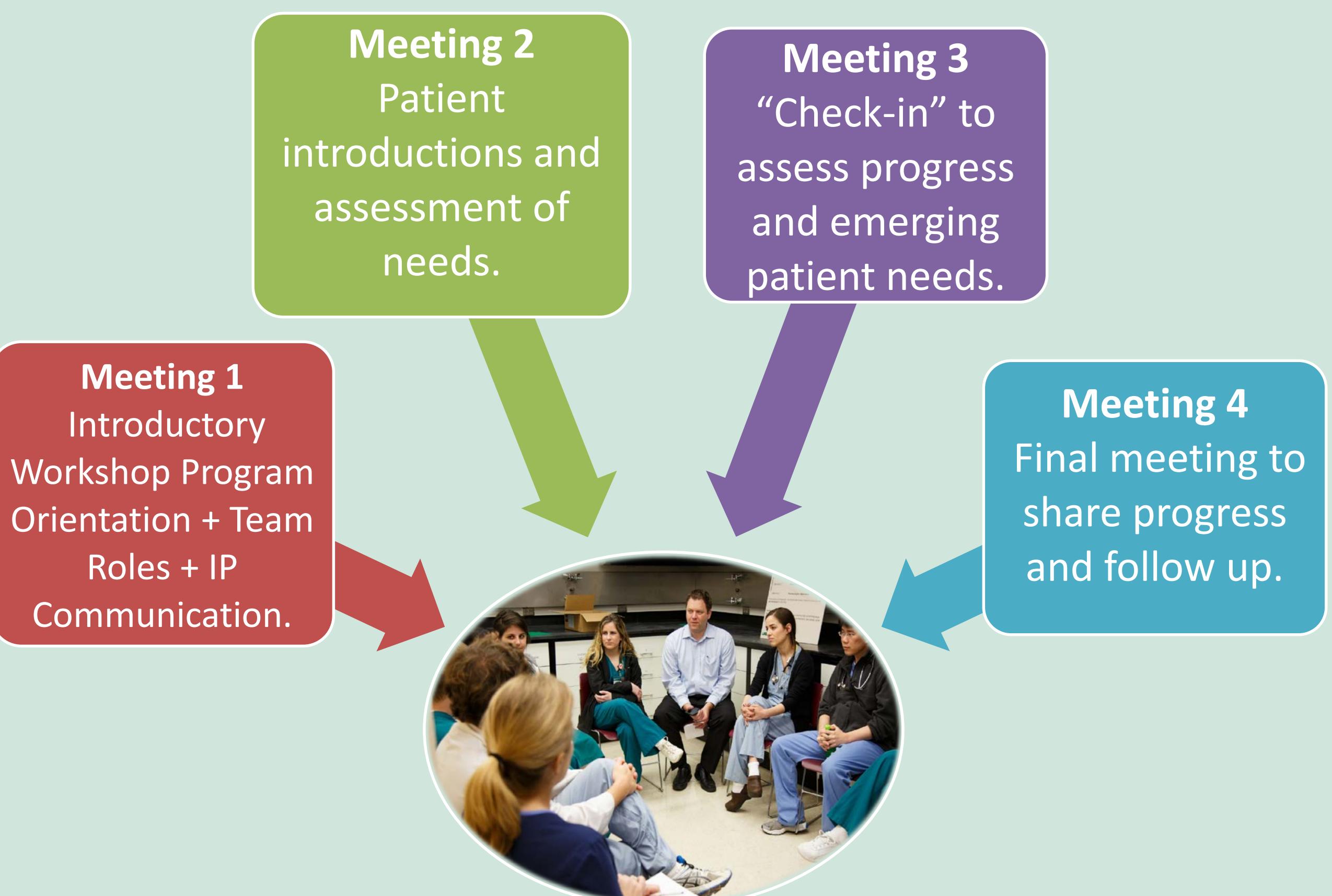
During 2017-2018, 28 students supported 8 patients with chronic heart failure from the UAB Heart Failure Transitional Care Clinic for Adults.



Methods

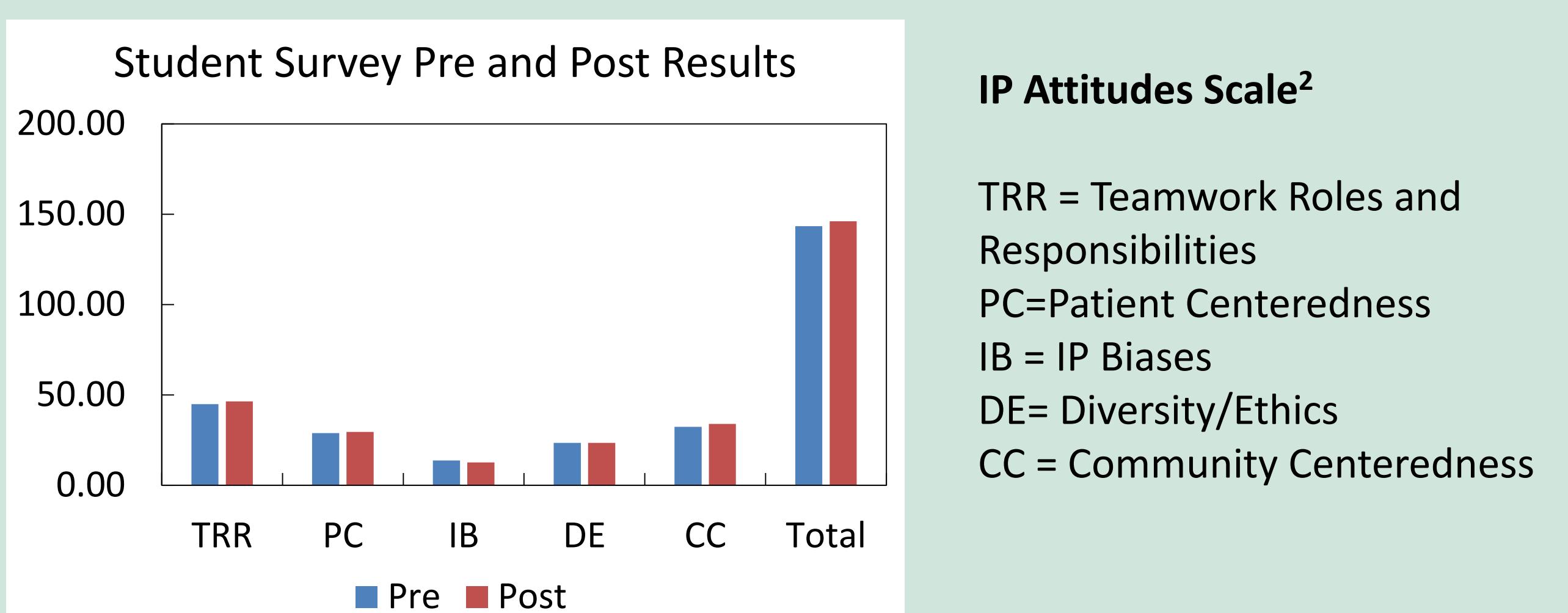
An IP team of educators designed and integrated SHARP within existing clinical courses for each professional school. Preceptors facilitated student-patient meetings. Between meetings students completed assigned patient support tasks related to patient learning and health navigation needs.

SHARP Steps...



A prospective mixed methods pilot evaluation was designed to assess changes in student IP attitudes, learning of IP teamwork skills, transitional care skills and program logistic factors.

Preliminary Results



Students demonstrated high baseline IP attitudes with small improvements in scores.

Student Feedback

Social Work

"This experience was very beneficial to learning about other professions and how to effectively work together"

Nursing

"...it's great to hear a patient talk about the effects on daily life and quality of life. This seems like a multi-beneficial program"

Medicine

"I really liked hearing from social workers, especially because so many social issues and aspects of healthcare come up in my patient experience"

Future Development

SHARP requires a collaborative institutional environment, integration into core curriculum, & shared learning objectives across professions. Additional virtual team activities are planned to enhance IP team building and competency development. A repository of SHARP patient resources is being collated for future patients.

References:

1. Blewett, L.A., Johnson, K., McCarthy, T., Lackner, T., Brandt, T. Improving geriatric transitional care through interprofessional care teams. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*. 2010;16: 57-63.
2. Norris, J., Carpenter, J., Eaton, J., Guo, J., Lassche, M., Pett, M.A., Blumenthal, D.K., Development and construct validation of the interprofessional attitudes scale. *Acad Med*. 2015; 90(10): 1394–1400

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