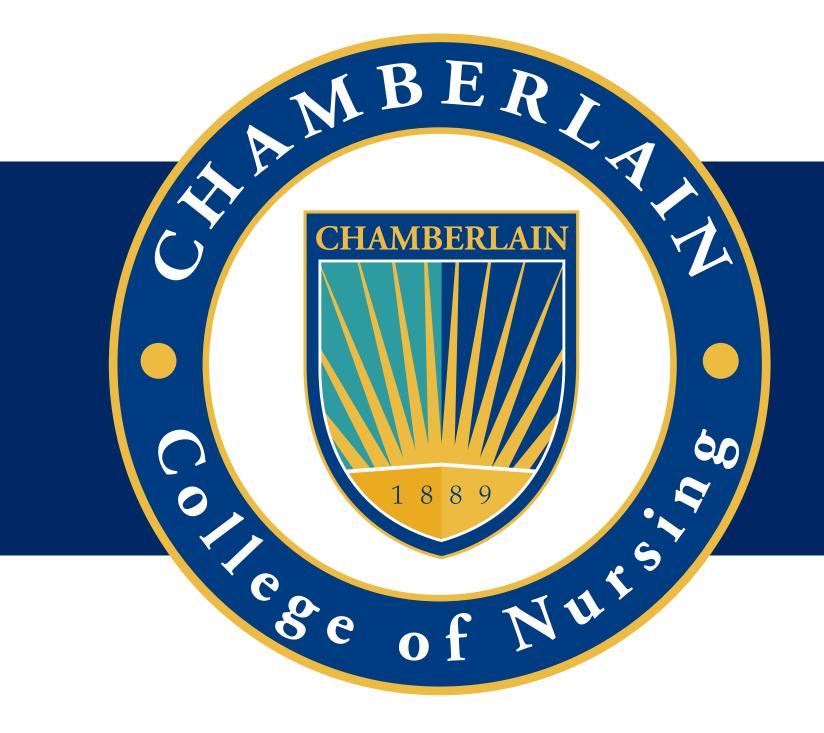
HEALTHY HEROS: MALE NURSING STUDENTS ROLE MODEL WELLNESS AND PROFESSIONALISM



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Introduction

The clinical project of discussion is entitled, "Healthy Heroes: Pediatric Wellness Program". Eight senior level nursing students in a bachelor's degree program with guidance from clinical faculty created a wellness curriculum taught in the Hilliard City public school system. This immersion based clinical allowed students to see pediatric clients in all levels of care via collaboration with school districts. Over 800 children received educational concepts on nutrition, hand hygiene, lice prevention and exercise. Students also participated in screenings and medication administration with school nurse role models.

Project Description

Student nurses assessed the statistical vulnerability of the population, recommendations of topics from Healthy People 2020 and district policies to create a curriculum to engage pediatric clients in wellness education. Students created 20 minute educational presentations that were manipulated to meet the developmental level of students ages 5 to 12.

Outcomes

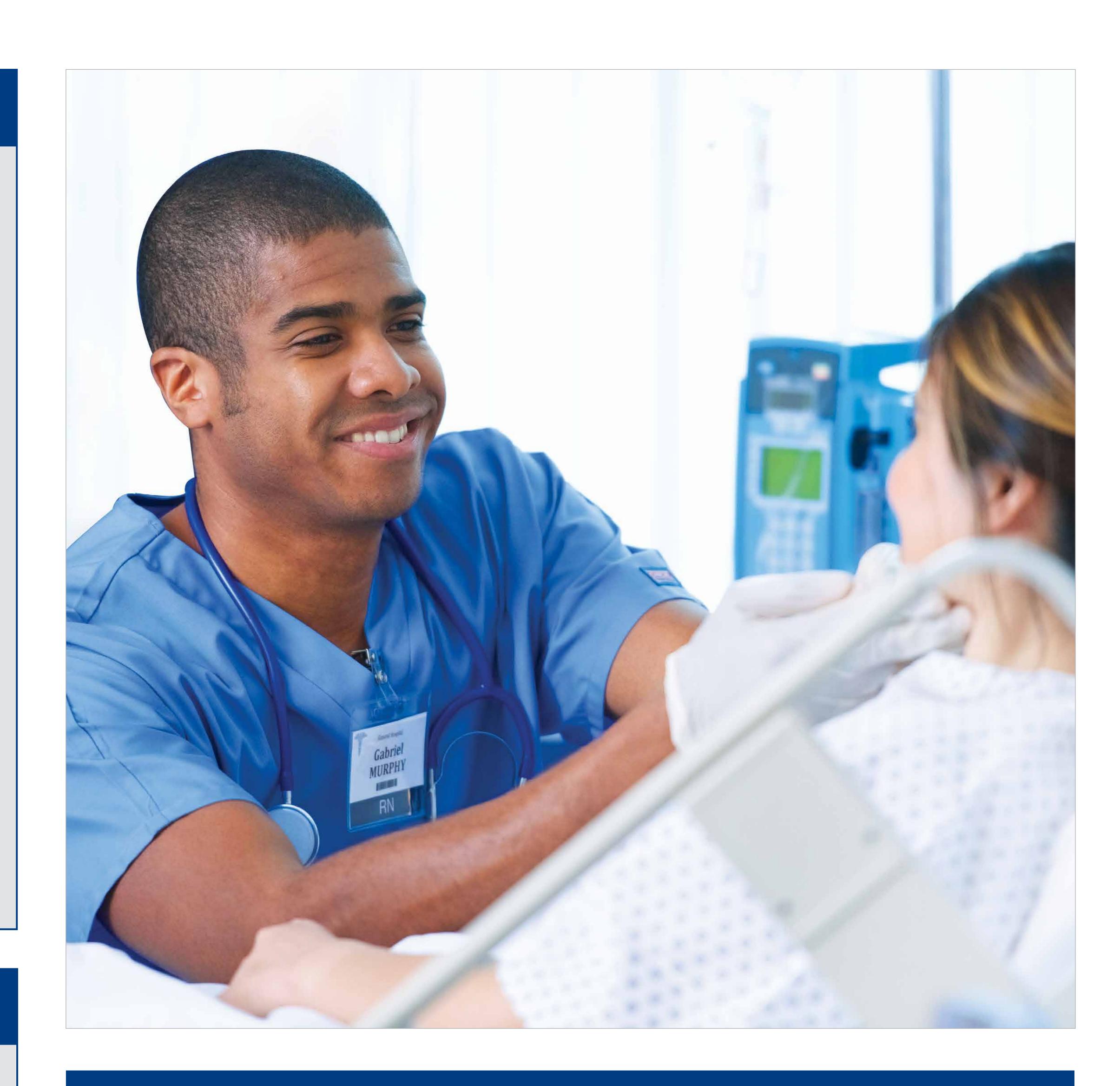
Survey results upon completion of the program showed young males grades K-5 exposed to male nursing student role models in the schools expressed a desire to engage in healthy activities. An unintended finding of the clinical project was the children's interest in the profession themselves. Survey responses from the children included such statements as, "I never knew boys could be nurses," and "I liked learning about taking care of myself from another guy, I think being a nurse is cool."

Project Goals and Background

The goal of this clinical project was to improve the wellness and health literacy of children in Hilliard, Ohio. Incidence of pediatric overweight continues to pose significant national health threats due to associated co-morbid, chronic conditions, including diabetes mellitus, hypertension, dyslipidemia and others. Interventions to address health behaviors of children often focus on the school environment because of the opportunity to have an impact on child health through nutrition education and optimization of the school food and physical activity environments (Avery, Johnson, Hamilton & Cousins, 2013). This particular clinical project focused on a holistic perspective, improving pediatric clients' self-concept, body image, self-efficacy and overall well-being through role modeling. Nursing students through focusing on positive behavior offered clear, direct information about healthy choices and what the behaviors look like, rather than drawing attention to negative consequences or models. These positive statements tell children what to do, instead of what not to do (Johnson & McCallen, 2014).

Implications

At the completion of the wellness program students reported higher perceived health literacy and self-efficacy. An unintended consequence of the role modeling was exposure to the profession. Nursing students provided care and education in a pediatric community setting resulting in elementary aged students being exposed to nursing students of diverse ages, races and backgrounds. This program's exposure resulted in increased awareness about the children's health but also career opportunities in the profession. In conclusion, the participation in community based education programs that support the modeling of health and wellness may also increase the interest and exposure tominority and male nurses.



References

Avery, G., Johnson, T., Cousins, M., & Hamilton, B. (2013). The school wellness nurse: A model for bridging gaps in school wellness programs. *Pediatric Nursing*, *39*(1), 13-7; quiz 18. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.library.capella.edu/docview/131791892 3?accountid=27965

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