



Empowering Rochester's Outreach Teams: Improving Wound Care for our Unhoused Communities

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INTRODUCTION

Individuals experiencing homelessness are at higher risk of untreated or not properly treated wounds, often resulting in skin and soft tissue infections requiring emergency department visits, which is draining on our healthcare system.

These infections and progressed wounds frequently lead to long-term health complications and increased healthcare costs for patients and our healthcare system.

My project takes a multi-pronged approach to providing wound-care education to various groups of outreach personnel, including UR medical students and outreach ambassadors employed by MC Collaborative while navigating their own journeys with housing instability and substance use.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

MC Collaborative works at the intersection of healthcare and social services, committed to addressing the needs of Rochester's unhoused communities through innovative programs and partnerships with individuals navigating their own journeys with housing instability and substance use.



Regional Health Reach is focused on extending care to those who need it most, Regional Health Reach delivers critical health services and resources to individuals experiencing barriers to traditional healthcare access, specifically Rochester's unhoused community.

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Conversations with outreach personnel revealed the need for increased education surrounding wound care for unhoused individuals

Needs assessment revealed need for information on xylazine-associated wounds, which were also addressed in educational materials

3x5 index cards with evidence-based basic instructions on caring for and identifying wounds in the field were developed

Following a few outreach sessions, the Cameron Community Center requested a lecture for their ambassadors, which was developed and additionally shared with UR Street Outreach personnel



Project Intervention

Walk and Talk
teaching with
Outreach
Ambassadors

15-minute
lecture with
Outreach
Ambassadors

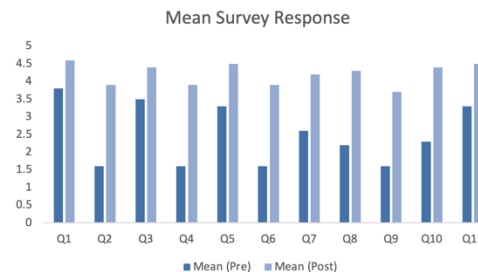
Asynchronous
teaching for UR
Street Outreach
Personnel

Evaluation and Results

11-item surveys assessing knowledge and confidence surrounding wound care were administered before and after educational sessions

Items 1-4 focused on confidence, Items 5-7 focused on knowledge base, items 6-10 focused on availability of resources, item 11 focused on risk identification

Responses indicated a significant increase in knowledge and comfort on all items



CONCLUSIONS

Targeted education improves wound care knowledge for street outreach personnel

Tailored education materials identified gaps in understanding and confidence

Survey feedback showed these resources were well-received and improved comfort in providing field-based wound care

Results demonstrated significant improvements in wound care knowledge, supported by consistently low p-values and moderate to large t-statistics

Limitations: Discomfort among outreach personnel to perform tasks traditionally performed by medical professionals

Future Directions: Continued education, provision of supplies

IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Results will be shared with community partners to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing

Outreach ambassadors will use the wound care resources provided during their outreach rounds to support individuals in need

The UR Street Outreach group will continue to provide wound care information and supplies during outreach rounds

Educational materials have been integrated into UR Street Outreach's onboarding process for sustained impact