

Assets and Barriers to Infection Prevention on a College Campus

HEA 356: Health Promotion Programming Photovoice Research Project – Fall Semester 2016

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The Problem:

Throughout history densely populated areas have been shown to be more susceptible to high rates of disease transmission.

- The U.S.'s largest Public Health campaign, the handwashing campaign, has lowered transmission rates, but college campuses still struggle with high transmission rates due to the density of the college population in small areas and lack of preventative vaccines.
- One case of a communicable disease can result in a ripple effect of contractions of the disease within the campus population.
- Handwashing is shown to be the most effective prevention method, but with the pace of today's society, most college students may not have the time to frequently wash their hands. As a result, college students who do not wash their hands experience more occurrences of infectious diseases, medical visits, and absences from class (Prater, et. al, 2016).
- Hand sanitizer stations may help alleviate caseloads for infectious diseases. College students are shown to be less apt to get preventative vaccinations such as the flu shot (American College Health Association, 2015).

Research Methodology:

"Photovoice has three main goals:

- (1) To enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns,
- (2) To promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important community issues through large and small group discussion of photographs, and
- (3) To reach policy makers" (Wang & Burris, 1997).



**Photo Voice One:
Pictured Above**

Hand sanitizer stations are positioned around campus. Hand sanitizing stations are beneficial to preventing the spread of communicable diseases, if it meets the alcohol concentration of 60% , which is set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Photo Voice Two:
Pictured Below**

Classrooms are one of the most notable aspects of a college campus. With the large amount of people within the room and the lack of consistent cleaning, infection rates in class rooms are high. Studies have shown classrooms are similar to petri dishes in the cultivation of diseases.



References:

- American College Health Association. (2015). *American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment II: Reference Group Executive Summary Spring 2015*. Hanover: American College Health Association.
- Prater, K. J., Fortuna , C. A., McGill, J. L., Brandeberry, M. S., Stone , A. R., & Lu , X. (2016). Poor hand hygiene by college students linked to more occurrences. *American Journal of Infection Control* , 66-70.
- Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education & Behavior*, 24(3), 369-387.
- White, C., Kolble , R., Carlson , R., Lipson, N., Dolan , M., Ali, Y., & Cline, M. (2003, October). The effect of hand hygiene on illness rate among students in university residence halls. Boulder, Colorado, United States of America.

Recommendations and Conclusions.

As mentioned, hand sanitizer stations are present on campus, but more would be beneficial to reducing transmission rates (White, et. al, 2003).

- The hand sanitizer dispensed should be 60% alcohol concentration according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- More focus on and stressing the importance of proper hand washing methods would help alleviate disease transmissions on college campuses, and hand sanitizer stations should be checked consistently to ensure the stations are full of sanitizer.

Resources Available:

- Murray State has Health Services, which is a campus clinic for students that addresses health needs on campus.
- The city of Murray has numerous community resources that are available for preventative vaccines to help with decreasing infection rates such as: Walmart Pharmacy, Murray-Calloway County Hospital, Urgent Care, Primary Care, local physicians, and health departments.