Mentoring the Next Generation of Nurse Researchers to Address Health Disparities

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Introduction: The NIH diversity supplement is a mechanism for aligning minority student's expertise and cultural focus with those of a funded project to foster personal growth in scholarship and research. The purpose of this paper is to present how a Hispanic student's clinical expertise in working with children and adolescents who have emotional disturbances was integrated into the parent project that is a randomized control trial to improve children's and parents' asthma management, while also addressing doctoral study requirements and meeting the research training objectives for the diversity supplement.

Method(s): Mentored research training activities and scholarship goals were identified for the diversity supplement. Activities include assisting in intervention delivery, monitoring intervention fidelity, developing data code books, conducting secondary data analyses, making presentations, developing publications, and meeting weekly with the mentor. A detailed written plan integrating regular doctoral courses and the diversity supplement activities was created. For example in the required Critical Review of the Literature course the student examined literature to identify gaps related to emotional responses of children with asthma. This work will serve as the basis for designing a pilot qualitative study in summer 2011 to investigate Hispanic parents' perspectives of their children's emotional responses to asthma.

Results: The student has assisted in educational sessions with Spanish-speaking families and participated in team meetings to learn how problems are identified and resolved. Goals accomplished in the first year were a presentation of a secondary data analysis at a national conference and serving as third author of a manuscript currently in review. More importantly, personal growth in terms of increased capability and confidence in making presentations and developing writing and scholarship skills have been benefits of the program.

Discussion & Conclusions: This diversity supplement bridges the student's clinical expertise with the faculty's research project that can serve as a natural laboratory to enhance the student's research training while focusing on groups that are often under-represented in research. The research training experiences coupled with intense mentoring can enhance the doctoral learning experiences.