Link2Health: Understanding the community health needs within the Rural Health Network

PURCH Population Health Clerkship 2022

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Summary

- Who are we? We are three second-year PURCH medical students and a pharmacist from Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy and Western New England University
- Where are we? We worked with the Rural Health Network based at Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield and surrounding communities
- Goal: The goal was to better understand the health needs of rural counties in Western MA
- Why addressing this issue is important?
 - Franklin County is the only county in MA that is completely rural
 - Isolated rural communities face unique health challenges
 - Barriers to health care include provider scarcity, lack of local health services,
 transportation, poor care coordination, geographical isolation
 - 1 in 4 people in Franklin County are 65 or older
 - Among older adults: ²/₃ with hypertension, ¹/₄ with depression, ¹/₄ living alone, ¹/₅ with diabetes

Experiential Learning

How?

- Visited various health and community organizations to better understand the local services available
 - Franklin Regional Council of Governments, Baker Pharmacy, South County EMS, Baystate Franklin ED, Hilltown Churches Food Pantry, Tapestry, NELCWIT, The Salisin Center, Moms Do Care.
- Engaged with community members to learn about barriers to health care
 - Charlemont Council on Aging, Ashfield Food Pantry, Greenfield Tapestry
 Community Outreach
- Considered how rural environments influence care coordination and access to healthcare

S.89: An Act allowing spouses to serve as caregivers

What is this bill?

- Introduced by Sen Joanne Comerford 2019-2020 as S.28 and 2021-2022 as S.89
- MassHealth Adult Family Care financially supports family members excluding spouses and parents who provide 24/7 care to adults requiring assistance with at least 1 activity of daily living. This bill removes the exclusion of spouses.

What is the impact?

- Increase access to caregiving services for eligible individuals in Franklin County will
 mitigate some of the effects of home care scarcity
- Any increased cost to the state is the result of eligible individuals accessing guaranteed services their families previously absorbed because of lack of access

Who supports this?

LifePath

Acknowledgments

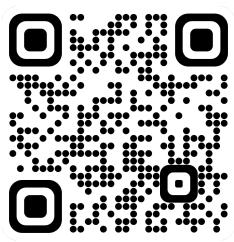
Community Preceptor: Cheryl Pascucci, NP

UMMS-Baystate Faculty Preceptor: Robert Baldor, MD

PURCH PCHC Organizers & Facilitators:

Lisa White, RN
Meg Ryan, RN
Rachel Lewis, RN
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Z. Smith, Paramedic

QR Code for Bill S.89









Baystate Health

