

Patient Care/Service Learning Paper Guidelines

Dental Care for Special Needs Populations

DSD 832

Purpose:

The purpose of this paper is to assist you in "crystallizing" some of the information you have gathered during your community volunteer experience. The time you spend in your community has offered you some insights into the special needs populations who reside there. The content of the lectures in class and your own thoughts on modifications necessary for providing dental treatment for special needs patients provide some of the framework in which to evaluate the information you gathered there.

This paper describing your reflections on special needs members of your community site will be evaluated as **50%** of the final grade for this course. The final paper is due on or before **Friday April 5, 2001**. Any indication of plagiarism of a previous student paper will result in disciplinary action. LDI Service-Learning Agreement and Service-Learning Verification forms **must** accompany your paper, or you will not receive a passing grade for the course.

Format:

- Typewritten (preferably computer generated)
- Double spaced
- 2 - 3 pages minimum length

Guidelines:

The paper should be written using these three major section headings. Please include a cover sheet containing the name of your community site, your name, and the course number (DSD 832).

Introduction: This section of your paper should include a basic factual description of your community site. You can describe the location, physical plant and setting, the "purpose" of the organization, and what special population is served there. Demographic information can include target population characteristics (gender, age, etc.). You may have multiple target groups (i.e. women, children, staff, teachers, parents, clients, or family caregivers) so include approximate numbers in each subgroup.

Reflections on Community Observations: (Body) This section of the paper should include a discussion of what you have observed or learned about your community members in terms of the concepts and issues you learned in DSD 832. (this is a good time to review your lecture notes). This may be a discussion of one individual in particular whom you observed in your community site, or a discussion focusing on the general condition of a number of the individuals in your community.

Most importantly, you should include in this section a discussion, based on your observations, of your perception about what treatment or oral health instruction modifications may be necessary when providing treatment for these individuals.

Some points to consider:

- What modifications might you need to make in your standard patterns of providing dental care in order to serve these special needs individuals?
- How might it be necessary to modify oral hygiene instructions or what adaptive oral health aids might be necessary for individuals in this group?
- What did you observe or learn about their particular patterns of oral disease?
- What is their perception of their own oral health needs? Or their caregivers perception of their dental needs?
- Are there any "preventive" practices established in the community (i.e. toothbrushes available, motivation, education)?

Conclusion/Summary: This section of your paper should be a one or two sentence summary about what you learned during your volunteer experience regarding your professional/personal role in providing dental care for patient populations whose special needs may demand additional time and energy output during provision of dental care. You may include any comments or insights that were not included in other sections of the paper.