

COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECT OPPORTUNITY for MASTERS OF PUBLIC HEALTH STUDENTS

(Working Title):

“Assessing Health Care and Supportive Service Infrastructure
for the Care and Management of Sickle Cell Disease”

Organization Partner:

Future Builders



Office of Community-Based Public Health
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University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
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Community-Based Project Opportunity

The following preceptorship/integration project opportunity was drafted by the Office of Community-Based Public Health (OCBPH) in collaboration with a community organization partner, and reviewed by COPH faculty member(s). **The project could potentially be a preceptorship and/or integration. Therefore this document, as written, is NOT finalized for immediate implementation by Masters of Public Health (MPH) students.**

The following community-based project opportunity must be fine-tuned to achieve MPH academic requirements and community-based organization (CBO) partner benefit in concert. To accomplish this, an MPH student must work with a COPH faculty advisor for the project and the CBO partner. **The OCBPH will facilitate MPH student connections with faculty and CBO partner. Contact Carla Sparks at 501.526.6603.**

Preceptorship/Integration Project Opportunity
(Working Title):
**Assessing Health Care and Supportive Service Infrastructure
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About CBO Partner:

Future Builders, Inc., established in 1990, is a non-profit community based organization located in Southeast Pulaski County. The organization is a rural, multi-service, grassroots initiative which focuses on using human potential to empower community residents to become self-sufficient through resource mobilization, education and training.

Future Builders’ mission is to empower community residents to become self-sufficient by motivating and stimulating both youth and adults with opportunities for cultural, academic and career building activities within their community. The organization believes that the long term impact of its efforts will result in empowered communities where resources are accessible and utilized by residents who take pride as contributing productive members of their community.

Health Issue to be Addressed/Problem or Focus:

Sickle Cell Disease, (SCD) is an inherited disease also known as sickle cell anemia. This serious and incurable disease causes an altered form of hemoglobin, the protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout the body. Unlike normal red cells that pass smoothly through the blood vessels, sickle cells are stiff and sticky and tend to form clumps that get stuck in the blood vessels and obstruct blood flow. The result is episodes of extreme pain as well as chronic damage to vital organs.

In the United States an estimated 70,000 to 100,000 African Americans are affected by SCD which statistically occurs in about 1 out of every 500 African American births. Currently, over 1,200 Arkansans are living with sickle cell disease and 600-700 babies are born in Arkansas each year with the sickle cell trait. Common health complications of persons affected by SCD are anemia, acute chest syndrome, stroke, skin ulcers and severe infections. Only within the last few decades has health care improved for persons affected by sickle cell and even now, few adult providers understand how to care for individuals with SCD.

While great strides are being made to answer the call to improve health outcomes for individuals with sickle cell disease, The Arkansas Legislative Task Force on Sickle Cell Disease reported to the General Assembly that education is also an essential component to a plan to improve sickle cell outcomes. Three of the Task Force recommendations were to: (1) Conduct a general awareness campaign using television, radio and newspaper advertising; (2) Target physicians using direct mail and conferences for family

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practice physicians and pediatricians; (3) Use schools to reach preteens for education about sickle cell trait and its implications for their lives.

Future Builders' proposed Arkansas Sickle Cell Network Program will complement these three recommendations through an aggressive media campaign, webinars and school medical professionals.

Based upon three of the recommendations from the Arkansas Legislative Task Force on Sickle Cell Disease, the Arkansas Sickle Cell Network employs the following objectives (1) conduct a general awareness campaign using radio, print media and social networking activities via the internet; (2) target physicians and medical personnel by conducting a webinar and conference/symposium to address SCD education, awareness and care and; (3) use school medical professionals to reach students in the public school systems.

Overview of Plan/Overarching Goal(s) of Preceptorship Experience

The work objectives of the Arkansas Sickle Cell Network are aligned with the recommendations of the Arkansas Legislative Task Force on Sickle Cell Disease. To support and strengthen their efforts, Future Builders leadership seeks to learn more about SC disease prevalence in central Arkansas and medical expertise and other resources for support of patients in the treatment and management of the disease. Therefore, the overarching goals for the project are to:

- Collect and analyze data on the prevalence of SC disease in central Arkansas.
- Collect and analyze data on the number of SC MD's/specialists in central Arkansas.
- Collect and analyze data on other resources available to assist patients in central Arkansas.
- Identify other resources, MD's/specialists, and other capacity needed to support persons with SC disease in central Arkansas.
- Develop a data base or resource directory on SC patient health care services and support resources.

Learning Objectives:

1. Work with an established grassroots organization based in a rural/incorporated city of Pulaski county.
2. Apply principles of community-based participatory public health (CBPPH).
3. Learn about the history, work and contributions of the Future Builders organization.
4. Learn about the sickle cell disease and patient quality of life issues/concerns.
5. Conduct qualitative research including project plan design, data collection instrument(s) development, interviewing, and data analysis/interpretation.

Activities:

1. Arrange first meeting with Future Builders leadership/preceptor that will include facility(s) tour, staff instructions, service territory identification and/or tour, and other relevant connections that facilitate orientation to CBO operations.
2. Complete related reading and write a one-page reflective paper on CBPPH principles and how they relate to public health research and practice with regard to project.
3. Conduct literature review on the sickle cell disease and its impact on African-American population.
4. Meet with Future Builders leadership/preceptor to confer on the development and implementation of the project.
5. Schedule regular 1-hour, bi-weekly meetings with Future Builders leadership/preceptor.
6. Meet with faculty advisor to confer on development and implementation of the project.
7. Identify and/or design data collection instruments and data analysis methods.
8. Compile data and conduct data analysis.
9. Write report summarizing and interpreting findings.
10. Develop database or resource directory of SC patient health care services and support resources.