

Integrating Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) into Health Professional School Curricula

Klariz Lazo, MSN, FNP-BC; Matthew Coleman, MPH, CHES; Jamie Means, MSPH; John Vick, Ph.D; Bonnie Miller, M.D.; Jason Jean, DNP, FNP-BC

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing



INTRODUCTION

Topic
Social determinants of health (SDOH) are conditions in the environments where people are born, live, work, play, worship, and age that affect their health outcomes (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022).

The National League for Nursing (NLN), American College of Physicians, National Academy of Sciences, & U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommend that health professionals receive education regarding SDOH due to its effects on health and to better prepare students to address and understand health disparities (NLN, 2019; Burke et al., 2022).

Problem
Current situation is lack of integration of SDOH into health professional school curricula across Tennessee (TN), leading to health professionals that are unprepared to address health inequities and resulting in adverse patient outcomes.

Survey conducted by the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) Primary Prevention Clinical Advisory Committee in 2019:

- 2 of 63 schools (3%) felt that it was only moderately important for students to receive population health content
- 9 of 64 schools (14%) admitted that population health concepts are only slightly integrated into their program (TDH Primary Prevention Clinical Advisory Committee, 2019).

Aim and Objectives
To increase dean/program director knowledge, confidence, and motivation about SDOH concepts from pre-survey results (baseline) to post-survey results and understand barriers to integration in health professional schools across TN after a one-hour virtual educational webinar

- (1) Conduct pre-survey in November 2022
- (2) Implement webinar in January 2023
- (3) Conduct post-survey in February 2023
- (4) Analyze results by March 2023



Figure 1. Social Determinants of Health (CDC, 2023)

METHODS

Participants
Deans/program directors from health professional schools (nursing, medical, public health, social work, pharmacy, dentistry, nutrition, physician assistant, mental health) across Tennessee.

Data Collection
Pre-webinar survey sent to 138 dean/program directors of health professional schools on November 10, 2022. Post-webinar survey sent to 10 participants that completed the pre-survey and attended webinar on February 21, 2023. Surveys were sent electronically via RedCap asking participants describe current state of SDOH education, barriers to integration, and to rate their knowledge, confidence, and motivation of SDOH education before and after one-hour virtual educational webinar conducted on January 13, 2023.

Data Analysis
Descriptive statistics for analysis of demographic information
Comparison of Likert-scale responses on pre-webinar survey vs. post-webinar survey

Figure 2. PDSA cycle

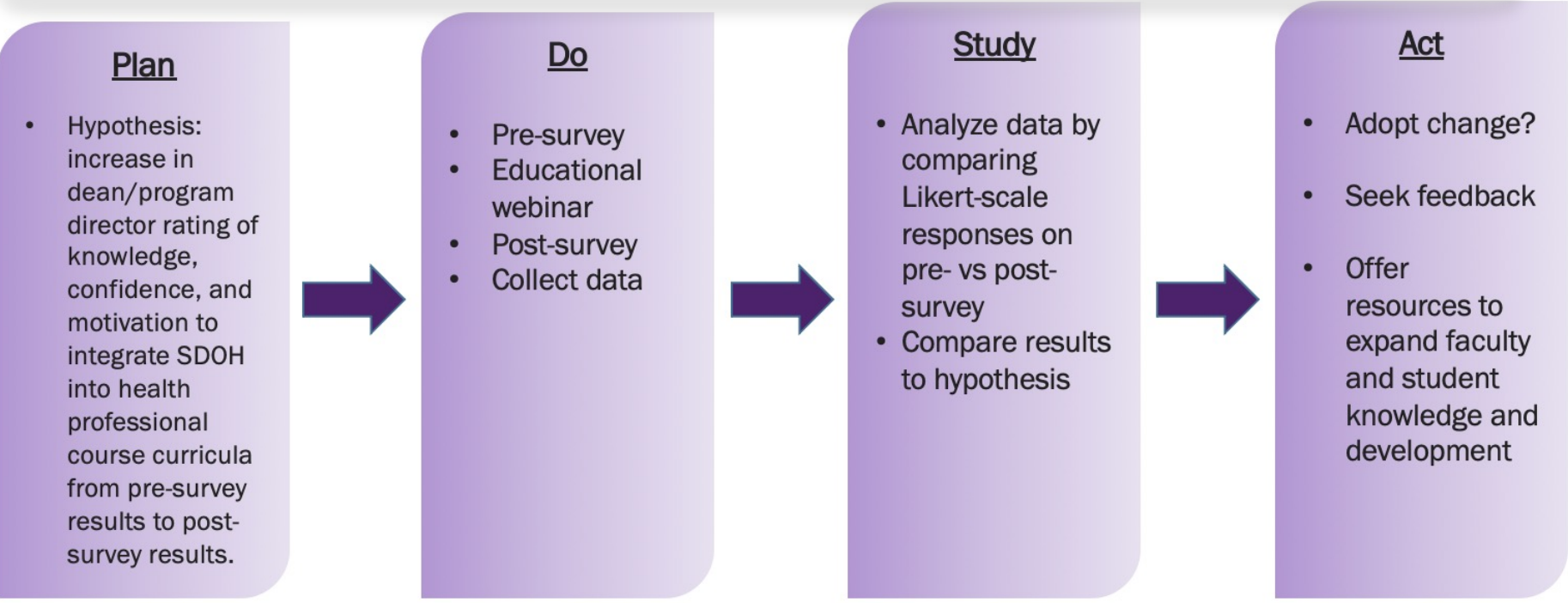


Figure 3. 2022 Pre-survey responses rating level of integration of SDOH concepts into curriculum

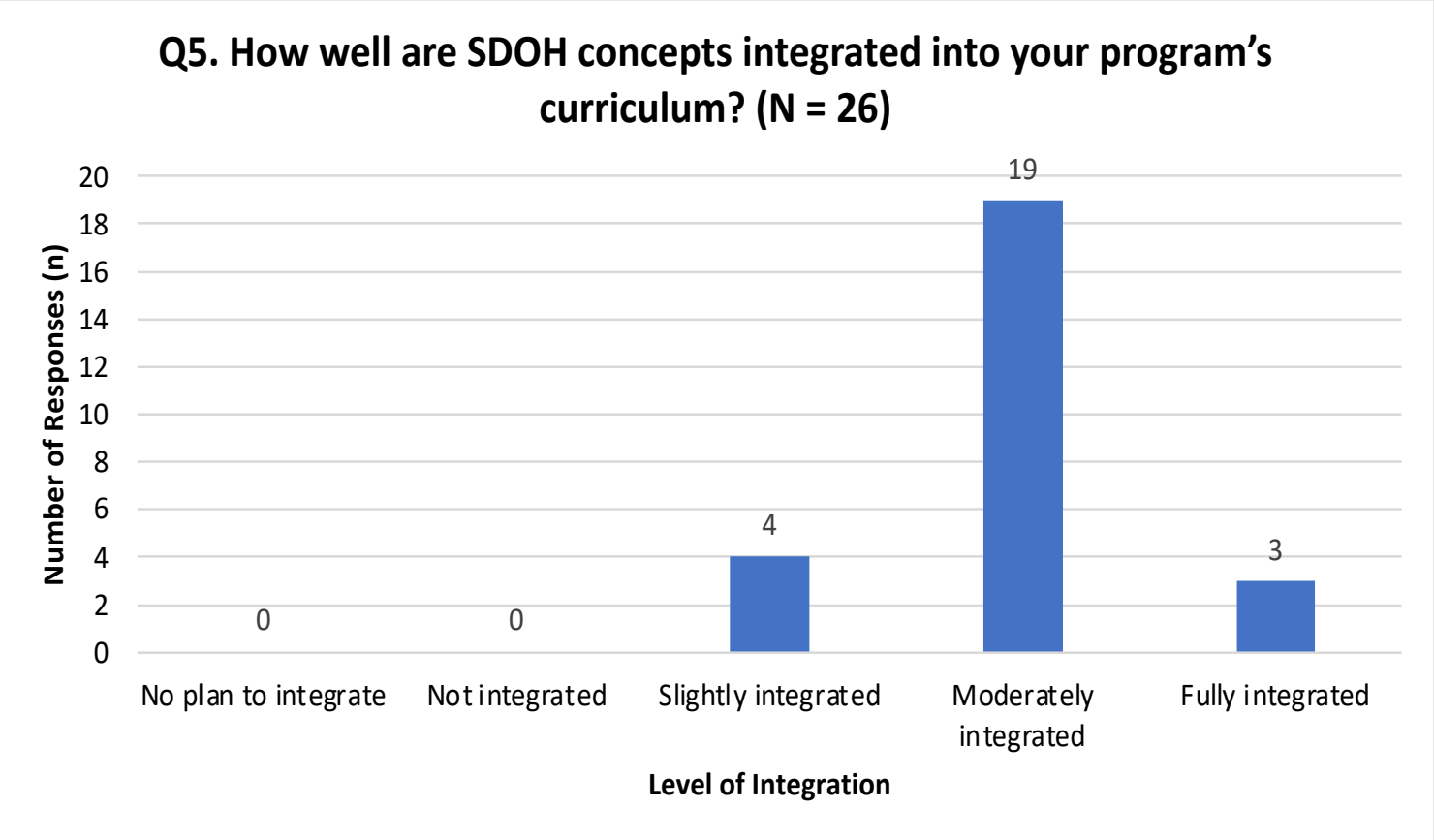


Figure 4. Barriers to integration of SDOH concepts identified by deans and program directors during January 13, 2023 webinar

- “Resistance from students”
- “Focus on clinical skills”
- “Amount of content in current curriculum”
- “Teach to certification exams”
- “Material to cover for competencies”

RESULTS

Pre-Webinar & Post-Webinar Survey Results:

Rating	Pre-Webinar Survey (N=26)	Post-Webinar Survey (N=3)
Knowledge:		
Weak	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Neutral	5 (19.2%)	0 (0%)
Strong	18 (69.2%)	1 (33.3%)
Very Strong	3 (11.5%)	2 (66.7%)
Confidence:		
Weak	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Neutral	7 (26.9%)	0 (0%)
Strong	16 (61.5%)	1 (33.3%)
Very Strong	3 (11.5%)	2 (66.7%)
Motivation:		
Weak	1 (3.8%)	0 (0%)
Neutral	5 (19.2%)	0 (0%)
Strong	10 (38.5%)	0 (0%)
Very Strong	10 (38.5%)	3 (100%)

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Create advisory committee at the state level to improve understanding of specific barriers to integration of SDOH concepts
- Use data and information gathered from surveys, webinar, and focus groups to develop competency framework for health equity and SDOH adapted for health professions students in Tennessee
- Facilitate connections for interprofessional education programs and community partners

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