Interprofessional Education and Practice Geriatric Screening Clinic (IPEP-GSC)
Students Caring for Elders: Elders Caring for Students

Goal of Project
To provide authentic elder-centered inter-professional geriatric education and training to Arizona Health Sciences Center and other students within an Academic Assisted Living practice setting, resulting in enhanced Elder health and well-being, and future providers who are collaboration-ready and better prepared to care for older adults.

Public Health Significance & Rationale
As our population ages and lives longer, we need to train future providers to be comfortable caring for elders with complex chronic conditions and geriatric syndromes, and to be skilled in providing person-centered care supporting quality-of-life and independence, while working in highly functioning interprofessional teams.

Objective
To provide authentic elder-directed interprofessional geriatric education and training to Arizona Health Sciences Center and other students within the St. Luke’s Home setting, resulting in enhanced Elder health and well-being, and future providers who are collaboration-ready and better prepared to care for older adults.

Methods
- Competency-based -National Core Competencies for Collaborative Interprofessionals and six domains of the Partnership for Health in Aging, Multidisciplinary Competencies in the Care of Older Adults at the Completion of the Entry-level Health Professional Degree.
- Monthly planning meetings with faculty, students SLH reps
- Self-determination is encouraged and supported, and all IPEP activities are formally submitted for approval to the St. Luke’s Home Elder Council and Board of Directors, prior to initiation.
- Clinic topics are generated based upon faculty, student and elder requests of common aging conditions, chronic diseases, and geriatric syndromes

- The IPEP-GSC brochure and topic list with an explanatory letter about the clinic are faxed to the elder’s primary care provider at the start of each year, with clinic follow up as appropriate.
- All screening clinics are attended by the clinic leads including a gerontological nurse practitioner and a board certified geriatric pharmacist, a program coordinator, and a content expert physician or health professional (e.g., cardiologist, speech and hearing scientist, gastroenterologist, etc.).
- Geriatric screening topics have included: Depression, Oral Health, Sleep Hygiene, Podiatry, Hearing, Skin Health, Osteoporosis, Respiratory Health (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Asthma), Heart Failure, Fall
Prevention, Gastrointestinal Health, and Polypharmacy-Medication Safety (in addition to topic-focused medication reviews within each clinic).

- **Monthly IPEP clinic** is held at the Academic St. Luke’s Home Assisted Living Center on the edge of campus.
- Students pre-register on-line prior to the clinic, and are placed into interprofessional teams of four to five, and are assigned to private areas at St. Luke’s Home by the program coordinator.
- On the clinic morning, faculty, students and St. Luke’s Home staff gather at SLH to: 1) sign in, 2) help themselves to breakfast, 3) attend an interactive 45-minute educational session by the content expert attending, 4) receive a 5-minute IPEP team “pearl”, and 5) meet their team.
- Relevant elder communication and biology of aging are embedded in all lectures. The interactive 45-minute session reviews core geriatric content, topic-related assessment skills, and the content-specific flow sheet and tools the teams use to assess each elder, as well as topic-specific patient education and self-care materials with resource lists.
- AIDET concepts are practiced and used to assure patient-centered care. After the training session, the teams are paired with their assigned elder at multiple private areas across the St. Luke’s Home campus.
- Each team interacts with and performs the assessment, completes the flow sheet, and reports to the attending and faculty preceptors to discuss their findings and recommendations. Final recommendations are specified and then discussed with the elder, and resources and self-care education are provided.
- All recommendations are thoroughly reviewed by the expert team, and primary care or specialty provider, or other referral (such as to the area agency on aging, or other resources) faxes are prepared when follow-up is recommended. St. Luke’s Home staff send these faxes to facilitate follow-up in order to assist with continuity.
- Elders and Students complete Likert-like evaluation after each clinic assessing change in content knowledge, communication skills, working within IPEP teams, and willingness to come to future clinics

I-PEP Student Benefits
- Elders educating students and students educating Elders
- Experience delivering person-centered care in an underserved community
- Ability to practice elder communication, assessment and planning skills supervised by geriatric content experts
- Support Elders in self-care education at their health-literacy level
- Experience working in IP teams, learning to value other professions and work collaborative

IPEP Student Comments
- Great organized experience. I learned a lot and gained confidence! Thank you!
- I now feel more natural talking to the Elders about these issues
- Our team caught a medication dosing error- this could have been serious- we were able to help!
- I didn’t realize that nurses were so skilled in talking to patients- I have a lot to learn (medical student)
- The nutrition students know all about life-style counseling- we don’t get taught much about nutrition (nursing student)
- Social workers really know how to help solve problems outside of traditional medical approaches
  (pharmacy student)
- This is so much better than those fake IPEP trainings, I want to see patients not pretend!

Elder Benefits
- Focused listening
- Opportunity to mentor
- Socializing with young people
- Receiving care rather than treatment
- Soothes fears and misconceptions
- A safe environment to voice concerns
- Deeper understanding of self-care & health problems
- Content experts refer, follow-up, counsel when appropriate
- ED avoidance with more appropriate chronic disease care
- Feedback to PCP and other providers for continuity of care

**Elder Comments**
- *They understood and recognized me as a real person.*
- *I felt happy with them within a short time. They actually cared.*
- *I have several areas of skin cancer that will be checked out soon by a dermatologist. These clinics are awesome.*
- *(Their) manner was wonderful. I felt safe and it was a relief to be heard.*
- *I didn’t know why I took my medicines... now I know what they are for.*

**Conclusion**
The St. Luke’s Home Interprofessional Geriatric Screening Clinic model has proven to be successful in developing an effective academic assisted living center that educates, respects, and empowers both the students and the Elders. Students report a deeper understanding of aging-related person-centered care, increased understanding of other health professional’s knowledge and skills, improved elder-communication and increased knowledge of aging-related health issues.

Elders report a greater sense of self-worth by contributing to students’ educational experiences, and enjoyed working with interprofessional teams who respectfully considered preferences and values. Low income AL facilities, serving Elders at high risk of health disparities, such as St. Luke’s Home, provide environments in which IPEP programs can enrich provide enriching relationships, and a care safety net, so are especially ideal venues for IPEP programs.