



Partners advancing rural health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CSS Students Share Resources about Pregnancy and Substance Misuse



Hailey Mathison



Dayo "Dee" Taiwo



Kim Anderson

(Duluth, Minn.) -- Pregnant individuals experiencing substance use challenges often face misunderstanding and stigma within healthcare settings. The intersection of pregnancy and substance use requires nuanced, compassionate care and significant resources. Yet, many healthcare professionals—already working under considerable strain—may lack the trauma-informed tools and support systems needed to provide effective, equitable care.

Wilderness Health (WH) conducted a survey that collected the attitudes of healthcare and county staff around perinatal SUD. The goal was to understand what specific resources staff needed. Survey participants indicated they wanted more resources to stay current with best practices, screen, and communicate with their patients. Motivational interviewing--or how to talk in a way that centers the patient's journey first--was seen as one key tool to support workers and patients alike.

The College of St. Scholastica Doctor of Nursing practice (DNP) students Hailey Mathison, Kim Anderson, and Dayo "Dee" Taiwo worked with WH to further understand healthcare workers' perspectives. They identified best practices and motivational interviewing techniques for staff around perinatal SUD. The students studied the results of WH's perinatal attitude survey. They created a more specific survey measuring harm reduction knowledge and confidence in manage SUD in pregnant and postpartum patients for Aspirus St. Luke's Maternal Child Health staff and providers. Students then created a presentation with specific tools around motivational interviewing.


The team of students completed their learning experience in August and presented at the Aspirus St. Luke's nursing skills days in June. The students shared that, "Working on this project allowed us to

translate what we've learned in the classroom into real-world practice. Partnering with Wilderness Health and Aspirus St. Luke's allowed us to better understand the needs of healthcare professionals and develop tools that directly support them. It was rewarding to collaborate with organizations so committed to reducing stigma and improving care for pregnant and postpartum patients with substance use disorders. We are especially proud that our work helped build both knowledge and confidence for staff as they continue to support patients and families."

As a result of their work, WH and Aspirus St. Luke's have new insights and strategies for addressing substance use in pregnancy and postpartum. It builds on the foundation of practice enhancement Wilderness is looking to provide to our partners. The students' work also furthers efforts funded by a Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) *Enhancing outcomes for pregnant and postpartum families impacted by substance use disorder* (EOPI-SUD) grant.

Mallory Cummings, MHA, RN, PHN and MCH Project Manager & Doula Coordinator at Aspirus St. Luke's says, "The CSS DNP students brought their compassion and energy in the form of a motivational interviewing presentation for the Maternal Child Health nurses. Motivational interviewing is an evidence-based, realistic tool that anyone can use when working with perinatal patients. It is especially important for nurses that positively impact patients with current or past substance use disorders. We are grateful to have this crucial education be presented in such a warm and receptive way."

Kim, Hailey, and Dayo "Dee" are pursuing their Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degrees at the College of St. Scholastica in preparation for careers as Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioners.

	<p>About Wilderness Health- a non-profit collaborative of independent providers working together to improve rural health care in Northeastern Minnesota and Wisconsin. Headquartered in Two Harbors since 2013, Wilderness Health aims to create a unified and supportive network for its members through its core values of collaboration, independence, networking, and quality. For more information about Wilderness, visit https://wildernesshealthmn.org/.</p> <p>Wilderness Health Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspirus Lake View Aspirus St. Luke's Bigfork Valley Hospital Community Memorial Hospital Cook Hospital Ely-Bloomenson Community Hospital Fairview Range / Range Regional Health Services Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital North Shore Health
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