

TITLE: Evaluating a Social Determinants of Health and Healthcare Navigation Program: A Mixed Methods Approach

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Program/project coordinators, researchers, evaluators

ABSTRACT: Background: Small healthcare and social service programs face significant barriers to evaluation including limited dedicated evaluation resources, small sample sizes and lack of control groups. In spite of these limitations, comprehensive analysis and dissemination of evaluative results are essential for program improvement and sustainability.

Purpose: We describe the mixed methods evaluative approach utilized by the Interprofessional Care Access Network (I-CAN), a community-based academic practice model that provides home-based care coordination and assistance addressing Social Determinants of Health (SDH) for a low income population via interprofessional student teams.

Results: We found that creative use of multiple data sources and analysis methods can provide a holistic picture of the I-CAN program, despite evaluative barriers and limitations. Our evaluative approach includes analysis of qualitative and quantitative data from student participants, nursing faculty, clients, and community partners from six unique neighborhoods across Oregon.

Conclusions: Small programs have much to gain from robust evaluation and dissemination of results. A mixed methods evaluative approach can help mitigate methodological barriers and programmatic limitations and provide a cohesive, well-rounded program narrative. Regular, ongoing process and outcome evaluation can improve programming and promote sustainability.

OBJECTIVE(S): Compare the benefits and limitations of a mixed methods approach for programs with small sample sizes.

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