

## RATIONALE/NEED

Within the first year of medical school, students are introduced to the process of clinical ethical case analysis, which provides a foundation for learners to develop and strengthen skills that will later become applicable for patient and health care interactions. This project is designed as a lesson in which these learners will go beyond the ethical aspects of the case study and into the broader social issues that often impact health care outcomes and health care status. This instructional design allows the learners to research the community resources and the very community in which they will be later providing care. Learners will be expected to research community resources and schedule either face-to-face or phone interviews to become more aware of the various community based programs and gain information that will be used to understand their patient population.

## METHODS/DESCRIPTION

A lecture will be given four weeks before the group presentations are due, introducing the concept of utilizing community resources and the overview of the services available to patients in eastern North Carolina. This lesson builds from the main theories into the concepts of virtue based theory, rights based theory (libertarianism), community based theory (communitarian ethics) and relationship based theory (ethics of care).

The overall goals for this lesson are:

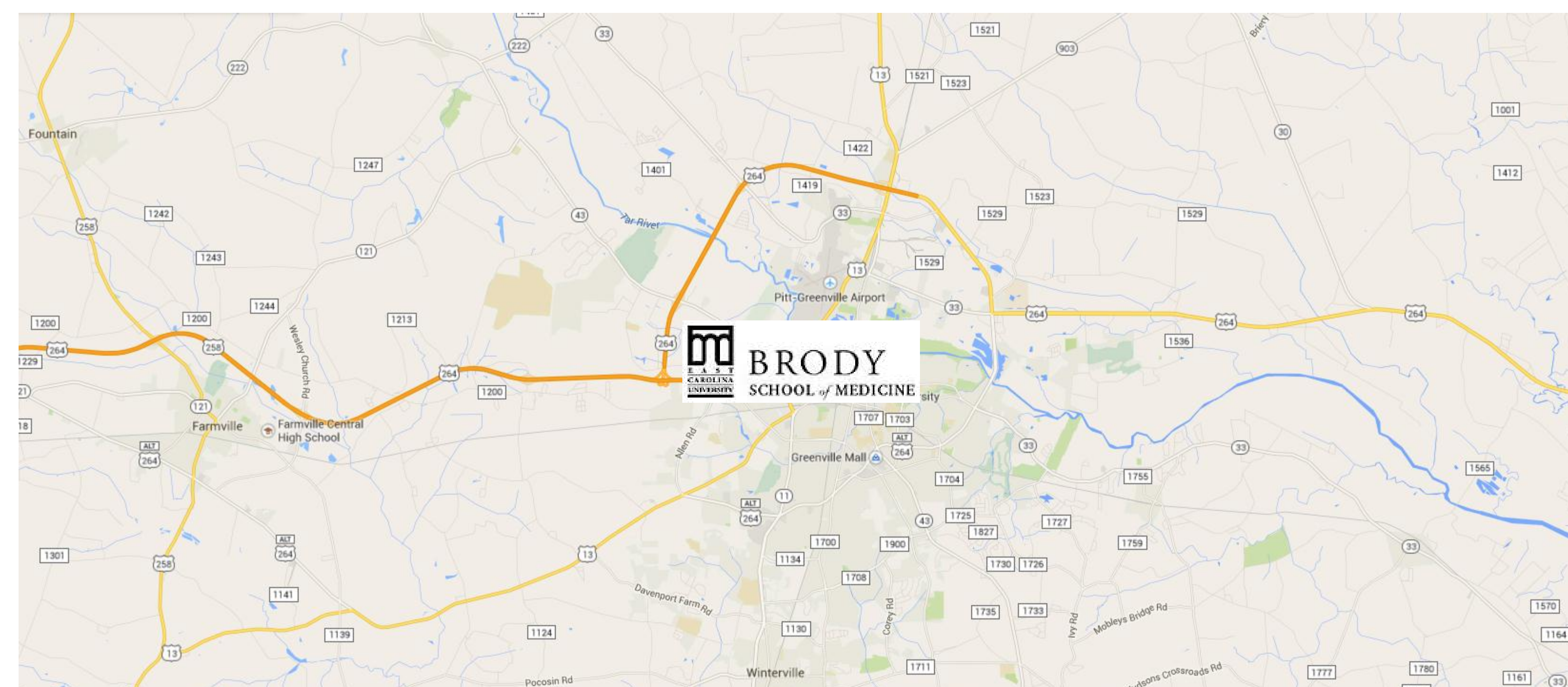
- Increase learner understanding of the utilization of primary care medicine through health promotion and disease prevention,
- Expand learner understanding of the ways in which the decisions of patients and surrogates impact health and health status
- Analyze the dynamics of health care systems, and how external and internal systems can impact their medical practice
- And, enhance learners' ability to understand structural and socioeconomic disparities

## RESULTS

The following performance objectives are addressed in the cases presented to the learners (this list has been adapted by the Social Work Competencies for the needs of clinical ethics learners) (Brewer, Roditti, and Marcus, 1996, xi-xii):

- Learners explain and is sensitive to cultural differences in patients
- Learners explain and is able to use sensitive knowledge about families and other natural support networks in the health care provision of a patient
- Learners recognize and accurately identifies physical, emotional, and behavioral indicators of abuse, the ways in which abuse impacts health, and the community resources available for abuse victims
- Learners gather pertinent information from the information provided in the case and additional resources to support or refute a the course of action that the learner deems as necessary for the health and ethical implications of the case
- Learners describe the importance of effective utilization of community resources and coordinating care
- Learners are able to develop a treatment plan taking other professionals' contributions into consideration in an appropriate way
- Learners can engage non-voluntary patients who are not directly forthcoming with information
- Learners work cooperatively with other disciplines that are routinely involved in community outreach
- Learners demonstrate a working knowledge of the community resources available to patients and families and utilizes them appropriately
- Learners provide reflective feedback on their experiences with this case/patient

This lesson will take on the three concepts cognitive knowledge, behavioral skills, and character development (Siegler, 2001) and develop them for the specific cases of this lesson. Learners are to use critical thinking skills in order to develop cognitive knowledge for addressing the ethical and social dilemmas presented in these three cases. Utilizing research methodologies and interviewing skills, learners will gain a practical approach for ethical analysis. One of the primary goals of this lesson is to reflect the reality and prevalence found in clinical situations that learners will encounter as a practicing physician. This lesson's design is based on the various patient settings and relies on the learners to address perceived and actual needs of the patients.



### References:

Brewer, L. K., Roditti, M., & Marcus, A. (1996). Child welfare case study module: Emergency response, family maintenance, permanency planning. Berkeley: University of California at Berkeley, California Social Work Education Center. <https://www.csulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/Child%20Welfare%20Case%20Study%20Module.pdf>

Siegler, Mark, (October 2001), Lessons from 30 years of teaching clinical ethics. *American Medical Association*, 3, 10. <http://virtualmentor.ama-assn.org/2001/10/medu1-0110.html>

## EVALUATION PLAN

Feedback from the learners will be very important in this initial investigative case analysis. When the lesson is first introduced, learners will be asked questions to ensure that they understand the goals of this lesson and they will be given the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any part of the process that requires more information. This will give the instructors an opportunity to make adjustments if necessary. Additionally, a sample case analysis will be provided to the learners. This will give the learners an example of acceptable work standards and the type of information that should be collected during their interviews.

After the assignment is completed, a graded summative evaluation will be given to the learner. The learner will be graded on the satisfactory completion of the performance objectives using a rubric.

## IMPACT/LESSONS LEARNED

An additional skill that will be developed in this lesson is behavioral skills. In order to have an impact on patients and patient care, learners must have the skill set that will show an expertise outside of the realm of medicine. Developing behavioral skills allows learners to gain thoughtfulness and sensitivity that is needed to address patients and their families (Siegler, 2001). Within the ethical and social issues that are presented in these cases, learners must rely on their own character traits to guide them in how best to proceed with their patient. Similar to the other two skills, character development is "molded by the experience of caring for sick patients" (Siegler, 2001) and this lesson provides a means for learners to do just that. As Siegler states, learners should be given the "opportunity to practice these skills" (2001).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This poster was prepared with financial support from the American Medical Association (AMA) as part of the Accelerating Change in Medical Education Initiative. The content reflects the views of the authors and does not necessarily represent the views of the AMA or other participants in this initiative. I would like to thank Dr. Maria Clay and the Department of Bioethics and Interdisciplinary Studies for their support during this journey.