

## **Fostering Awareness of the Community by Engaging Students (FACES)**

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Fostering Awareness of the Community by Engaging Students (FACES) is a program created by students and faculty of the IU School of Medicine and Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health at IUPUI to provide medical and public health students structured volunteer opportunities to engage with adults experiencing homelessness, allowing for an increased understanding of vulnerable populations and community exposure. Despite poor health outcomes and a need for primary healthcare services, adults experiencing homelessness often do not seek or receive the medical care they need<sup>1,2</sup>. In response to this issue, FACES seeks to provide safe group settings (art, educational, and focus groups), in which students can discuss barriers to quality healthcare and public health services with a small group of homeless individuals and better recognize methods to improve service delivery.

Through the support of the IUPUI solution center, data has been collected to inform the development of FACES and to promote program sustainability. An evaluation of the student volunteer training module was performed to assess the quality of information provided within the training. Two in-person pilot training sessions were conducted for this evaluation, using a mixed methods approach. Each pilot session consisted of a pre- and post-assessment of self-perceived knowledge to obtain quantitative data regarding the impact of the training on knowledge levels, as well as an information recall test to provide quantitative data on the ability of the participants to become engaged in the training. Qualitative data for the evaluation was collected through focus groups conducted at the completion of both training sessions. To further advise program development, FACES's developers conducted focus groups with small groups of homeless individuals to collect input from the participating community and obtain qualitative data concerning the details of program organization, future topics of discussion, and willingness to participate.

### Resources

1. Kushel, M., Vittinghoff, E., & Haas, J. (2001) Factors associated with the healthcare utilization of homeless persons. *JAMA*, 285, 200–206.
2. Stein, J., Anderson, R., Koegel, P., & Gelberg, L. (2000). Predicting health services utilization among homeless adults: A prospective analysis. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 11(2), 212-230.

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