Promoting Healthy Habits Through Education for Women in Addiction Recovery

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About First Step Home

First Step Home is an addiction recovery facility in Cincinnati serving women with substance use disorders. They provide treatment and housing for pregnant and non pregnant women and their children. Their mission is to empower clients with the skills to succeed in their recovery and provide a nurturing environment for their children. First Step Home offers services such as group and individual therapy, medication management, an employment program, and recovery groups (Alcoholics Anonymous & Narcotics Anonymous). Each summer, First Step Home welcomes an intern from the Urban Health Project to support the medical team. Urban Health Project's mission is to immerse medical students into a service-oriented experience working with underserved populations in the local community.

Internship Responsibilities

- Teaching group education sessions on health topics including nutrition basics, benefits of exercise, and contraception methods
- Taking vitals during appointments with the physician
- Assisting the nurse with coordinating healthcare services for clients
- Compiling a roster of COVID-19 vaccinated clients

Project 1: Healthy Meals Workshop

I designed a Meal Planning Guide for clients to use when grocery shopping. It includes steps for planning meals for the week ahead, making a grocery list, using coupons, and preparing meals.

I taught a cooking class with the clients where we made stuffed peppers using produce from their community garden.

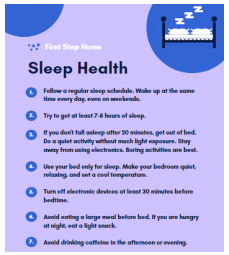
Acknowledgements
I would like to extend many thanks to the staff and clients at First Step Home for welcoming me into their community this summer. Special thanks to my supervisor, Jen, for her guidance. Thank you to Dalton and Zohabe at UHP for your ongoing support.

Project 2: Health Education Materials

I created easy to read handouts with information on a variety of health topics tailored to the needs of the client population.

healthy beverage choices

adding exercise to your daily routine



sleep hygiene

dental health

constipation prevention

Reflection

This partnership between Urban Health Project and First Step Home facilitates a valuable learning experience for medical students while making a positive impact on the community. My experience at First Step Home introduced me to substance use disorder treatment, furthering my understanding of addiction as a complex chronic disease. Working with this underserved population taught me the importance of treatment programs like First Step Home in supporting people through the challenging recovery process. I intend to use the lessons I learned this summer to be an outspoken advocate for people with substance use disorders.