The 2014-2015 academic year has been an exciting time for interprofessional education at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. The year culminated in the awarding of a $1.7 million grant from HRSA for the Pre-doctoral Training in General Pediatric and Public Health Dentistry and Dental Hygiene that was awarded to the Rutgers School of Dental Medicine for a five year project period beginning 07/01/15. As noted in the application, the Rutgers School of Dental Medicine (RSDM) seeks to improve access to and quality of oral health care for vulnerable and underserved communities within the city of Newark and its environs by providing enhanced training of diverse health professions students through interprofessional education (IPE) and collaborative, culturally competent, clinical practice. The proposed Special Populations Interprofessional Care Experiences (“SPICE”) will accomplish this goal by placing dental students in community-based sites that currently lack oral health care services. In these sites, dental students, along with students in dental hygiene, medicine, nursing, nutrition, pharmacy and social work, will work in teams to care for vulnerable and underserved patients. In addition to providing dental screenings, dental students will demonstrate various oral hygiene therapies to the other participating health professions students, including training in the application of fluoride varnish and conducting oral examinations to identify early signs of decay, gingival inflammation and their implications.

This proposed project will also aim to improve and expedite the delivery of care for the special needs patient population of the RSDM Special Care Dental Clinic and Oral Medicine Clinic. Medical, dental, nursing, pharmacy, hygiene, social work and nutrition students and faculty will holistically review the medical and social histories of special needs patients in advance of their first appointment. Establishing a technological solution to permit interprofessional teams to jointly review patient histories and treatment records will allow students, under faculty supervision, to collaborate in planning for intake and treatment of actual patients. Because special needs patients are frequently unaware that they require medical and other referrals prior to dental treatment, they encounter lengthy and repeated delays between their first dental appointments and actual dental treatment. Through this program, patients will be directed to needed medical and other services prior to their first dental appointments, avoiding unnecessary trips to the dental clinic and lengthy delays in treatment. In addition, a newly designed continuing education/fellowship and honors programs Teaching Treating Patients with Special Needs (2TPSN) will be developed, including scholarship support for students and an emphasis on recruitment of students from underrepresented minorities, from rural or disadvantaged backgrounds, and veterans.

This grant is in addition to the $1.5 million three year HRSA grant awarded to the Rutgers School of Nursing in July 2014. This project will provide mental health services to community residents seen in the Jordan and Harris Community Center in Newark. The funded project will train nursing, medical, dental, pharmacy, social work and allied health students to develop an integrative, interprofessional approach to the provision of mental health services. Through the funding awarded, the Newark Community Integrated Services Project will be expanded to add interprofessional mental health education and care in addition to expanding the scope of services to at least two additional sites within the city of Newark. It is expected that, at full capacity, this project
will allow 503 pre-licensure, graduate, and doctoral nursing candidates and 371 medical and other health-related students to have interdisciplinary experience in the program.

On June 1, 2015, Rutgers- New Jersey Medical School was selected as one of ten new teams to participate in the 2015 Interprofessional Student Hot Spotting Mini-Grant Project learning collaborative. The team will receive up to $4,000 in matching funds from AAMC. The project is a joint initiative between the Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers, Primary Care Progress and AAMC. In addition to students from NJMS, the project will involve nursing, pharmacy, public health and social work students.

The Rutgers School of Social Work received a three year grant totaling $175,000 from the Rutgers University-Newark Seed Grant program in support of the Rutgers Interprofessional Center for Children and Families. This legal assistance clinic is a joint venture between the Rutgers Law School, the School of Social Work, New Jersey Medical School, the School of Public Affairs and Administration, and the School of Business.

FOCUS clinic is an initiative of the School of Nursing located in downtown Newark. The clinic provides interprofessional experiences for students from nursing, pharmacy, social work, dietetics and the physician assistant program. In 2015, the clinic received $80,000 in one year funding from the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey to provide mental health services for veterans in the community utilizing an interprofessional model.

Several other faculty have submitted IPE-related grants and are awaiting responses from the funders. Funding is also being requested from the Josiah Macy Foundation in support of an interprofessional project focusing on improving health literacy and interprofessional communication.

Three Rutgers faculty abstracts were accepted for presentation at the upcoming Collaborating Across Borders V conference in Roanoke, Virginia. An additional three abstracts were submitted to the 2015 Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) Education Forum in Washington, DC. Those proposals will be judged in July 2015.

Oral and poster presentations focused on IPE were given at the following meetings: the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting in October 2014, the 10th International Interdisciplinary Conference on Clinical Supervision, and the 2014 Annual Meeting of the College of Psychiatric & Neurologic Pharmacists.

The Vice-Chancellor for Interprofessional Programs, Denise V. Rodgers, MD gave a plenary address on interprofessional education at the annual meeting of the Association of Departments of Family Medicine. She presented the annual Snively Lecture at the University of California, Davis and the annual Putterman Lecture at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, both lectures focused on interprofessional education. Dr. Rodgers presented IPE focused Family Medicine and Community Health Grand Rounds at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and she is scheduled to present at Medicine Grand Rounds at New Jersey Medical School in the fall. She has also made IPE focused presentations at Rutgers School of Dental Medicine and the School of Nursing.
During AY 14-15, two highly successful large case based interprofessional sessions were held on the Piscataway campus. One case focused on the delivery of team-based care to a stroke patient and the other focused on the care of a terminally ill cancer patient. Over 400 students from medicine, nursing, physical therapy, pharmacy, the physician assistant program, social work, and nutrition participated in the cases. Students also gained interprofessional clinical experiences at the FOCUS clinic, the NJMS Student Family Health Center and the Promise Clinic at RWJMS.

Each summer an interdisciplinary group of students participate in the Bridging the Gaps internship program that is coordinated by the School of Public Health with placement sites in New Brunswick, Newark and Camden. Students from medicine, physician assistant, and public health are participating this year. In July 2015, an interprofessional group of students will participate in a three day music festival at Lincoln Park in Newark. The students from nursing, dentistry and medicine will work together to provide health screenings and health information under the supervision of faculty.

It should also be noted that Robert Wood Johnson Medical School will be offering a graduate certificate in medical and health professions education in collaboration with the Rutgers Graduate School of Education. It is hoped that this program will be expanded to include faculty from all of the RBHS schools as well as the School of Social Work and the Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology.

The Interprofessional Education Faculty Advisory Council (IPEFAC) meets monthly and oversees the development and implementation of IPE activities at RBHS. IPEFAC members represent the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology, New Jersey Medical School, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Rutgers School of Dental Medicine, the Schools of Health Related Professions, Nursing, Public Health, and Social Work. It should be noted that Dr. Alma Merians was recently named Associate Dean for Interprofessional Education and Practice at SHRP.

An important development in the Office of Interprofessional Programs was the hiring of Caroline Harris, MPH as the IPE Program Coordinator. Ms. Harris started working in March 2015 and has already proven herself to be an important resources in the planning and development of IPE related activities at RBHS. It is anticipated that due to her efforts the RBHS Office of Interprofessional Programs website will go live by the end of July 2015.
PLANS FOR AY 2015-16

In September 2015, it is hoped that all incoming students from RBHS will participate in an interprofessional orientation session that will be held in Newark on 9/9/15 and in Piscataway on 9/10/15. The large group IPE case-based learning sessions on CVA and Hospice care will be repeated next year as well. New small and large case based IPE seminars are being developed by several schools. An online IPE introductory web-based experience is being developed by faculty from New Jersey Medical School in collaboration with faculty from other RBHS schools.

A web-based introductory course for all incoming RBHS students is also being developed by the Office of Interprofessional Programs.

During AY 15-16, the IPEFAC will continue to collaborate with the Master Educator’s Guild in the creation of a faculty development curriculum aimed at improving faculty skills in large and small group facilitation, interprofessional evaluation and general principles of IPE and interprofessional collaboration.

Faculty from RBHS schools will continue to apply for funding to help support IPE activities, as we implement recently funded initiatives. RBHS faculty will also continue to attend and present at national meetings. The certification of the Healthy Greater Newark Medicaid ACO will provide interprofessional groups of students with opportunities to work on community health projects. Students will also continue to work in the interprofessional clinical settings noted above.