

Aging in Rural Oregon

Deschutes Rim Clinic



Where We Started

- CDC Rural Health website, 15% of all Americans live in rural areas, and they are at greater risk of dying from certain causes than their urban counterparts.
 - a) Rural Americans are usually of more resilient, hardy and independent stock and do not believe in asking for help.
 - b) Many do not qualify for Medicare-covered Home Health services as they are not 'home-bound.'
- When decline of memory, activities of daily living (ADL's) and function slowly occur,
 - a) they are unable to recognize their need for extra assistance and are usually unwilling to talk to family about these changes for fear of being "put away."
- Deschutes Rim Clinic, would like to assist our birthday-challenged residents to age in place, in their own home, until such time as they may qualify for other Medicare-covered services.
 - a) This will be an innovative, community based project to build an integrated, socially responsible solution to an ever increasing problem.

Why and How

- Deschutes Rim Clinic is in South Wasco County, located one hour from any other resources, medical or social
- We applied for this Elder Service Innovation Grant
 - To train some staff and provide funds for travel and hours to provide home social service visits to several area residents
 - Training will be done in-house by trained professionals, utilizing a format developed by Washington DOH
 - All staff are overseen by clinic providers

Washington State CHW **training program**

- <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/140-066-CourseObjectives.pdf>
- Roles and Boundaries
- Skills in communication, organization, documentation, assessment of home environment, needs for referral resources
- Cultural Competency
- Screening needs for preventive medicine

Home visits

- Meeting patients on their own turf
- Getting vital signs at home where blood pressures best and documentation in EHR helps meet QIMS
- Safety and basic needs assessments assist provider in determining what is actually needed—giving patients a voice

GOALS

- Reframe respect for our elders by incorporating organized local youth groups to create intergenerational opportunities.
- Frequency of visits: determined by individual needs
 - performed by qualified staff,
 - include adaptive strategies with a functional focus for each client

GOALS, continued

- Services: medication reconciliation, fill medication boxes, blood pressure, pulse and pulse ox checks, safety and fall assessments
- Basic needs assessments: food, water, heating and cooling

An Important Element

- One of the most important elements is companionship,
so the client does not feel so alone

Obstacles

- Patient's fear of having “strangers” in home
- Need to build rapport with them in clinic first
- Financing for mileage and employee's car
- Documentation

Evolution

- Enlightenment to the needs of patients in their homes
- What do we need to do to expand outside of the clinic walls?
- How can we address that loneliness?

BIRP

- **B**uilding **I**ntergenerational **R**elationship **P**rogram
- Developed as part of our Elder Grant from Office of Rural Health by Tammarra Ferguson, one of our Medical Assistants and our resident Community Health Social Worker
- Goal: to pair kids and elders in our community and work towards a better understanding for both

START UP

- We started by sending out over 100 letters to specific “elders” in our service area
- Then a presentation to the school
- The kids were much more receptive as we received several applications from students who were interested
- Not a single application from any Elder contacted

REVAMP THE PROCESS

- There is no commitment to a longer term program, as originally envisioned
- She paired up with Care Coordinator from neighboring Assisted Living Facility to organize “Game Night”

Ricky



Who attended

6 elder residents from Canyon Rim Manor,

6 adults from the community

BUNCH of teens and younger kids!

There was an aging game, paint parlour and a rousing table top scavenger hunt!



- To say fun was had by all is an understatement!
- I saw kids helping elders, making sure they were all included
- kids working with adults and other kids to make sure everyone participated

What's Next?

- Monthly game nights
- Change up on location
- Advertising in local monthly paper, face book and our website
- Word of mouth advertising
- Hope is to evolve this over time and make it available to all who are interested



Contact Info

- Sharon D. DeHart, PA-C / District Manager
- White River Health District dba Deschutes Rim Health Clinic
- 1605 George Jackson Road, PO Box 219, Maupin, OR 97037
- sharondehart@deschutesrimclinic.org
- www.deschutesrimclinic.org