A multi-site team of community/public health nursing (C/PHN) faculty is exploring how to utilize the Quad Council Competencies for Public Health Nurses (2011) (QCCPHN) as a standard for the public health nursing profession in various community settings. The team is currently conducting research and advocating for the utilization of the competencies in baccalaureate nursing education with an emphasis on education, practice, and research. The project began in 2013 with a focus on nursing faculty use of public health nursing competencies and continues to expand the utilization of the competencies when working with local and global communities. The purpose of the project is to build and evaluate a nursing workforce that meets the needs of the 21st century for: improved population health, population focused care and community based networks at the local, national and global levels.

Quality Improvement
Our initial work began with a quality management project to foster increased use of competencies at the Tier One level of the 2011 Quad Council Public Health Nursing competencies in our respective academic institutions. Tier One QC PHN competencies were used to train and enhance socialization of the role and practice of the C/PHN for both baccalaureate community/public health faculty and nursing students. The team developed a clinical evaluation tool (CET) based on the Tier One 2011 QC PHN competencies that was piloted across our own settings. Each of the multi-site universities identified a course. The students in the selected course completed a mid-term and final evaluation utilizing the CET form. Faculty also completed pre and post questionnaires. In addition to staff development of clinical faculty, several programs were presented to curriculum committees, general faculty and at department meetings.

The data from the quality management project was presented at the June, 2015 Association of Community Health Nurse Educators (ACHNE) Annual Institute. In the participating multisite universities it was evident that: 1) Clinical faculty were not prepared for teaching C/PH using the Tier One 2011 QC PHN competencies, 2) Clinical faculty were not aware of the competencies and often did not support application in the assigned clinical sites, 3) C/PH faculty that were aware of the competencies often did not support the application of specific competencies, such as health policy and finance, as both were deemed graduate level skills and not for undergraduate nursing education. The data also demonstrated that there was a lack of consistency in teaching C/PH content and a lack of structure in defining appropriate clinical experiences for addressing population health.

The findings from our initial quality improvement project provided impetus for the next quality management and improvement project involving the education of baccalaureate nursing faculty and key stakeholders in community health clinical sites. As a part of this outreach, the team launched a monthly teleconference, *The Learning Community for C/PHN* with baccalaureate faculty. Faculty was recruited at regional and national conferences and via email.
outreach. To date we have conducted three sessions. The calls serve to provide ‘walk through’ information on the use of the Clinical Evaluation Tool (CET) and initiate ongoing dialogue and sharing regarding issues and concerns about the implementation of the 2011 QC PHN competencies.

Research Survey
The results of the quality management and improvement initiative in four universities formed new questions that framed inquiry for our current research project entitled Community/Public Health Nursing Faculty’s Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of Public Health Nursing Competencies. An integral part of this research project was the recruitment of 12 regional assistants named Regional Champions at the ACHNE Spring Institute in June 2015. The Champions contacted C/PHN faculty via e-mail, text or in person at schools and colleges of nursing within their region to explain the research study and distribute a flyer and letter with the link to the survey. The link to take the survey by February 29, 2016 is https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/quadcouncilcompetencies. To date over 110 faculty have completed the survey. The Regional Champions continue to assist the research team and will be part of the next study.

Structure/Method/Design
The outcomes for the research study will be to: 1) Describe the demographics of academic/clinical faculty teaching C/PHN in baccalaureate schools of nursing that use local health modalities/clinical practicums; 2) Validate and differentiate the knowledge, skills and attitudes of community/public health nursing faculty utilizing the 2011 Quad Council Competencies for Public Health Nurses; and 3) Determine the difference among knowledge, skills and attitudes of academic/clinical C/PHN baccalaureate faculty for each competency domain. Sustainability is encouraged by linking competencies across the curriculum and linking professions across the university, nationally, regionally and globally. A similar study with public health nursing service providers is in the proposal stage.

Evaluation
Evaluation will be conducted through the analysis of the survey; on-going dialogue with Quad Council regarding competency based learning in nursing programs; and utilization of the Clinical Evaluation Tool for local and study abroad programs in community/public health nursing. The desired results are nursing students and a C/PHN workforce prepared to respond to the challenges in local/global population health today.

Research Outcomes and Evaluations
Analysis of the survey will provide baseline demographic information that will define the population of academic/clinical faculty and the community/public health nursing specialty. Validating the knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to Quad Council Competencies for Public Health Nurses (2011) will help frame our practice. Utilizing our practice sites for community based participatory research will provide data for an inter-professional approach to improve a community’s health.
Recommendations and Actions for Faculty

- Complete the survey [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/quadcouncilcompetencies](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/quadcouncilcompetencies) (Closes 2/29)
- Participate in the C/PH nursing educator *Learning Community* telephone conferences on March 3rd & April 28th. (Contact one of us for more information).
- Establish Quality Improvement Team in your school/region
- QCCPHN become a curriculum standard for all community/public health/population courses.
- Educate stakeholders on QCCPHN and the baccalaureate generalist of the future.

Summary

To address the challenges of an expanding 21st century health care delivery to populations and communities, community/public health nursing education, practice, and research must be re-examined, re-focused, and re-designed. The objectives of health care delivery systems today are to improve population health, population focused care, and community-based networks. Utilizing common standards that already are in place assures a consistency of policy, care and delivery by academia, practice, and research. Furthermore, utilizing the Quad Council Competencies for Public Health Nurses (2011) will position nursing as a leading partner to advance systemic improvements in health and health care delivery.

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