Project #45 - Preconception reproductive knowledge promotion (PREKNOP)
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Approximately 50% of pregnancies are unplanned. Unplanned pregnancies have social
and economic costs as well as adverse health outcomes for both the mother and infant. These
rates are worse among low-income minority women. The objective of this study is “to promote
women’s reproductive health and positive pregnancy outcomes by examining the effectiveness
of the ‘Preconception Reproductive Knowledge Promotion (PREKNOP),’ an intervention to
increase women’s knowledge of their body, while reducing the risk of unplanned pregnancy and
delayed pregnancy recognition.”

The study, colloquially known as the Women’s Health Promotion Program, seeks to
enroll 120 low-income women ages 18-44. The program is a 2 year, longitudinal study in which
nursing students and community health workers (CHW’s) provide educational teaching for six
months. The participants are randomly selected into control or intervention groups. Both groups
receive information about nutrition, exercise, alcohol, smoking, weight management, iron, folic
acid, and access to care. In addition, the intervention group will learn about reproductive health
such as reproductive anatomy, contraceptives, signs of pregnancy, and methods to track
ovulation (the time in which an egg is released and women are most fertile).

Throughout the summer, I performed home visits, input data, and conducted literature
reviews. Part of the study used senior nursing students to conduct home visits during a
community clinical rotation. As part of my research, I analyzed nursing students’ knowledge of
reproductive health. My literature review showed that although no articles focusing specifically
on nursing students, thirteen studies measured student knowledge. While several studies asked
students about their level of knowledge, this method of self-reporting does not show whether or
not students actually knew the material. Our study is unique because each nursing student took a
survey before and after their involvement teaching reproductive knowledge in the PREKNOP
program. We hypothesize that students’ knowledge will increase after being involved in the
PREKNOP study.

This research not only impacted the women and students involved in the study, it
impacted me as well. This summer I wrestled with social injustices and big problems such as:
how do you help low-income women while empowering them? As a Christian, how do I promote
justice? Through many conversations with Godly professors and friends, I realized that God is
calling us to a unique area in life. Some people are called to work with those in poverty, some
people are not. The importance is not where you are called; rather, it is whether you are
following your calling.

This summer I learned how to implement a research project. Through home visits,
conducting surveys, reminding participants, ordering supplies, transcribing data, entering
quantitative and qualitative data and training additional students, I gained skills for graduate
school. Most importantly, I have seen first-hand examples of God working through broken
situations to bring his wholeness and redemption.