Baby Boomer Imperative: Working Together to Care for an Aging Population
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Background
The Houston Geriatric Education Center (H-GEC) utilizes an interprofessional approach to the training and education of health care providers who care for vulnerable older adults. One of the educational offerings of the H-GEC is Baby Boomer Imperative, a 40 hour didactic certification course that is open to professionals from all disciplines of health care and social care and the lay community. The course purpose is to prepare the healthcare workforce in the Texas Medical Center and greater Houston community for the increasing number of older adults who will be seeking geriatric-specific health care.

Educational Objectives
• Demonstrate increased knowledge of best geriatric practices and improved attitudes in providing emotional and physical health care and social services to older adults
• Discuss evidenced-based strategies for treating older adults, including those with multiple chronic illnesses.
• Identify strategies for effectively communicating with older adults to ensure positive health outcomes.
• Describe the value of the interprofessional team in caring for older adults

Program Outline
Baby Boomer Imperative course is a 40-hour geriatric certificate program with 27 hours of onsite training and 13 hours of online training. Onsite classes occur one Friday per month for four consecutive months. Participants may receive continuing education credits for completing one or more full day(s). Only those participants who complete all 40 hours of training receive the certificate. Since 2011, the H-GEC has offered two programs per year.

Baby Boomer Imperative is an interprofessional and inter-institutional collaboration. Faculty members are from the disciplines of Chaplaincy, Dentistry, Medicine (Family Medicine, Geriatrics, Neurology, Palliative Care, Psychiatry, and Urology), Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Public Health, Social Work, and Speech and Language Pathology.

Institutions include Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health from The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, University of Houston Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, College of Pharmacy and Graduate College of Social Work; Texas Woman’s University Schools of Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy.

Onsite Training Topics
Day One – Geriatric Syndromes
Introduction to Aging and the Quintet of Geriatric Syndromes
Hazards of Immobility and Hospitalization
Falls
Overview of the 3Ds: Delirium, Depression and Dementia
Urinary Incontinence
Polypharmacy

Day Two – Issues in Aging
Biology and Physiology of Aging
Communication Disorders/Ethnogeriatrics
Mental Health
Financial Exploitation of Older Adults
Executive Function and Capacity

Day Three – Aging with Disability
Oral Health
Medical Homes
Intimacy and Sexuality
Principles to Consider in Aging with Disability
Home Modification, Durable Medical Equipment, and Driving

Day Four – Palliative and End-of-Life Care
Hospice versus Palliative Care
Communication: Delivering Bad News
Caregiver Issues
Stroke Conversations
Spirituality in Aging

Online Educational Training Options
www.houstongec.org → Online Video Education
Library → Interprofessional Lectures → Lecture

Sample Menu Example of Lectures Available:
• Alcohol Use and Abuse in Older Adults
• Identifying Elder Abuse Interprofessional Education: Oral Health and Mechanically Ventilated Critically Ill Adults
• Interprofessional Education: Oral Health and the Stroke Survivor
• Introduction to Aging

Baby Boomer Imperative (BBI) Participant Demographics

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Pre/Post Educational Testing
• Pre and Post Testing was conducted in all 7 cycles of 4 days of learning with 6-8 lectures/day
• Mean change in learning ranged from 12% to 30.1%

Results – Participants Who Completed

KEY FINDINGS
• Utilization of program cycles proved helpful for working participants to complete the 40-hour certification, e.g. if a participant missed a particular day of onsite learning, they could easily make it up in a subsequent cycle.
• Older participants were as interested in their own health and aging issues as they were in the issues affecting their older patients
• Case studies were the basis for learning about interprofessional communication and processes.
• Diversity of participants’ healthcare discipline and educational level was both beneficial and detrimental, depending on the complexity of the content.

IMPLICATIONS
• Geriatric and palliative care education is greatly needed, as evidenced by the number of enrollees in each cycle of BBI.
• Consideration should be given to individualizing program content to participants’ specific discipline or educational level, e.g. lectures designed for medicine and advance practice professionals with prescription privileges
• The principles of interprofessional teamwork, including the roles of different disciplines and communication skills, should always be included.

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