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Webinar Series

Discovery Driven Solutions Related to Educational Attainment for Students from Foster Care
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Fostering Health: Addressing the Healthcare Needs of Foster Care Alumni

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Background and Significance

• Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) impact health outcomes\textsuperscript{1, 2}
• Experience higher rates of acute and chronic health issues\textsuperscript{3, 4}
• Adolescents more likely to engage in high-risk behaviors, such as smoking, alcohol use, drug use, or unprotected sex\textsuperscript{5}
• Placement instability creates inconsistency in access to care\textsuperscript{3, 4, 5}
• Longitudinal impact of health conditions after aging out of care\textsuperscript{3} yet, few are engaged in healthcare services after turning 18\textsuperscript{3, 6}
• Limited knowledge of how emerging adults with a history of foster care understand physical health and services
Research Question

What are the healthcare experiences of emerging adults with a history of foster care?

• Explore health challenges that may arise after aging out
• Identify how history in foster care impacts current health
• Identify strengths and challenges surrounding service utilization
Research Design

• An exploratory examination of experiences with health care services was conducted through a concurrent triangulation.

• Convenience sampling of students ($N = 14$) with a history of foster care at a Midwestern university (18-25 years old).

• A 24-item demographic survey of service utilization/knowledge.

• Semi-structured interviews regarding overall health, access, preventative care, insurance, and engagement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Sample Demographics ($N = 14$)</th>
<th>$n$ (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>$M = 22.15$ ($SD = 1.62$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11 (78.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3 (21.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>11 (78.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a or Hispanic</td>
<td>1 (7.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>2 (14.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>6 (42.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>6 (42.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Insurance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently Insured</td>
<td>10 (71.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insured After 18 But Not Currently</td>
<td>2 (14.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain if Insured</td>
<td>2 (14.28)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Healthcare Services Utilized after 18 (N = 14)

- Doctor/Medical Provider
- Dentist
- Eye Doctor
- Emergency Room
- Hospitalization
Utilization of Campus-Based Health Services (n = 7)

Acute Illness Care

HIV/STI Testing

Wellness Counseling/Physical

Immunizations
Qualitative Themes

- Attitudes Towards Help-Seeking
- Access to Services
- Guidance/Navigation
- Attention to Trauma/Mental Health
- Sexual Health/Family Planning
- Impact of System Involvement
Discussion

- Exploratory examination of the knowledge and experiences of health care services for former foster youth
- Difficulty accessing services due to inconsistent insurance coverage, and previous experiences with service providers
- Campus based support programs, previous caseworkers, and mentors were particularly helpful in making connections
- Importance of family planning and attention to trauma
- Although campus-based health services are available, only half of the participants chose to utilize these services
Practice and Policy Implications

• Actively engaging college students in decision-making prior to 18
• Ongoing support from mentors and campus-based support programs can provide needed information and referrals
• Professionals are uniquely positioned to advocate for policies and programs to support healthy development and well-being
• Increase awareness of preventative or ongoing health services (e.g. dental issues, diabetes, and follow-up care/check-ups)
• Campus-based services may help address some of the ongoing or unmet health needs reported by participants
Contact Information

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References


Thank you for attending!

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