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**For Immediate Release**

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Greetings!:

The University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing has exciting news, prestigious awards and ground breaking research developments happening every day. See what we've got going on now. Click on the headlines to be taken to the full story below:

- [Penn Study Shows School-Based Program Reduces Risky Sexual Behaviors in South African Teens](#)
- [Team Receives \\$300,000 Grant to Study Model for Transitioning People with Serious Mental Illness from Hospital to Home](#)
- [Penn Nursing's Health Care Experience in Honduras](#)
- [Penn Nursing Students Receive Special Recognition at State Convention](#)

## Penn Study Shows School-Based Program Reduces Risky Sexual Behaviors in South African Teens

A school-based, six-session program targeting sexual risk behaviors has proven effective in reducing rates of self-reported unprotected sex and sex with multiple partners among South African sixth-graders, according to a report in the October issue of Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, one of the JAMA/Archives journals.

Loretta S. Jemmott, PhD, RN, the van Amerigen professor of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing and her husband John B. Jemmott III, PhD, professor of Communication in Psychiatry and the Kenneth B. Clark Professor of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Medicine and Annenberg School for Communication conducted the study with colleagues at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the University of Fort Hare in South Africa, among others.

Researchers tested a school-based prevention program at 18 primary schools in Eastern Cape Providence, South Africa. Based on previous research, they conducted a cluster-randomized, controlled study and two six-session behavior-change interventions.

Nine schools were randomly assigned to participate in the HIV/STD intervention, which was designed to teach students how to avoid HIV and other STDs, enhance beliefs supporting abstinence and condom use, and increase the skills and self-confidence needed to choose less risky behaviors. The health-promotion intervention focused on physical activity, diet, and other behaviors linked to non-communicable diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer. The 1,057 participating children (average age 12.4) were asked about sexual behaviors before and at three, six, and 12 months after the intervention.

Averaged over the three follow-ups, a significantly smaller percentage of students in the HIV/STD risk reduction group than the health promotion group reported having unprotected vaginal intercourse (2.2 percent vs. 4.2 percent), having vaginal intercourse at all (4.8 percent vs. 7.2 percent) or having multiple sexual partners (1.8 percent vs. 3.2 percent).

Photos are available upon request.

[Back to the top](#)

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## Team Receives Grant to Study Model for Transitioning People With Mental Illness From Hospital to Home

If not well-handled, the transition from a psychiatric hospital back into the community can be extremely challenging for people with serious mental illness, who may already be in a vulnerable state. They can end up cycling in and out of psychiatric hospitals and emergency services, which is stressful for and harmful to the client and a strain on public resources. Now, a multidisciplinary team of researchers, headed by Nancy Hanrahan, R.N., Ph.D. assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing and a colleague at Penn's School of Social Policy and Practice, has received a \$300,000 18-month grant to test a model of care that may show promise for breaking that cycle.

The Transitional Care Model for Persons with Serious Mental Illness (TCM-SMI) provides 90 days of intensive hospital-to-home services. The model involves an advanced practice psychiatric nurse with graduate-level training in psychiatry and primary care who assesses and engages the client, as well as the client's primary care and mental health providers, to ensure that discharge plans and treatment regimens are followed. The nurse also connects the client with community services she or he needs to receive appropriate and continued care.

The TCM-SMI is patterned on a similar model of care that has been used successfully to provide hospital-to-home care for elderly medical patients. Hanrahan and Solomon will lead a team that will conduct a small trial to compare TCM-SMI with usual case-managed care for people with serious mental illness and compare the quality of care, client and provider satisfaction, quality of life and cost-effectiveness.

This is one of six grants announced by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Interdisciplinary Nursing Quality Research Initiative (INQRI). The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation created INQRI in order to address gaps in knowledge about nursing's effect on quality of care and to leverage opportunities for research that would identify nurses' contributions to improving patients' health and safety. This is the fifth cohort of INQRI grantees.

Over the past four years, INQRI grants have supported research to establish links between nursing and the quality of care delivered to people within and across a variety of health care settings. Each new INQRI research team receives an 18-month grant of up to \$300,000 to support a project that explores the relationship between nursing and health care with a focus on developing evidence on how to disseminate and implement programs that are known to be effective. INQRI will share the results of this research with policy-makers, hospital administrators and others who make decisions about how nursing resources are distributed to improve quality and patient outcomes.

"We are very excited about the potential contributions of this year's cohort of grantees," said INQRI Program Director Mary D. Naylor, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., who is the Marian S. Ware professor in Gerontology at the University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing, which administers the program. "Nurses represent the single largest group of health professionals delivering hospital care, but our knowledge of their contributions to ensuring that care is safe, beneficial, patient-centered, efficient and equitable is woefully inadequate. INQRI is working to change that. This year's grantees will help us disseminate proven nurse-led interventions and implement successful programs in new settings to improve patient safety and health care quality. This work falls directly in line with the recent recommendations of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing at the Institute of Medicine."

Photos are available upon request.

[Back to the top](#)

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## Penn Nursing Students Aide Maternal and Child Health in Latin America

For the fourth year, faculty members Mamie Guidera, CNM, MSN and Dawn Durain, CNM, MPH led a course-related trip to Honduras with 12 second degree BSN students, graduate MSN students and one traditional BSN student.

The aim of the course is to provide students with a socio-political and cultural perspective on health and health care delivery in Latin America through service learning. Students learn about the culture, health and health care by working side by side, or shoulder to shoulder with people in Santa Lucia and Concepcion Honduras.

The students were responsible for the creation of multiple health education lesson plans throughout the semester. Using popular education techniques, these lessons focused on a wide variety of health promotion subjects, and were presented while in Honduras during trainings for area midwives and community health workers and health education sessions with patients and community members. Students also spent significant time

conversing in Spanish in order to gain practice (and confidence!) with medical and other relevant vocabulary.

Honduras is largely a rural, agricultural country. According to the Honduran Ministry of Health, more than two-thirds of the country lives in poverty and half of the country lives in extreme poverty. One third of all children under the age of 5 suffer from malnutrition. The maternal mortality rate is the highest in Central America, and the total fertility rate is between 3.2 and 8.3 children per woman.

The first home base in Honduras was a clinic in Santa Lucia which is sponsored by partner NGO, Hombro a Hombro (meaning Shoulder to Shoulder). This organization works with several academic institutions in the United States with the goal of delivering sustainable health care to rural communities and improving the overall well-being of their residents.

The second week was spent in Concepcion, a small community just north of Santa Lucia, in the southwest corner of Honduras, close to El Salvador. In Santa Lucia, students took calls at the clinic; assisted with the labor and care of four women and their four babies; ran field clinics in outlying villages; taught community midwives; provided primary care and cervical cancer screening at the field clinic sites. In Concepcion, the group from University of Pennsylvania was the first clinicians to staff the new clinic. The students and faculty provided primary care and cervical cancer screening.

Based on assignments, group participants either worked in the Hombro a Hombro clinic or in the field clinics. The Hombro a Hombro clinic functions as a small hospital and cares for community members with a wide variety of both acute and chronic medical problems. Students were able to use their skills in assisting with care ranging from machete wounds to broken bones, and infections to malnutrition. Women came in for prenatal visits as well. Students assisted in each of the visits with the faculty members and conducted prenatal education sessions for the women using popular education methods. Additionally, everyone participated in day and night labor and delivery and emergency medical calls.

The majority of the group travelled each morning to a different out-lying village, by way of pickup trucks. There the group set up field clinics, usually in a school. Some students did complete pediatric assessments including eye examinations and anemia screenings. The children were often sent home with vitamins, anti-parasite medication and other necessary medication for problems diagnosed that day. Other students performed gynecological care with Midwifery faculty. These visits included cervical cancer screening, pelvic exams, and breast exams. Women with abnormal results were referred to the clinic in Santa Lucia for follow up.

Once back at the clinic, afternoons could be spent reading, practicing Spanish, refining health education materials, exercising, or hiking. In the evening, the group debriefed and debated interesting medical cases, questions or concerns about the work of the day. Finally students were given their assignments for the next day. They then reviewed lesson plans, made preparations for their new station, looked up vocabulary words and restocked the equipment bags to be ready for the morning. To cope with the oppressive Honduran heat, the group managed to find time to hike to a waterfall about a mile and a half outside of Concepcion. A highlight of the trip included swimming to the El Salvador border!

The students organized trainings for midwives in Santa Lucia and surrounding areas. They presented information by using skits, songs, demonstrations and activities. The students focused their lessons on 1) the components of both a prenatal visit and a post partum visit, 2) warning signs of complications during pregnancy and when to take women to the clinic and 3) methods of contraception.

The students gained an incredible amount of experience in just two weeks. They acquired new skills in pediatric care, women's health care, emergency medicine, and physical assessment. They gained exposure to a completely different world and were humbled by experiencing international health care in an up-close-and-personal kind of way. The students were committed to teaching and learning from all the people they served. Overall, the students shared that their time in Honduras was invaluable in terms of life lessons, cultural humility and clinical experience. It is our hope that this course sparks a life long interest in international health and the important role of nursing professionals abroad.

As one student, Andrea Eichholzer, wrote in the journal she kept on the trip: "... a freedom that I hadn't thought about much before this trip is the freedom to practice without so many restrictions. Part of this is leaving behind defensive medicine, or, paraphrasing from Mamie and Dawn, ' to be able to deliver a baby the way it was meant to be born. There is an elegant simplicity to this kind of care that is very attractive. In Honduras, death is much closer to the everyday experience; people are more aware of the fragility of life. I see this is how they choose to live, whether it be risking personal injury, or eating tortillas with reckless abandon. ....I think we could all use a little Latin flavor in our lives.

The course faculty members remain committed to sharing their skills with the underserved, advancing the dedication of the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Nursing to improving global health, and exposing students to learning experiences that change their world view.

Photos are available upon request.

[Back to the top](#)

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## Penn Nursing Students Receive Special Recognition at State Convention

Two students were elected to the Student Nurses Association of Pennsylvania state board at the 58<sup>th</sup> annual convention November 17-20. Amanda Daley was elected to the Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC)-Eastern Region and Kaitlin Best as Legislative Coordinator.

Additionally, the Student Nurses' Association of Pennsylvania recognized seven outstanding Penn Nursing students with scholarships. Scholarships were awarded to nursing seniors Amelia Cataldo and Naomi Yager; nursing juniors Amanda Daley and Karen McVay; and nursing freshmen, Nora Casper, Lauren Cosgriff, and Bianca Cutler. These scholarships were sponsored by HCR ManorCare, Jeanes Hospital, Memorial

Hospital, the Pennsylvania State Nurses Association, PinnacleHealth, Student Nurses' Association of Pennsylvania, and Temple University Hospital.

Student Nurses at Penn (SNAP) sent twenty-five nursing students to the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Nurses' Association of Pennsylvania (SNAP) State Convention in Lancaster, PA, which took place November 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>. They joined over eight hundred nursing students from across the state, and participated in the various networking, professional development, and organizational governance opportunities offered at the conference.

The twenty-five students who attended the SNAP convention included:

Nursing/Wharton senior and SNAP President, G.J. Melendez-Torres; nursing senior and SNAP Vice President, Amelia Cataldo; nursing senior and SNAP Peer Advising Co-Chair, Katie Goldschmidt; nursing senior and Penn Class of 2011 Class Board Nursing Chair, Tamara Yang; nursing senior, Abby McDowell; nursing senior, Naomi Yager; nursing junior and SNAP Legislative Coordinator, Amanda Daley; nursing junior and SNAP CPR Chair, Karen McVay; nursing sophomore and SNAP Fundraising Chair, Debbie Yiu; nursing sophomore, Kaitlin Best; nursing sophomore, Gabriella Kim; nursing freshman, Caroline Bourassa; nursing freshman, Nora Casper; nursing freshman, Ellen Chang; nursing freshman, Lauren Cosgriff; nursing freshman, Bianca Cutler; nursing freshman, Leah Geoghegan; nursing freshman, Emily Johnson; nursing freshman, Ryan Keating; nursing freshman, Hannah Lan; nursing freshman, Michelle Murphy; nursing freshman, Christopher Wojcik; nursing second degree student and SNAP Second Degree Peer Advising Chair, Erica Blanco; nursing second degree student, Alison Ercole; and nursing second degree student, Antonette Shaw. They were accompanied by advisor Dr. Diane Spatz.

Student Nurses at Penn was awarded the Chapter Excellence Award, recognizing the group's outstanding achievements and initiatives throughout the past year. This award was given to the chapter in Pennsylvania with 51 to 100 members that best met the following criteria: Outstanding participation at chapter meetings and chapter-sponsored events; success in community projects and fund-raising activities that promote the nursing profession in the community and encourage student and member involvement; and retention and recruitment of the chapter's membership. In addition, Student Nurses at Penn received the Outstanding Website Award that recognized SNAP's internet site for informing members of local and state nursing events and national nursing news in a timely and interesting manner. The website was judged based on its ability to create interest for student participation in events, inspire student contributions to the website, promote a positive image of nursing, and report on current issues/concerns of the profession of nursing at

<http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/snap/>)

[Back to the top](#)

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