An Interdisciplinary Approach to Elder Care in Nicaragua

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An Interdisciplinary Approach to Elder Care in Nicaragua

**Description**
An interdisciplinary team of students and faculty from Pacific University traveled to Nicaragua to work with underserved elders living in a group home. The trip extended from late December 2007 through early January 2008.

**Disciplines**
Dental Public Health and Education | Occupational Therapy | Physical Therapy
An Interdisciplinary Approach to Elder Care in Nicaragua

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Introduction
University traveled to Nicaragua to work with underserved elders living in a group home. The trip extended from late December 2007 through early January 2008.

Assess activities of daily living (ADLs)
Assess oral health status
Educate patients and caregivers

Purposes
• Create a sustainable improvement in the well being of underserved elders living in a group home environment
• Begin plans for building a rehabilitation center
• Provide an interdisciplinary opportunity for health professions students and faculty to work together to provide health services
• Develop an appreciation for the role of other health professions in providing comprehensive patient care and referrals

Our interdisciplinary team included one faculty member and two and poverty
physical therapy.

Future Plans
• Establishing contacts within Nicaragua
• Expand services provided to residents and provide services at additional locations
• Making travel arrangements including air, ground, hotel and meals
• Coordinating fundraising and solicitation of medical supplies
• Arranging for translation services
• Developing financial infrastructure to support student and faculty travel, as well as purchase of supplies

The Jessie F. Richardson Foundation is a charitable foundation that is committed to enhancing the efficacy and impact of the world’s response to the global aging crisis. They support programs to improve living conditions for indigent elders in the U.S. and internationally.

Student Feedback
“After working closely with the other programs, I learned that patient assessments start as soon as the patient and moving in and out of a chair. I used to view these as basic everyday activities but now realize that these are just a few assessments that occupational and physical therapy perform to evaluate patients and ultimately work with them to improve their quality of life.”

Jessie F Richardson

“I have built relationships and an understanding of other disciplines that will greatly contribute to my patient’s oral health and their overall health and well being.”

The Jessie F. Richardson Foundation is supported by the Jessie F. Richardson Trust, and the Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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At the time of our visit La Providencia had 46 residents (24 males and 22 females). The residents range in age from 60 to 90 years old. Hogares are funded primarily through donations.