The Nursing Systems Department at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Nursing is offering a one semester, 2 hour credit fellowship for 3rd Semester (S1) Pacesetter nursing students. At the end of the semester, nursing students will be able to demonstrate delivery of competent care for People with Disabilities.

The purpose of this fellowship is to prepare and train nursing students to function in clinically competent capacity when encountering an individual with a disability, across the life span whether the disability is static or progressive. Additionally, the nurse fellow will expand his/her knowledge by applying health promotion and prevention principles to this vulnerable population. Areas of focus will include the following:

- Clinical innovation: advancing clinical approaches and methodologies using processes, products or procedure to benefit the health of this population
- Improving health outcomes and reducing health disparities through health promotion and disease prevention
- Utilizing evidenced based research to provide individualized care that incorporates the PWD’s circle of support, care givers paid and unpaid and interdisciplinary health care team

The 2 hour fellowship is comprised of 90 clinical hours and enrichment activities. The fellow will rotate through primary, secondary, tertiary and community care sites while working with interdisciplinary professionals and participating in multidisciplinary rounds.

Fellows will participate in weekly conference activities and will be responsible for presenting clinical case studies during debriefing conferences.

**Program Coordinator:** Allison P. Edwards, DrPH, MS, RN, CNE
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**Length of Program:**
One semester during S1, 3rd semester Pacesetter
2 hour Credit: Independent Study
90 Clinical Hours

**Eligibility:**
3.5 GPA
J2 at time of application
No withdrawals
Full time student
Participation in a panel interview
**Number of positions:** Five positions awarded $2,500 each Fall and Spring Semester

**How to Apply:** Available online at: [https://nursing.uth.edu/currstudent/cocurricular/index.htm](https://nursing.uth.edu/currstudent/cocurricular/index.htm)

**Required Texts:** Nies/McEwen: *Community Public Health Nursing*, 7th edition  

**AIMS/OBJECTIVES/COMPETENCIES**

Historically, people with disabilities have been marginalized and in the health care system are underserved in both routine clinical and preventative services, health promotion and wellness initiatives. Further, this population is prevented from accessing health care due to structural or communication related barriers. Attitudes, inaccurate and inadequate knowledge and limited skills in diagnosing, treating and providing ongoing care to People with Disabilities (PWD) impact not only their health outcomes, but contribute to the disparities experienced.

**Fellowship AIMS**

Objective: Competency based education that will enhance the quality of care of people with disabilities and contribute to elimination of the disparities.

**Domain I Attitudes**

Attitudes: basic disability awareness and survey of attitudes prior to and following fellowship participation.

**Domain II Knowledge**

Knowledge; Disabilities that span the entire life span

I. Recognize the historical context of PWD including the impact on:
   1.1 public education  
   1.2 independent living  
   1.3 self advocacy  
   1.4 reproduction  
   1.5 terminology describing PWD

II. Describe 3 models of disability: Biopsychosocial, Medical, Integrative

III. Avoid assumptions regarding abilities, quality of life and participation

IV. Understand socioeconomic factors insurance, finances, support systems necessary to provide effective clinical care

V. Apply ADA principles pertaining to communication, access and documentation requirements with PWD

VI. Recognize systems useful for PWD outside of the clinical care system and implement referrals as relevant to improved outcomes.

VII. Recognize PWD as important source of information.

VIII. Identify the PWD circle of support

IX. Recognize potential types of abuse with PWD including sexual, physical and financial
Domain III Skills

Skills: Specific training on select disabilities including:

1. Modify communications strategies as it pertains to the PWD
2. Demonstrate skills in teamwork including paid and unpaid care providers, including flexibility, adaptability, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, evidence based practice and mutual goal setting.
3. Describe/Assess common functional limitations—mobility, sensory, cognitive, behavioral associated with specific disabilities
4. Assess and collect information re: physical health of PWD
5. Perform a physical assessment of PWD with modifications for mobility, sensory, cognitive and behavioral issues associated with their disability.
6. Appraise disability as static or progressive
7. Identify common problems associated with primary diagnosis
8. Anticipate conditions common to progressive disabilities
9. Anticipate secondary conditions likely to occur with static disabilities.
10. Recognize PWD with concurrent mental health conditions
11. Interpret relevant information and needs pertaining to clinical preventive services
12. Address age appropriate reproductive health and sexuality
13. Support needs of PWD during times of transition, living settings or health providers
14. Provide appropriate care and support addressing lifecycle milestones of PWD addressing specific challenges