

The Geriatric Experience

Curriculum Overview

Designed for:

- High school students
- Post-secondary courses in health care
- Certified Nursing Assistant training courses
- In-service training for nursing home facilities
- Public health organizations
- Community education

Length:

This 13-hour curriculum is comprised of 9 lessons.

Goal:

To help participants learn about the many physical challenges of aging and develop a sense of empathy and sensitivity towards the geriatric population.

Synopsis:

Designed for use with the RealCare® Geriatric Simulator, this curriculum presents documented information about aging and provides activities and discussions designed to educate participants about the many life-changing consequences of aging. The RealCare Geriatric Simulator is a complete weighted garment that allows both male and female wearers to experience many of the effects of aging. As a hands-on teaching aid, the sensitivity suit and curriculum can be used not only to educate but help increase empathy and understanding in our interactions with older adults. Participants will discover for themselves the many difficult physical, cognitive, emotional and social challenges that older adults feel as they age. This realism will shatter their stereotypical understanding of older adults and foster a shared understanding as they “walk in the shoes” of an older adult. This learning experience is especially effective because it is tangible.

Designed, developed and reviewed by experienced curriculum specialists and subject matter experts, this curriculum includes pre- and post-summative assessments. The lessons and activities include objectives, materials required and approximate class time. Supplemental activities are also suggested.

Soft Skills Addressed:

- Define geriatrics and gerontology and explore related careers
- Identify and experience six different age-related visual impairments
- Learn the top ten signs of aging and ways to slow the decline in mobility
- Understand the impact of aging on bones and joints
- Identify potential causes of hearing loss and signs of age-related hearing loss
- Understand the difference between dementia and old age, and which cognitive processes are impacted
- Experience first-hand the physical, emotional, social and intellectual impact of aging
- Identify specific ways to lead a longer and healthier life

Curriculum Components:

- Teacher's guide - complete lessons, including detailed steps of activities, time and materials needed, participant handouts and instructor information for each lesson
- Microsoft PowerPoint presentation slides
- Pre and Post-Assessment

Learning Objectives:

Lesson 1 – Exploring Geriatrics and Gerontology

- Define geriatrics and gerontology
- Identify several professions in the healthcare field related to geriatrics and gerontology
- Consider if any of the occupations covered in class are appropriate for them

Lesson 2 – Visual Impairment

- Define and recognize a series of common age-related visual impairments and conditions
- Experience a series of age-related visual impairments and conditions
- Increase sensitivity to the feelings engendered when vision is impaired and independence may be compromised

Lesson 3 – Declining Mobility Due to Aging

- Understand how the aging process impacts mobility
- Experience declining mobility in a simulation exercise
- Have increased sensitivity as to how a decline in mobility can impact older adults physically, socially, cognitively, and emotionally
- Learn ways to slow down the decline of mobility

Lesson 4 – Impact of Aging on Bones and Joints

- Understand how the aging process impacts flexibility and range of motion
- Experience decreased range of motion and flexibility in a simulation exercise
- Have increased sensitivity as to how a decreased range of motion and flexibility can impact older adults
- Learn ways to slow down stiffness and decreased range of motion

Lesson 5 – Hearing Loss

- Experience age-related hearing loss
- Increase sensitivity to the feelings engendered when hearing is impaired and independence may be compromised

Lesson 6 – Cognitive Changes With Aging

- Experience cognitive changes due to aging
- Understand the difference between dementia and old age
- Increase sensitivity to the confusion and agitation engendered when cognitive abilities are impaired

Lesson 7 – The Geriatric Experience

- Experience physical changes due to aging
- Understand what it means to be empathetic
- Increase empathy and understanding of what it is like to age and the impact it has on daily life

Lesson 8 – Amazing Aging

- Understand that not everyone ages the same way
- Understand that aging adults can do amazing things later in life
- Learn about the achievements of some amazing older adults
- Identify tips for leading a longer, healthier life

Lesson 9 – Post-Summative Assessment

- Assess their understanding of information presented throughout the course