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Practicum Site:
Community Health Improvement Team
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Practicum Site Supervisor:
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the complicated and interdisciplinary nature of health, and to gain practical experience collecting primary data.

Outcome: The outcome of this assessment is to determine the highest priority needs and develop an implementation plan to be adapted by Vanderbilt University Medical Center. This information will be displayed and available for public access in 2019 on Vanderbilt University Medical Center's website and by request.

An Examination of Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Community Health Needs

Project Purpose: I completed my practicum at the Institute of Medicine and Public Health (IMPH) at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. IMPH works to create a bridge between research and teaching through policy and with practical applications. Within IMPH, the Vanderbilt Community Engagement Core focuses on improving the health of communities that Vanderbilt University Medical Center serves through engagement, outreach, and a focus on specific needs of the community. In addition to various community engagement and evaluation projects, the Community Health Improvement Team is responsible for compiling the Community Health Needs Assessments, which must be completed by all non-profit hospitals in order to maintain their tax-exempt status. This assessment was mandated as tax law and was passed as part of the 2010 Affordable Care Act.

Structure of project: In collaboration with Saint Thomas Medical Center, Davidson, Rutherford, and Williamson County Health Departments, along with other community groups and leaders, I gathered information to determine the highest priority needs of the communities served. This information was gathered through collection of secondary data, collection of primary data (interviews, focus groups, surveys), and systematic reviews of recent literature focusing on health outcomes, factors, and resources.

Objectives: My objectives for this practicum experience were to engage with community leaders and people from different backgrounds, use skills learned from didactic experiences to explore