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The VA has invested in developing the skills of its primary care workforce through the longitudinal Geriatric Scholars Program. The program consists of core components --- intensive course in geriatrics, intensive workshop in quality improvement (QI) and initiation of a micro QI projects in the Scholar's clinic; electives allow learners to tailor the program to self-identified gaps in knowledge, skills and competencies. The program has demonstrated direct impacts of continuing education through a workforce development process that enhances skills and competencies at a pace and selection that meets clinicians' self-identified gaps in training. Now in its 11th year, the program has been shown to increase career satisfaction and job retention, standardize provider behaviors, improve clinical decision-making and reduce dispensing of potentially inappropriate medications. This symposium further explores the impact of the program on individual clinicians and on clinical teams.

#### AN EVALUATION OF THE VA RURAL INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM TRAINING PROGRAM: OUTCOMES AND IMPLICATIONS

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The rural interdisciplinary team training (RITT) program has provided in-person training for almost 2000 VA providers and staff at 125 rural clinics since 2011. The multi-modal workshop, accredited for 6.5 hours for a number of disciplines, focuses on the recognition of common issues facing older Veterans, red flags prompting further assessment, how to administer screening instruments and team-based approaches for improving patient outcomes. Participants develop an improvement action plan improvement project based on common challenges faced by clinic patients. A program evaluation found an increase in geriatrics knowledge and a modest improvement in teamwork after the education program. It also found that participants self-identified an enhanced ability on average to use red flags after the 6.5 hour training in areas such as polypharmacy, falls and caregiver stress. The action plans were often not implemented at follow-up. The evaluation results will be discussed, as well as challenges, limitations, and implications.

#### THE EFFECT OF GEROPSYCHOLOGY TRAINING ON JOB EFFECTIVENESS AMONG VA PSYCHOLOGISTS

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Providing training to assist employees with excelling in their job role may increase their job effectiveness, which then translates to improvements in an organizations' performance measures. In 2018, the Geriatric Scholars Psychology Program measured whether a multi-day course influenced the Psychologists' perceived job effectiveness using modified questions from Godat and Brigham's Reaction Measure. Ninety-two percent agreed the training assisted them with identifying and overcoming obstacles; helped them set goals to increase problem solving at their designated facilities; boosted their confidence in fulfilling their job duties; and the training should be made available to other employees who provide care to older Veterans on a regular basis. Findings from the 3-month follow-up assessment demonstrated that the positive effect on job effectiveness was sustained. Discussion will explore aspects of the course that may be key in improving perceived effectiveness and consider novel approaches to enhance this outcome.

#### SPREAD OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN A GERIATRICS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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This project characterizes spread of quality improvement (QI) projects initiated in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Geriatric Scholars Program (GSP) workforce development program. This mixed methods study analyzes a recent cross-sectional survey of GSP participants and program-level data on participant characteristics and QI project topics. We surveyed 578 scholars who had completed all program requirements to that point, and still worked for VA; 207 (35%) responded. The majority of respondents who had been in the program for at least six months (70%) reported sustainment of their QI project beyond initial implementation and nearly a third (30.4%) reported any spread beyond their own care team. QI project topics spanned many domains and percent of projects reporting spread varied across domains from 0% to 67%. A workforce development capstone activity in which participants demonstrate substantive