

Presenters



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(she/her)
Health Equity and
Community Access
Supervisor



Vanessa Rose, (she/her)

Executive Assistant, Chief
Medical Officer Team

Project Lead, Hair Care
Equity Project



University of Vermont Medical Center

Land and Labor Acknowledgement

The UVM Health Network acknowledges that we live and work in Wôbanakik (Woe-bun-ah-kick) the historical and current homeland of the Abenaki peoples and Kanièn:ke (gah nyon gay), the historical and current homeland of the Mohawk peoples. We recognize the long history of genocide and land theft used to create what we now know as the State of Vermont and the State of New York, as part of the United States of America. We commit to our shared role in land stewardship and seeking the voices and needs of indigenous peoples.

The UVM Health Network acknowledges the history of slavery and the rich contributions of African descendants for more than 400 years. We acknowledge the exploitation of labor for economic growth and our responsibility to address labor inequities that exist today.

We carry our ancestors in us and are continually called to do better. This acknowledgment is one of many essential steps towards our commitment to create an inclusive environment of care for our staff and community.





Acknowledge hair inequities and historical and sociocultural significance of hair care.

Highlight the impact of hair inequity on patients, patient families, and health care workers.

Objectives

Understand the steps to implementing a Hair Care Equity Project at an Academic Medical Center in a rural state.

Explain the importance of continuous quality improvement



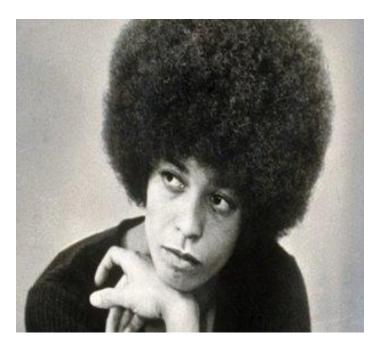


"As a Black African woman, my hair represents me. It represents my personality, how I choose to wear it, and how I choose to adorn it with jewels, beads, or colorful threads or extensions. My hair is me, if I lose the essence of my hair care, I lose a part of me.

That's why this project is so important to be able to bring something special to each and every Black and Brown patient to be included, seen, and cared for appropriately with the right products."

-UVMMC Patient and Test Participant

History and Cultural Significance







Survival

Symbolism

Discrimination

CROWN Act



Find Your Curl Type



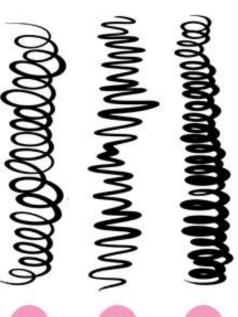
Type 2: Wavy Hair

Fine & Thin to Coarse & Frizzy



Type 3: Curly Hair

Loose Curls to Corkscrew Curls



4a



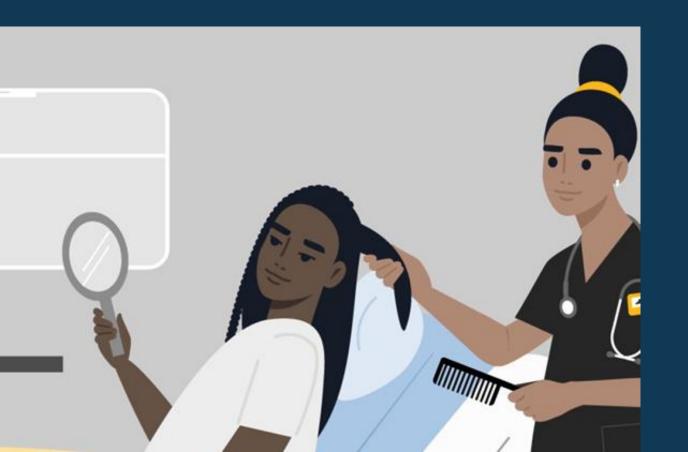


Type 4: Tightly Textured Hair

Tightly Coiled to Z-angled Coils



Hair Care is Health Care



"Hair care is an essential part of personal hygiene and has an important role in maintaining selfesteem and quality of life. Supporting patients to maintain hair care when they cannot do this themselves is a fundamental aspect of nursing care."

Lawton S, Shepherd E (2019) Procedure for washing patient's hair in bed. Nursing Times [online]; 115: 6, 60-62.

"Assisting patients with basic hygiene creates a personal connection between the healthcare provider and the patient and is vital to maintaining the patient's health.

Goldenhart AL, Nagy H. Assisting Patients With Personal Hygiene. [Updated 2022 Sep 26]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2025 Jan. . Available from:

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK563155/

"As a healthcare provider in an acute care setting, I see the direct impact on my patients when they do not have the care products that respect their diverse needs. The kinds of products we have accessible for patients to put on their bodies directly impacts how open, comfortable, and safe they feel in receiving our care and their ability to reach their careplan goals. For patients who do not have the option of their loved ones bringing them care products from home, I have assisted many with diverse hair types order olive oil from the Nutrition Department because that has been safer and kinder to their hair than the bulk products that have been available on UVMMC's shelves."

-UVMMC Employee, Specialty Surgery Unit





Hair Care Equity at UVM MC

Too many hospitals across the country and our area lack the tools and training to properly care for all hair types.



Vanessa Rose (she/her)
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Paule Newchurch (she/her)
Marissa Coleman PsyD, VP
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Kristin Fontaine (she/her)
Justin Graham (she/him)

Timeline

- 2022 Pediatric Nurse Manager learns about Nationwide Children's Hospital Hair Care Equity Project.
- After some challenges, Laura connects with the REACH Employee Resource Group who jumps at the opportunity to become involved.
- 2023 Community Health Improvement staff join to provide backbone support.
- Employee Committee is created.
- Funding through a statewide Equity Learning Collaborative provides grant funding.
- 2024 Superuser Trainings and Cornerstone online module launched, products stocked!
- Quality improvement initiatives
- 2025 launch Network-wide roll-out with training at first healthcare partner, Porter Medical Center.

Product Research

REACH Employee Resource
Group



TESTING PROCESS





SUPPLIER DIVERSITY: BIPOC and/or WOMEN OWNED BUSINESSES



RESULTS





"As a Black multiracial woman who has had more than one stay in the hospital, I know firsthand how it feels to receive know firsthand how it feels to receive overnight products that speak nothing to my needs. Not only are the products wasteful because I can't use the current offerings without damaging my hair, but they are another reminder of how systemic racism infiltrates the most random areas of life by ignoring the needs of entire populations. A person's hair symbolizes aspects of their identity, ancestry, freedom, resistance, creative expression, and so much more. As a patient and as a health care worker, I know these products and the hair care training will make it so those who enter our facilities are well cared for, as well as help them feel seen and dignified."

-Test Participant and Medical Technician



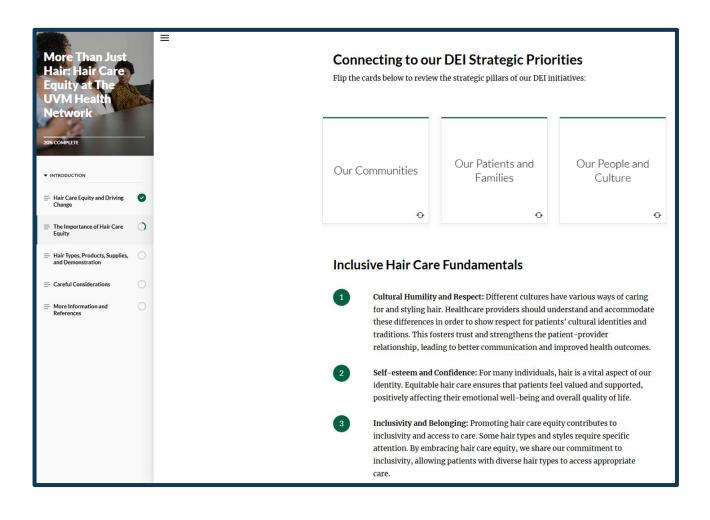


Training



- Cornerstone Module
- Training Video
- Super Users
- LNA Training Program

Cornerstone Online Learning Module



- Assigned to all clinical staff
- Designed based on Nationwide Children's Hospital
- 93% Completion rate



Hands on Training Opportunities

- Super User Model
 - 40 staff with representation from every unit attended in person training.
 - Provided input on the process to our team.
 - Serve as a resource to other staff
- LNA Training Program and Skills Days
- Nursing Skills Fair
- Practice Cart Coming Soon

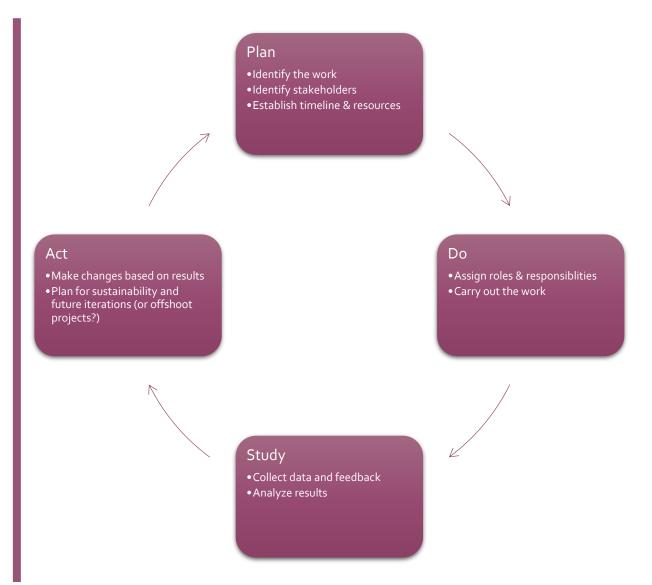
Results to Date

Product -	Usage 20 ↓↓
Brush (161974)	1079
SHAMPOO CLARIFYING 2OZ (160980)	910
CONDITIONER LEAVE-IN 2OZ (160978)	900
3-1 comb (161975)	661
CREAM STYLING COIL KINKS AND WAVES 20Z (160979)	614
CONDITIONER KIDS 20Z (160977)	558
Spray Bottle (161947)	507
Silk Bonnet (161976)	453

At least 600 Patients have received some or all of the products

Lessons Learned

- Employee and Community Member Compensation
- Ongoing buy-in as priorities shift and staff change
- Leadership Support
- Quality Improvement Continuous Improvement



What's Next?







Connecting to the Network Strategic Plan



Proactive Training Approaches



Continued reminder that this is patient care

Patient Story



Thank you!

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