

ACHIEVING CURRICULAR AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

*Impact of the
CSWE Geriatric Enrichment in Social Work Education Project*

ACHIEVING CURRICULAR AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

*Impact of the
CSWE Geriatric Enrichment in Social Work Education Project*

by

NANCY R. HOOYMAN

*Principal Investigator,
The Council on Social Work Education
GeroRich Project*



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Copyright © 2006 Council on Social Work Education

Book design by Kathleen Dyson

Photographs courtesy of Getty Images/PhotoDisc Volumes Mature Lifestyles 2

Dedication

The real credit for the success of GeroRich goes to the 67 GeroRich project directors, who were unwavering in their commitment to gerontological social work, their persistent and persuasive leadership, and their innovative problem-solving. Hearing their success stories with faculty, students, and practitioners always served to remind GeroRich staff of the importance and value of our own work. In the end, the GeroRich project directors are the ones who deserve the credit for increasing gerontology competencies and content in foundation courses—and the ones who made it all worthwhile.

NRH

Acknowledgments

Many people contributed to the success of the Geriatric Enrichment in Social Work Education (GeroRich) Project. Yet none of the GeroRich Project accomplishments would have been possible without the strategic vision and commitment of the John A. Hartford Foundation Trustees and Dr. Corinne H. Rieder, Executive Director and Treasurer. Critical and visible leadership was also provided by program officers at the Hartford Foundation, from project inception to completion. Laura Robbins, the Hartford Program Officer during the conceptualization and two years of planning and implementation of GeroRich, was unwavering in her confidence that our proposed model of curricular and organizational change would work. When Jim O’Sullivan assumed the role of the Hartford Program Officer for social work initiatives, he readily learned about the GeroRich process of planned change and attended numerous meetings to hear firsthand from GeroRich project directors about their accomplishments and challenges. And Rachael Watman, program officer from Hartford, provided invaluable support regarding evaluation. On behalf of the social work profession, I express deep gratitude and appreciation to The John A. Hartford Foundation Trustees and Officers for their generous support of the Hartford Geriatric Social Work Initiative and specifically the GeroRich Project.

The success of the overall GeroRich Project is due in large part to Suzanne St Peter, GeroRich Project Director, who enthusiastically attended to all the details of Project implementation and was exemplary in her responsiveness to innumerable questions from project directors. Numerous other staff assisted with the implementation and evaluation of GeroRich—Tim Brod, Michael Peck and David LaFazia, as doctoral student assistants, and Kath Wilham and Elise DeGooyer. And as noted in the dedication, the 67 GeroRich project directors deserve the most credit for the overall impact of the GeroRich Project on social work education.

The production of this monograph would not have been possible without the critical insights and extensive editorial assistance of Suzanne St Peter and Kath Wilham. I am deeply grateful for their thorough editing, document development, and careful attention to detail, despite myriad other demands on their time from their current responsibilities. Although not co-authors in the traditional sense of the word, they are equal and highly valued collaborators in the publication of this monograph.

Table of Contents

Preface	. . . . .	.xi
Executive Summary	. . . . .	.xiii
Chapter I	The Need . . . . .	.1
Chapter II	Rationale and Goals of the GeroRich Project . . . . .	.9
Chapter III	Background and Context . . . . .	.19
Chapter IV	The GeroRich Planned Change Model: <i>Identifying needs and planning for infusion</i> . . . . .	.33
Chapter V	The GeroRich Planned Change Model: <i>Implementation and sustainability</i> . . . . .	.57
Chapter VI	Lessons Learned . . . . .	.85
Chapter VII	Identification of Programmatic Factors Associated with Success . . . . .	.97
Chapter VIII	Impact of the GeroRich Project on Social Work Education . . .	.111
Chapter IX	Future Directions . . . . .	.123
References	. . . . .	.133
Appendices	. . . . .	.137

Preface

This monograph synthesizes data gathered and lessons learned from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Geriatric Enrichment in Social Work Education (GeroRich) Project, which was funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation from 2001 through 2006. The first three years of funding were devoted to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of curricular and organizational change initiatives among 67 social work programs across the country; each GeroRich project received \$60,000 across Years 1 and 2, with the third unfunded year focused on sustainability and evaluation. The last two years (2004-06) provided funds to the GeroRich Coordinating Team to gather additional outcome-based data to evaluate the Project outcomes and to enhance the sustainability of changes made by GeroRich projects. In addition, the Coordinating Team continued to create opportunities for GeroRich project directors to meet at national conferences so that they could build upon the peer problem-solving supportive networking that was a distinguishing characteristic of the overall Project.

For some readers of this monograph, the GeroRich Project will be familiar, particularly since there have been over 250 presentations at national and regional conferences over the past five years and approximately 63 publications, including 16 peer-review articles. Others may have heard about the Project, but not known about its goals, overall approach, and impact. And for yet others, just entering social work education, the Project's primary goal of gerontological infusion within courses and programs as a whole may be new. Regardless of your extent of knowledge of the GeroRich Project, this monograph will be useful to you in its synthesis of over five years of lessons learned about curricular and organizational change. In fact, the planned change model and the lessons learned are relevant to any program seeking to infuse new competencies and content into their curriculum and organizational structure, regardless of the area of need.

You will find here, in one comprehensive report, a synthesis of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered across five years, designed as a resource for faculty, academic administrators, curriculum decision-making bodies, and community practitioners/field supervisors, all of whom aim to prepare graduates to work effectively with older adults and their families, regardless of practice setting. The intent is to provide you, the reader, with guidelines adaptable to your situation, regardless of the extent to which issues of aging and older adults are embedded in your curriculum and program. This includes programs that are just beginning to think about how to meet the growing workforce needs for gerontologically competent graduates as well as those seeking to improve upon and sustain already infused

gerontological competencies, content, and teaching resources. This monograph incorporates strategies, lessons learned, and teaching resources that can facilitate and sustain ongoing curricular and organizational changes needed to meet the demographic imperative of the 21st century. As such, it also serves as the final report of the GeroRich Project to the Hartford Trustees.

Executive Summary

The GeroRich Project, funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation, 2001-06, provided \$60,000 to 67 BSW and MSW programs for two years of planning, implementation, and evaluation of strategies to infuse gerontological competencies and content into foundation curriculum and the organization as a whole. Both quantitative and qualitative data document Project outcomes and its impact on faculty, students, class and field curriculum, and programmatic structures.

This monograph begins with a brief review of the need for gerontological social workers, the goals and rationale of the Planned Change Model promoted by GeroRich, and the background and context in which the GeroRich Project was conceptualized, implemented, and evaluated, including the rationale for an infusion approach to “gerontologizing” curriculum. The primary phases of the Planned Change Model—planning, implementation, measurement, and sustainability—are presented in detail, since this model is the essence of the GeroRich Project. Particular attention is given to the value of a competency-based educational approach, a potential future direction for Educational Policy and Accreditation.

Although lessons learned are implicit throughout all chapters, those on lessons learned and factors associated with success explicitly provide guidelines for programs that aim to increase gerontological competencies and content in their curriculum and organizational culture. The monograph concludes with chapters that assess the overall impact of the GeroRich Project and point to future directions to build upon GeroRich successes and the gerontological capacity of social work education programs. The appendices include most of the documents used in planning, implementation, measurement, and sustainability phases.

Chapters are written to be useful as stand alone documents for faculty, academic administrators, students, and practitioners who want to focus on a particular aspect of the GeroRich Project relevant to their social work program. As a whole, the monograph provides a comprehensive review of a successful project that has profoundly influenced social work education—and will continue to do so in the future.

