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University of Southern Indiana (USI) GWEP

USI College of Nursing and Health Professions (CNHP), Center for Healthy Aging & Wellness

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Attachment 4: Updated Project Abstract

The University of Southern Indiana's (USI) College of Nursing and Health Professions (CNHP), in partnership with Deaconess Health System, three Deaconess primary care clinics and a family medicine residency program, two Indiana Area Agencies on Aging and two chapters of the Alzheimer's Association, is implementing a Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) with the goal of improving the healthcare and health outcomes of older adults in southwestern Indiana. The USI GWEP serves a 12-county region of Indiana, of which 11 counties are federally designated Health Professions Shortage Areas; 10 are designated as entirely rural or containing significant rural areas; and nine are designated as entirely medically underserved, with a 10th containing medically underserved areas.

The USI GWEP is transforming the healthcare of older adult patients by maximizing patient and family engagement in healthcare; preparing health professions to serve older adults in primary care settings; increasing community-based access to evidence-based health programming; and leveraging supportive services in communities to address the non-medical factors impacting patient health. The USI GWEP's aims to: 1) Establish reciprocal, innovative, cross-sector partnerships between academia, primary care sites, health systems, Area Agencies on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association with the shared goal of improving health outcomes for older adults; 2) Train primary care providers, area health professionals, health professions students, residents, fellows, and faculty to address the primary care needs of older adults; 3) Assist primary care partners in transforming the care provided to older adults by focusing on best practices pertaining to the 4Ms: *What Matters, Medication, Mentation, and Mobility*; 4) Increase access to community-based programs that provide older adult community members and patients, caregivers and direct care workers with the knowledge and skills to improve health outcomes for older adults; 5) Provide training to persons living with dementia, caregivers, direct care workers, health care providers, health professions students, residents and faculty on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ARD) while creating dementia-friendly communities.

Four pillars underpin the USI GWEP approach. First, the USI GWEP connects primary care and social service sectors to improve health outcomes for elders by embedding Area Agency on Aging (AAA) case managers in primary care clinics. The USI GWEP seeks to transform the health system by operationalizing the model, seeding age friendly provider champions, and demonstrating contributions to age friendly healthcare practice. Second, the USI GWEP has established an Interprofessional Geriatric Assessment Clinic to prepare primary care residents and health professions students to provide comprehensive, quality care to older patients with complex physical and psycho-social health conditions. Third, the USI GWEP has developed the Minka Learning Laboratory for Living Well to support innovative health professions research, education and training in a smart home environment designed to support aging-in-place. Fourth, the GWEP incorporates gerontology into university and health professions curriculum through the addition of new curricula and resources, courses, academic degrees and concentrations, and certificate programs that meet state requirements and prepare students for licensure boards at federal and state levels; collaboration with nursing and social work programs to increase student internships, capstone projects and clinical experiences in geriatric care; and growing the clinical preceptor pool available in southwestern Indiana. Significant investments also have been made in the capacity of AAAs to deliver evidence based programs that benefit older adult health.