

# Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences

## 2015-16 Student Proposal Cover Page

### Applicant Information

Applicant name:	Rusudan Kilaberia	Email: kilab002@umn.edu
Project title:	The role of diversity in team functioning in a long-term care setting	
Department:	Social Work	College: CEHD
Degree program:	Social Work	Faculty advisor name & email: Ronald Rooney rrooney@umn.edu <input type="checkbox"/> NA
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How did you hear about this funding opportunity?

Consortium e-mail    The Brief    Advisor    Dept. email/newsletter    Consortium website    Other

### Funding

Total amount of funding requested:	<b>\$7000</b>
Executive summary (maximum 200 words)	

This dissertation project aims to study health and social care delivery in a team type environment at a large, urban senior housing complex. Team-based care is a sought model of care in current health care systems. Such teams are known as interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary, interprofessional, integrated, etc. The longer human lifespan, prolonged management of chronic illnesses, growth of the aging population, and soaring healthcare costs promoted teams as alternative models of care delivery. In comparison to standard care, team-based care is thought to be better equipped to provide multi-faceted care in a cohesive and patient-centered way that can also help contain healthcare costs. However, there are questions about the effectiveness of such teams in terms of quality of care, patients' quality of life, cost effectiveness, and the general functioning of such teams. This study focuses on professional and demographic diversity in teams, and the role of diversity in team interdependence, distress, and commitment. Funds are sought for stipend, supplies and services, and equipment.

### Approvals

*Check all appropriate approvals required for your proposal. Approvals must be obtained prior to receipt of funding. If you have applied for approval but have not yet received it, indicate that below.*

IRB  Yes    No    Application pending

NA

Other  Yes    No    Application pending   Specify:

NA

### Checklist—for reviewer use

- The proposal is 1000 words or less excluding budget, biographies, references and citations.
- The proposal includes a work plan with a specific timeline using months or quarters to identify work to be done and completion dates.
- The proposal includes a 1-2 paragraph biography of the applicant and all co-investigators.
- The budget form is complete including the funds sought for this project, other pending applications for this project, and the amount/source of matching or other funds.
- The applicant's faculty advisor is copied on the application email. Professional students w/o advisors check NA.
- All necessary approvals are pending or received.

## **The project's nature and importance**

This dissertation project aims to study health and social care delivery in a team type environment at a large, urban senior housing complex that combines multiple levels of care. Team-based care is a sought model of care in current health care systems. The longer human lifespan, prolonged management of chronic illnesses, growth of the aging population, and soaring healthcare costs promoted teams as alternative models of care delivery. In comparison to standard care, team-based care is thought to be better equipped to provide multi-faceted care in a wholistic way that can also help contain healthcare costs (Brumley et al., 2007; Kane, McCarthy, and Shamliyan, 2011).

Such teams are known as interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary, integrated, etc. The extant literature has posed various questions with regard to the effectiveness of such teams in terms of quality of care, patients' quality of life, cost effectiveness, and the general functioning of such teams. Two general views prevail: (1) that the team model of care is superior to non-team care because it contributes diverse viewpoints of participating professionals and thus can deliver innovative and cohesive care; (2) that the team model of care is constrained by its diversity because teams are taxed with having to negotiate and reconcile multiple and diverging viewpoints, status differences, and power differentials (Carton & Cummings, 2012; Mannix & Neale, 2005; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007).

Formation of sub-groups and faultlines is likely in team environments. Knowledge-based, identity-based, and resource-based subgroups can emerge based on group member positionality (Carton & Cummings, 2012). Likewise, faultlines or dividing lines can materialize based on divisions stemming from age, gender, race, and alignments of other demographic and organizational variables (Lau & Murnighan, 1998; Lau and Murnighan, 2005). Whereas sub-groups and faultlines can promote psychological safety of group members because they can maintain within-group cohesion, they can constrain team functioning in general (Edmondson, 1999).

The following interrelated factors underlie the importance of studying health and social care delivery in a team environment. First, team studies to date have produced heterogeneous results with regard to team functioning. This is in large part due to the differences in teams, and differences in settings in which teams operate, which complicates their meaningful comparisons. This has pointed out the importance of studying contexts in which teams operate (Hall et al., 2011; Ke et al., 2013; Lemieux-Charles & McGuire, 2006; Lorenz, 2008; Shepperd, Wee, & Straus, 2012; Zimmerman et al., 2008). Second, where both health and social care professionals are involved, the health paradigm prevails as interstitial human service professions, such as social work, for example, lag in their embeddedness in the medical realm (Abbott, 1988, 1995; Wenocur & Reisch, 2001). Third, the extant literature points out interprofessional distress among team members that deters teamwork and can lead to underperformance (Clark, Cott, & Drinka, 2007; Compton & Galaway, 1999).

With this in mind, this dissertation study combines fieldwork, interviews, and observation methods, and draws on qualitative ethnographic design. In particular, the dissertation study focuses on the role of diversity in team functioning in three specific areas: (1) what role diversity factors play in how team members are interdependent with one another; (2) what diversity factors contribute to team conflict; (3) how individual team members commit to functioning as a group. The dissertation study pursues a three-article format, and, accordingly, poses these questions for each article as described above. To date, 44 interviews have been conducted, and 62 team meetings observed. In addition, the study is informed by the immersion method whereby the principal investigator lived in the senior housing setting for more than 4 years. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Minnesota approved the request to conduct this dissertation study.

## How this research represents an innovative contribution to interdisciplinary work on health

This dissertation study combines perspectives from healthcare, social services, and organizational diversity literatures. Thus, it adds knowledge both in disciplinary and interdisciplinary realms. In addition, the study setting is a senior housing complex with multiple levels of care such as independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing care, providing services such as memory care, short-term rehabilitative care, palliative, and hospice care. The combination and intersections of care levels, services, patient populations and care professional populations provide a unique opportunity in which to study teams composed of diverse professionals that aim to provide health, social, and spiritual care across and within care levels, service types, and senior populations. The combination of the manifold theoretical literatures, the complex care setting, and multiple qualitative methodologies enable adding both research and practice knowledge to the topic of team functioning.

Provided below in table 1 is the project timeline.

Table 1: Timeline plan for project completion from February 2016 through May 2017

	February- March 2016	April-May 2016	June 2016	July-August 2016	Sept-Dec 2016	January-Apr 2017	May 2017
Data collection	X						
Data processing (transcription of interview and observational data)		X	X	X			
Data management			X	X			
Analysis (coding, etc.)				X	X	X	
Writing					X	X	
Member checking					X	X	
Dissertation defense							X

## Biography

Rusudan Kilaberia, M.S.W., is a doctoral candidate at the University of Minnesota School of Social Work, where she also completed her master's degree with a concentration in human services management. Rusudan has a minor in gerontology. She is interested in gerontological social work, and has lived alongside older adults at a senior housing campus that combines multiple levels of care. Rusudan is currently studying the role of professional diversity in social and health services delivery in a team environment. Her previous work includes projects related to long-term care, older immigrants, and elder financial exploitation. Rusudan is currently working with her dissertation committee.

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