

Expanding Knowledge About Diabetes Among the Local Hispanic Community



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Introduction

•The 2010-2011 Presidential Scholars Program selected community health awareness as its topic for the year. Our group focus was “Cultural Contexts” and, through communication with numerous community contacts, a need was recognized within the Hispanic community.

•According to the US Census Bureau’s 2009 population estimates, approximately 15,000 people of Hispanic or Latino descent live in Charleston county. After discussions with several clinics, including the Seacoast Dream Center, as well as MUSC’s Hispanic Health Alliance, a need for Spanish health-related educational materials was continually noted.

•Our group focus was Type II Diabetes Mellitus. Our goal was to provide information on the disease state, appropriate diet and lifestyle changes, as well as produce a list of local clinics available at no cost to patients.

•Diabetes is noted as a growing epidemic for Hispanics. The American Diabetes Association states that about 11.8% of Hispanic Americans are living with diabetes and they are at a 1.9 times greater risk of developing diabetes than non-Hispanic whites of a similar age.

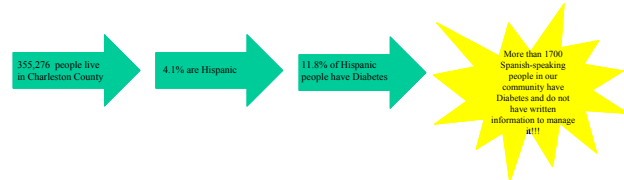


Figure 1: Schematic depicting the thought process that led us in the decision to make diabetes posters in Spanish

Methods

- Brainstormed how cultural beliefs and health literacy can influence successful treatment and prevention of chronic illness – particularly Diabetes in the Hispanic population of Charleston.
- Site meeting with the Dream Center in North Charleston to discuss the needs of the Hispanic population
- Dr. Bartoccini’s main concern was the lack of knowledge about complicating factors that result from Diabetes
 - Charged with educating patients on maintenance, prevention, and treatment
 - Noticed a lack in the availability of educational materials in Spanish
 - Questioned if these materials were written in a patient-friendly manner and no higher than a 5th grade reading level
- Used Descriptive statistics to analyze data and eliminate the need for IRB approval

ACTIONS TAKEN

- Created posters and pamphlets about Diabetes in Spanish
 - Diabetic foot care
 - Diabetes and Exercise
 - Managing Diabetes (A1c, BP, etc)
 - Diabetes and Healthy eating habits
 - Places where people without insurance can receive care
- Decided on 7 different locations that have a significant Hispanic clientele in order to distribute our materials
 - CARES Clinic
 - Dream Center Clinic
 - Barrier Island Free Clinic
 - Sea Island Comprehensive Healthcare
 - James Island Baptist Church Hispanic Ministry
 - New Covenant Church of God on Ashley Phosphate
 - Midland Park Ministry Center
- Assessed locations on:
 - The estimated percentage of Hispanic patrons
 - The amount of health educational materials (any language) in the waiting and exam rooms
 - Types of educational materials (brochure, poster, magazine, etc.)
 - What did the educational materials address
 - The amount/type of educational materials in Spanish visible and able to take away in the waiting and exam room
 - The amount of Spanish educational materials about Diabetes

Results

We attempted to contact and evaluate several local clinics and churches serving the Hispanic Community. In the end, we were only able to evaluate four clinics including the CARES clinic, the Franklin C Fetter Sea Island Clinic, the Barrier Island Free Clinic, and the Dream Center Clinic. We found that these locations overall had lower levels of Spanish language materials (Figure 2). The clinics on John’s Island had the most availability of Spanish language material. However, even locations serving a sizeable percentage of Hispanic patients had few or no Spanish language materials available (Figure 3). Furthermore, we found that available Spanish language materials focusing on diabetes and healthy living catered to high literacy levels and lacked Hispanic cultural appeal.

Availability of English and Spanish Health Information Materials at Local Clinics

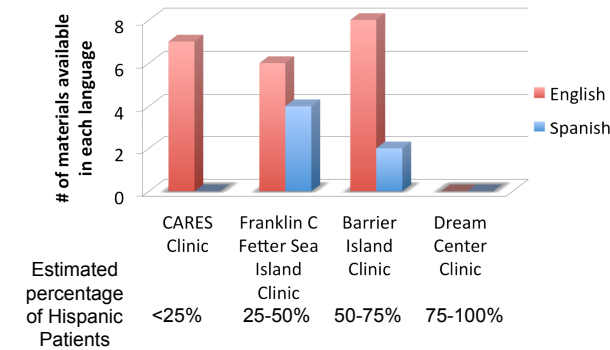


Figure 2: Availability of English and Spanish language health information at local clinics serving the Hispanic community and the estimated percentage of Hispanic patients treated at each location.

Availability of Spanish vs. English Language Materials about Diabetes

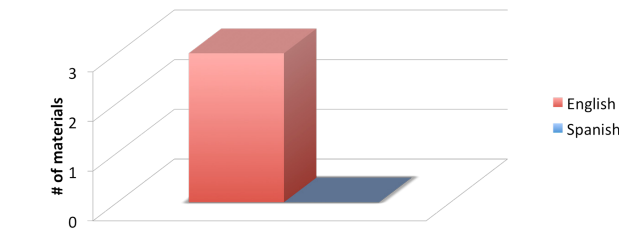


Figure 3: Availability of English and Spanish language health information about diabetes in all of the locations we evaluated.

We also evaluated the availability of Spanish language materials available through local church ministries that serve the Hispanic Community and found that none had any materials about diabetes or healthy living to distribute to their Hispanic patrons.

After evaluating each location, we distributed the posters and pamphlets we designed. The staff at these locations were overall very enthusiastic about receiving these materials and in several cases requested more materials. It is clear from our interactions with these community partners that there is a significant need for Spanish language materials that allow Hispanic patients to be informed about maintaining a healthy lifestyle and preventing the onset and complications of diabetes.

Our Spanish Language Posters and Pamphlets



Discussion

Distribution of our Spanish information on diabetes greatly increased the availability of such materials to the Hispanic population. We believe that this intervention will significantly increase Charleston area patients’ understanding of the disease state, disease management, and potential complications. Our goal was to educate and empower our target demographic to make healthier diet and lifestyle choices. By also providing information on the local clinics catering to the uninsured we improved communication between our various community partners and their patients, which was our ultimate goal.

The inter-professional nature of our group was especially helpful in achieving our goals. The professions involved in health care delivery, such as Dental, Health Professions, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy, helped us understand the importance and nuances of patient – healthcare worker relationships, especially regarding the barriers in health education. The Law professionals helped understand the barriers to health for the uninsured. The Graduate students helped in the design of the study and analysis of the data obtained. Thus, having many different perspectives allowed for a very well rounded project that addressed all issues.

Future Presidential Scholars groups can evaluate the long term impact and effectiveness of these interventions. Also, with an anticipated growth in the local Hispanic population, future groups can explore additional community partner opportunities to expand the distribution of culturally appropriate healthcare education materials.

References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- US Census Bureau
- American Diabetes Association (Diabetes.org)

Acknowledgements

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