LESSONS LEARNED: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF A THEATER-BASED COLORECTAL AND CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING AND AWARENESS PROGRAM

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I, or an immediate family member, including spouse or partner, have NO financial relationship(s) relevant to the content of this educational activity.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Become aware of Forum Theatre, a novel method for cancer education and screening
- Know what strategies within this method can be most beneficial

BACKGROUND

- Racial/ethnic disparities in colorectal (CRC) and cervical (CxC) cancer exist in:
  - Screening
  - Incidence
  - Mortality
Forum theatre (FT) was developed by Augusto Boal
Interactive and participatory in nature
Community-based

- Our purpose was to use FT as a way to increase awareness and screening of CRC and CxC
- Catchment area: Harris County (Houston, Texas)
- GIS mapping was used to determine zip codes with highest incidence
Community health workers (CHWs) used to reach the African American, Hispanic and Vietnamese communities

Community members were trained as actors and formed three separate acting troupes: African American, Hispanic and Vietnamese

Story plots were developed from community members’ discussions

Plays were performed in English, Spanish and Vietnamese

Post-play surveys distributed

CRC and CxC knowledge questions

Pre and post-play screening intent questions

Open-ended comments and suggestions question
DESCRIPTION

- 57 plays held between September 2011 and July 2013
- 1,471 total attendance; 1,041 surveys (70.7%).
  - By troupe: African American (31.7%), Hispanic (29.7%), Vietnamese (38.6%)
  - 450 of 1,041 surveys (43.2%) completed the open-ended section
- A content analysis framework was used to identify salient themes within these responses. Participant observation methods also used.

EVALUATION

- Three major themes emerged:
  1) High value of plays' educational aspect
  2) Recognition of importance of the messages
  3) Interest in further action
     - Future plays
     - Screenings
EVALUATION- THEME ONE

- High value in educational impact of the plays
  - Attendees recognized usefulness of theatre
    - "This type of theater is very important for us to be well and healthy."
      - Hispanic female
    - "The presentation was a very good way to alert others that might not have proper knowledge of colon cancer."
      - African American female

EVALUATION- THEME TWO

- Recognition of importance of play content
  - Cancer prevention was recognized as important
    - "After we saw these two performances, I understand the importance of our health. I will let my friends know. I really appreciate this program."
      - Vietnamese female
    - "Great educational tool. Much needed. Can prevent premature deaths."
      - African American male
EVALUATION- THEME THREE

- Great interest in further action in form of screening or additional plays

“We need to do more outreach in this type of performances more because they’re really good for the community.”
-African American male

“Please show these performances more for the Vietnamese community so the people can know about the danger of these diseases.”
-Vietnamese female

EVALUATION- THEME THREE

- Based on observations by project staff:
  - Inquiries for immediate screening and testing
  - Expressed informally post-play
  - Project collaborators provided information on eligibility to obtain services
Facilitator training ensuring that FT philosophy and methodology is followed is crucial.

Cultural considerations should be taken seriously as each group has different needs.

FT can be a useful tool for educating and reaching underserved minority groups.

**SOURCES**


- National Cancer Institute, SEER data: Cancer Statistics Review 1975-2011

- American Cancer Society Colorectal Cancer Facts and Figures, 2011-2013
THANK YOU

- For more information, please visit:

  bcm.edu/cancercenter/cncp