



A Dialogue: Unfurling Issues Surrounding African American Women and Breast Cancer

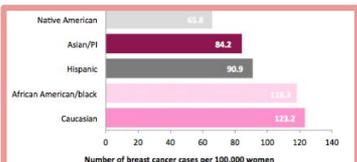
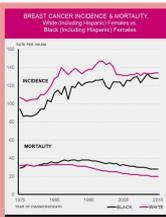
Premeds Advocates Facing the Varying Degrees of Health Disparities in Underserved Black Communities

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Background

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women. Breast cancer is the 2nd leading cause of cancer death among women. However, African-American women are more likely to die from it. The mortality rate is 40% higher in African-American women than in white women. Why? African-American women are more likely than white women to get Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC), the most aggressive form in breast cancer. TNBC means that is often resistant to chemotherapy and cannot be treated with hormone therapies or HER2 targeted therapies, because they are ER-negative, PR-negative, and HER2-negative. About 5–10 percent of breast cancer cases in the U.S. are due to inherited gene mutations. BRCA1/2 are the most common genes linked to breast cancer risk. BRCA1/2 mutations are rare in the general population. Most people with breast cancer who have a BRCA1/2 mutation are diagnosed at a younger age and have more aggressive Tumors. African-American breast cancer patients who have had genetic testing are more likely to have BRCA1/2 mutations compared to other populations. Because of this African-Americans are more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer at an earlier age. Alongside the differences in tumor biology and genomics, African-American women face other barriers. Many socioeconomic factors and gaps in appropriate care play a role in widening the gap of health disparities. We are aware of this information but, we are searching for ways to tackle system change, appropriate follow-up or delays in diagnosis, treatment plans, insurance and cultural competency.



TheSusanG.KomenBreastCancerFoundation

Project Description

Goals: The aim of this project was to spread awareness and provide strategies to combat the high mortality rate of African American women with breast cancer in the Bay Area through education.

Target Population: African-American Women ages 30-50

Objectives:

1. Connect Community Health Organizations and promote health services .
2. Provide free mammograms to women at conference.
3. Encourage Black women to be advocates for their own health.
4. Acknowledge the history of our health system and African American people and dispel the mistrust.
5. Increase awareness of breast cancer
6. Education: Self-care and risk and risk factors in African American communities.



Major Activities:

- Keynote speakers from leading scientist, physicians and Public Health professionals.
- QA sessions
- Mammogram Services
- Community Health Organization Outreach

Lessons Learned

1. Importance of partnership and working together with community allies.
2. Flexibility: Pre-Survey Q section allowed us to modify conference topics that mattered most to attendees.
3. Picking a specific date that is not near a holiday.
4. Reaching out more to target population.
5. Not be disappointed if things do not go as planned

Results & Outcomes

Figure 1: Majority of attendees between ages 36-41

Figure 2: 48% of attendees found out about conference event by word of mouth from family and friends

Figure 3a & 3b: Increase level of comfort post-conference survey identifying health risks of breast cancer

Recommendations

1. Integrate workshops.
2. Marketing strategies: Implement greater use of social media.
3. Try to get funding earlier so we can have a clearer vision about the scope of the conference.
4. Have a survivorship section and from that information create deck of cards that have questions patients diagnosed with cancer can know what to ask their PCP.

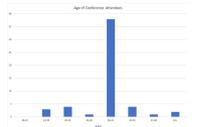


Figure 1

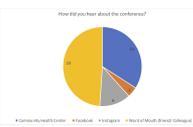


Figure 2

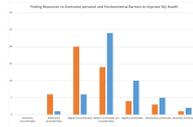


Figure 3a

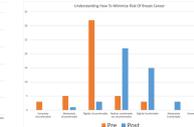


Figure 3b

Acknowledgements

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Community Partners

All of our community partners are committed to improving and addressing health disparities in underserved communities.



Speaker Series Topics

- Etiology of Breast Cancer
- Survivor experience: 'Living with Breast Cancer'
- Alternative Medicine: Hyperbaric Healing
- Clinical Trials
- Health Disparities and Navigating the Health System
- Self-Care

References

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