



Jeffrey G. Edwards; Sam Gyurdzhyan; Ysabel Duron; Dale Gene O'Brien, MD; Manali Patel, MD MPH MS; Lisa Goldman Rosas, PhD, MPH

ADDRESSING CANCER DISPARITIES USING COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATES DURING COVID-19

Background:

Hispanic/Latino individuals face disparities in cancer outcomes, with cancer being the leading cause of death for Hispanic/Latino Americans. Further, Latino individuals are less likely to participate in cancer screening compared to their White counterparts. In Monterey County, 38.5% of the population identifies as Hispanic/Latino, highlighting the disparities by race. Stanford Medicine, in partnership with The Latino Cancer Institute, worked to address these disparities utilizing Community Health Advocates (CHAs) to promote the use of precision medicine in Latino communities.

Methods/Approach:

As part of the initiative, four CHAs were hired, two in primary care clinic (Clinica de Salud del Valle de Salinas) and two in oncology clinic (Pacific Cancer Care). The CHAs all have community roots in Monterey County and are fluent in Spanish and English. The CHAs were onboarded by summer 2020. The CHAs implemented patient educational campaigns, providing an interpretation of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network guidelines in a culturally-sensitive manner that took into account various health literacy levels.

Results:

The CHAs coordinated multiple patient education/outreach events, interviewed 30+ community members, and administered surveys to community members. The CHAs also identified key themes from the interviews including financial barriers, and lack of knowledge of precision medicine screening and diagnostic methods.

Conclusions:

Engaging community outreach programs can occur during a pandemic. Phone/Zoom platforms can be used to solicit community member feedback and conduct patient education. These encouraging results might suggest a hybrid approach moving forward to reduce costs/improve geographical reach of patient-focused interventions.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

THE LATINO CANCER INSTITUTE