

HPV Awareness and Prevention During the COVID-19 Pandemic Among Hispanic/Latinx Communities in the Bay Area

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Background

- The COVID-19 pandemic caused changes to clinic and hospital protocols. It is not known how these changes affected the medical care of Latinx patients.
- 99% of cervical cancer cases are caused by a previous HPV (human papilloma virus) infection, making cervical cancer the most preventable cancer¹.
- The incidence and mortality of cervical cancer in the Bay Area is higher in Hispanics than in non-Hispanic whites².
 - Research shows this is due to decreased adherence to pap smear recommendations and lack of knowledge about HPV³.
 - The degree of knowledge about HPV in Latinx communities in the Bay Area is not known
- Pap smears are the best available form of detecting cervical cancer³.

OBJECTIVE:

- To assess how the COVID-19 pandemic affected access to cancer treatment and preventions services in the Latinx community in the Bay Area by surveying a sample of 200 Bay Area residents.

Community Partner

- This study is a partnership between the OCE at Stanford Medicine and Latinas Contra Cancer (LCC), a non-profit organization in San Jose, CA
 - Mission: achieve health equity in the Latinx community in the Bay Area around issues of cancer.
 - Services provided at LCC include patient navigation, free wig and prosthesis boutique, health education, advocacy training, and support group.

Methods

- Responses were collected through a virtual survey using the RedCap platform
- Eligibility is: 1) 18 years old or older, 2) Reside in Santa Clara, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, or Alameda county, 3) Self-identify as Latinx/Hispanic
- The survey included questions on demographics, health conditions, medical care needs during the pandemic, and problems accessing medical care during the pandemic.
- Survey intake was done through phone calls or in-person outreach at community events or clinics
 - The client database from Latinas Contra Cancer was used as a recruitment tool
- All participants received a \$10 gift card as compensation
- Qualitative data through provider interviews and focus groups are being collected. **All data collection is still ongoing.**
- Microsoft Excel was used to calculate percentages

Lessons Learned / Recommendations

- Our research question was driven from the community partner based on needs already seen in the community. LCC reached out to the PI for help on performing a research project that could lead to changes at the county and state level.
 - Through this project, we learned that both academic institutions and non-profit community organizations have assets that benefit each other, which highlights the importance of research community partnerships
- Our results highlight the importance of prioritizing primary care and cervical cancer education in the Latinx communities in the Bay Area.
- We recommend policy changes at the county and state level, particularly in the Medi-Cal and the Primary Care Access Program, that improve these services.

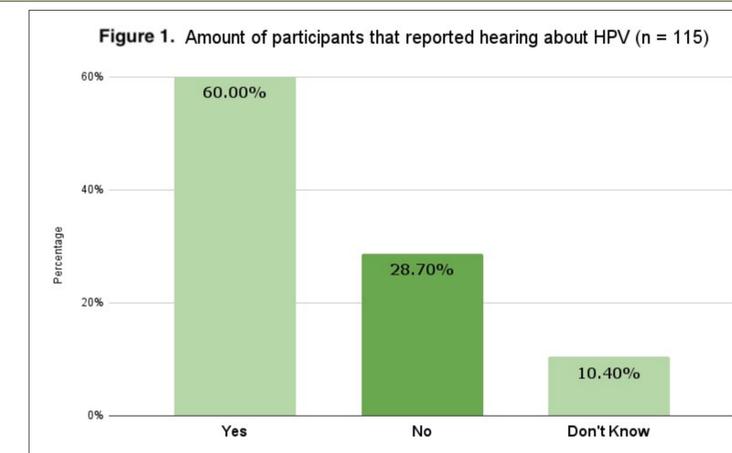
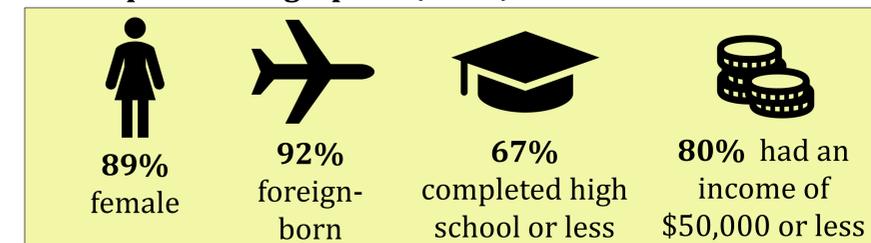
The COVID-19 pandemic decreased access to cervical cancer prevention in the Latinx community, which widens already existing cancer inequities.

Acknowledgements

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Results

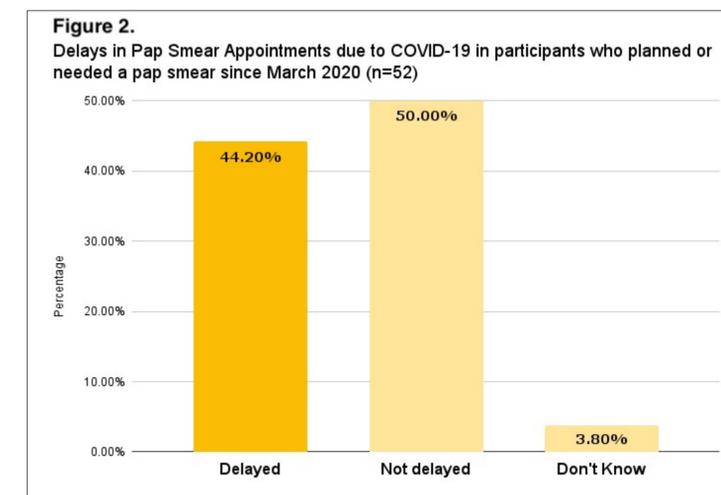
Participant Demographics (n = 115)



Outcomes

All questions were asked if they applied since March 2020 to now

- Out of all participants, 29% reported never having heard about HPV (Figure 1)
- 21.7% were planning to get an HPV test; of those, 44% were postponed due to the pandemic
- Out of the participants that were 45 years old or younger (n=52), 5.8% were planning to get or needed an HPV vaccine
- Out of the participants that had children older than 9 years old (n=88), 14.8% were planning to vaccinate their children and 18.2% did not know if they were planning to vaccinate their children against HPV.
- 44% of women who needed/planned a pap smear reported that they or their provider postponed their appointment (Figure 2)



References

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3. Kobetz, Erin, and Julie Kornfeld. 2010. "Knowledge of HPV Among United States Hispanic Women: Opportunities and Challenges for Cancer Prevention." *Journal of Health Communication* 12: 22-29.