Improving the Recruitment & Retention of a Diabetes Prevention Program in La Villita, Chicago

Margarita M. Ramirez Silva, MPH¹, Olivia Ramirez², Darius Tandon, PhD²

¹Program in Public Health, Northwestern University ²Universidad Popular

Background

La Villita is a predominantly Mexican, under-resourced community on Chicago’s west side.

Community Partner

- UP is community center in La Villita focused on participatory learning
- UP joined the Chicago CARES Diabetes Prevention Program in 2019
  - Year-long program for adults at risk of developing diabetes
  - Gives participants a lifestyle coach & a peer support group

Project Description

PURPOSE:

To improve the recruitment, retention, & participant engagement in Universidad Popular’s Diabetes Prevention Program

Outcomes

**IMPLEMENTATION**

**RECRUITMENT**

- Partnerships with primary care clinics in the community
- Recruitment via social media & asking La Villita organizations with large followings to share posts

**RECRUITMENT: GROUP LEADER INTERVIEW**

- Access to new people through primary care referral system
- Expanded network within Little Village:
  - Cooperation leads to successful recruitment
  - Utilize existing networks to increase recruitment

**RECRUITMENT: GROUP LEADER INTERVIEW**

- Recruitment Method by Percentages
  - Word of Mouth
  - Accompanying a Loved One
  - Primary Care Referral
  - Social Media

**RECRUITMENT**

- Recruitment by Group Leaders

**RETENTION**

- Fostering community via technology
- Adjusting Pittsburgh program to meet realities of La Villita residents

**RECRUITMENT: GROUP LEADER INTERVIEW**

- Access to new people through primary care referral system
- Partnership with healthcare providers

**RECRUITMENT: PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW**

- Support from others & learning from their experiences
- Creating friendships & NOT following an outsider’s diet & workout plan
- Tasty foods w/ ingredients found in local stores
- Considers exhaustion from work & neighborhood security issues

**EVALUATION**

**RETENTION**

- Better attendance w/ virtual meetings
- Transportation barrier removed
- Childcare barrier removed
- Convenient

**RETENTION: GROUP LEADER INTERVIEW**

- Support organizing kitchen
- Support cooking
- Identify opportunities for physical activity

**EVALUATION: PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW**

- Childcare barrier removed
- Transportation barrier removed
- Convenient

Conclusion & Recommendations

- It is vital to center cultural relevance when tailoring behavioral change programs for Latinx, without relying on generalizations and treating the Latinx community as a monolith
- Programs should take advantage of existing resources & relationships in the community

Lessons Learned

- Importance of an asset-based approach to building programs in under resourced communities
- Consulting community members is key when building successful public health programs

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Olivia Ramirez, & the rest of the Universidad Popular staff for welcoming me into the community and partnering with me to make this project possible.

I would also like to thank the Northwestern Program in Public Health for their continued support.