Combating COVID-19 through Community Education

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Overview

- Partner Organization
- Project challenges/outcome
- Social determinants of health impact
- Overarching themes
Partner Organization

• Mission: Improve health and provide hope through sustainable disease prevention, education, and treatment for every life we touch.
• International program established over 50 years ago.
• Esperança’s Domestic Program started in 2000 to provide health education and resources to Maricopa County’s most at-risk and underserved Latino youth, adults, and seniors.
• Domestic program has served over 30,000 families.
• Community health educators deliver health education courses in community centers, clinics, schools, and HUD housing.
• Continuing to deliver courses virtually in response to covid-19.
Overarching themes

Screening, testing, treatment, contact tracing
• Educating community about covid-19 signs and symptoms, steps after exposure, and emergency precautions, vaccine education

Self-care & resiliency
• Maintaining mental, emotional, and physical wellness during a pandemic

Investigate the relationship between the social determinants of health and COVID-19
• Collaborating with an organization that serves multiple vulnerable populations
• Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) in Esperanca’s targeted population
Project Challenges

Rapidly evolving covid-19 developments
• Changing recommendations on masks, school closures, treatment, vaccines
• Solution: Multiple evidence-based revisions to curriculum

Evolving community needs
• Community needs changing based on most recent covid-19 developments
• Solution: Frequent updates by Esperanca community health educators and domestic program director on status of community needs

Covid-19 Misinformation
• Misinformation spreads fast within close-knit community
• Solution: Community members trust Esperanca health educators to provide accurate information

In-person health education not possible due to social distancing
• Solution: Education delivered remotely via Zoom
Project Outcomes

1. Creation of culturally competent covid-19 curriculum tailored to the needs of the patient population

- Delivered at HUD senior housing and school districts by Esperanca community health educators
- Available in English and Spanish
- Curriculum contains information on pertinent covid-19 topics:
  - Prevention
  - Emergency precautions if infected
  - Approaches to maintain mental wellness
  - Long-haul covid-19
  - Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children
  - Medication education
  - Avoiding scams
  - Vaccines
Project Outcomes

2. Mapping of CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI)

- Mapped census tracts of school districts served by Esperanca
- SVI data will be incorporated into an application for grant funds to help establish Esperanca as a Point of Distribution (POD) center for the COVID-19 vaccine with goal to improve vaccine uptake within the community
- Data will help target immunizations to census tracts most at need

Covid-19 and Social Determinants of Health

- Hispanic community experiences over 2x the incidence of covid-19 and over 3x the rate of hospitalization\(^1\)
- Hispanic community disproportionately affected by SDOH\(^2\)
- SDOH impacting community served by Esperanca
  - Prone to occupational exposure to the virus
  - Low wage work without paid sick leave
  - Limited access to health benefits
  - Reliance on public transportation
  - Living in high pollutant neighborhoods
  - Cultural beliefs about the virus
  - Decreased health literacy
  - Crowded housing
  - Limited access to care
Social Determinant of Health Impact

- Cultural beliefs about the virus/decreased health literacy
  - Community health educators leverage their trust within the community to deliver evidence-based culturally appropriate health education
  - Curriculum addresses cultural beliefs and practices common in Hispanic communities
  - Education is targeted to most vulnerable populations
- Improved access to care/Crowded housing
  - SVI data will be used for vaccine POD grant funding
  - Priority will be given to census tracts with increased housing density