EDUCATING LATINOS for BETTER RESOURCES, OUTREACH and NUTRITION EXCELLENCE Project

Overview

The Educating Latinos for Better Resources, Outreach, and Nutrition Excellence (EL BRONX) is a unique community assessment aimed at understanding the health care needs, resources, and challenges of diabetic individuals and their family members. The project seeks to combine all of the difficult facets of Latino life in New York City—poverty, lack of health/social services, and predisposition to diabetes—with all of the positives: responsibility and dedication to family and community. The goal of the project is to collect information on diabetes diagnosis, aspects of diabetic care, population demographics, and health care statistics in order to discover which Latino communities in the South Bronx, New York are most affected by the diabetes epidemic and how.

Background

Nearly one in every three residents of New York City is Latino with the largest concentrations existing in the South Bronx, Harlem, and Washington Heights areas. (NYC GOV 2007; US Census Bureau 2000) A large percentage of Latinos live in many of the poorest areas of New York City that contain the highest rates of poverty and lack in utilization of community and health care resources. These areas also have virtually no space or amenities for healthy living or exercise and few grocery stores with healthy food options. (NYC GOV 2007; NYCDOHMH 2003)

Diabetes has been identified as a primary health concern for Latinos living in New York City, and as such, a number of health initiatives throughout the city have been created to address this growing epidemic. (Latino Federation 2005; NYCDOHMH 2003) Approximately 11% of Latinos living in the United States suffer from Type 2 diabetes, in addition to suffering from risk factors for the disease such as obesity, general CVD, and impaired fasting glucose. (NIDDK 2007) Latinos in New York City face a number of risk factors - approximately 27% are obese and have experienced a corresponding rise in diabetes cases to 17% from 2000 to 2004. (Van Wye and Kerker, 2008)

Project Aims/Goals

The project addresses the following:

• Collect statistical information on diabetes—its distribution and characteristics—among Latinos living in the South Bronx and Northern Manhattan to inform future interventions and research objectives
• Gain understanding on the specific issues that Latino diabetics face in managing their disease
• Identify what issues family members of Latino diabetic patients face in helping the patient manage the disease
• Gauge the influence diabetics have on the lifestyle of their associated family members
• Learn if associated family members would be interested in making changes to their lifestyle to prevent the possible onset of diabetes
• Discover the influence that family members have on diabetic patients in the management of their disease
• Test the effectiveness of clinical based assessments in diabetic communities

The collected data will be used to appropriately disseminate vital information on the diabetes epidemic in Latino communities living in the target area of the South Bronx, New York.

**Assessment Focus**

This assessment is composed of two types of participants: diabetic patients and a care-giver who completed brief quantitative surveys and qualitative focus groups that identified their needs, challenges, and resources for meaningful diabetes prevention and management strategies.

**Applicant Criteria/Screening**

The study interviewed approximately 100 participants and engaged 4 total focus group sessions at Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center in the South Bronx, New York. All applicants were asked a series of questions to determine if they fit the criteria listed below:

- Must self identify as Latino or Hispanic
- Must be aged 18 or older and a resident of New York City
- Diabetic applicants must be diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes
- Care-giver applicants must be predisposed (have a family member currently suffering from the disease) or be diagnosed with pre-diabetes. Care-giver participants that were diabetic were not excluded from participation, and were referred to as diabetic care-givers.

**Participation Requirements**

The study was executed in the spring of 2011 where eligible participants were required to review and sign an informed consent form in their preferred language before participating in the needs assessment. Data analysis and finalized report findings were conducted in the summer and fall of 2011.

Before participating in the focus groups, participants answered an assessment survey about their current medical health care such as:

- access to medical services
- current health habits and behaviors
- management plan for diabetes (if this applies to participant)
- opinions on health care and community health interventions

Certain participants engaged in focus groups which asked about their experience with and opinions on the following topics:

- nutrition and exercise
- family--social support
- understanding of diabetes
- ways to improve or prevent Type 2 diabetes

The assessment tools were developed using common question methods for gathering demographics and information on health and medical practices. All were developed from a question grid of validated surveys including national-census based tools; as well as reputable academic research sources in measuring and collecting health practices and beliefs.
Administrative information

The following organizations comprise EL-BRONX:

**New York University Health Promotion and Prevention and Research Center—Latino Health Initiatives (NYUPRC)** is an academic-community partnership dedicated to building leadership and capacity for health promotion and disease prevention across diverse populations in New York City. The Latino Health Initiatives (LHI) of the NYU PRC is designed to build community capacity and to provide information and resources to Latinos regarding the major health issues affecting their communities.

**Health and Hospitals Corporation of New York (HHC)—Generations+/Northern Manhattan Health Network** is the largest multi-hospital network which serves millions of people throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and The Bronx. These health organizations and associated community networks implement initiatives and health outcome projects that benefit the growing demographic shifts throughout NYC.

**Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center for Collaborative Community Research (LMMHC-LCCCR)** is recognized for the high quality of care provided to underserved populations and providing professional training for physicians and other providers within the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation. Lincoln Center for Collaborative Community Research (LCCCR) is an academic-community partnership committee which promotes public health, medical practice and research, health care, health education and training through a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach.

For more information

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