

Submission Id: 5320

Title

Improving Interprofessional Understanding of Community Health Workers: A Unique Project ECHO Educational Series

Priority 1 (Research Category)

Global Health

Presenters

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Abstract

Context

Maine is experiencing a dynamic population change with a markedly increased number of immigrants in recent years. Community Health Workers (CHWs) are a valuable resource to reduce healthcare barriers these communities can experience. However, successful integration of CHWs into care teams can be hampered by a lack of understanding and minimal continuing education to support this partnership. We utilized the Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) model to host educational sessions and increase institutional awareness of barriers faced by immigrant communities and of the role of CHWs.

Objective

We evaluated the relevance and impact of educational sessions on participants' knowledge and confidence in working with CHWs before and after the sessions. We aimed to assure our sessions were clinically relevant and effective.

Study Design and Analysis

Our analysis is based on survey results collected after each session. Analysis included summary statistics of audience members for sessions. Final pre- and post-survey analysis was completed with Wilcoxon Signed-Rank testing.

Setting

Virtual educational sessions over the Zoom platform.

Population Studied

All participants who attended CHW ECHO sessions and then completed an online survey.

Intervention/Instrument

Electronic survey (demographics and Likert scale) distributed to all participants in CHW ECHO sessions.

Outcome Measures

Participant descriptors and demographics including attendee participants for each session, discipline and work location. Survey questions included relevance of the sessions to work as well as knowledge and confidence around working with CHWs.

Results

Over two academic years (18 sessions), session content was overwhelmingly applicable to participants: average rating 4.3/5. Due to changes in data collection instruments, two scales were utilized in both academic years. There was a statistically significant ($p < 0.0001$) increase in both knowledge and confidence after intervention. Knowledge increased an average of 0.34 and 0.62 in the 4 and 5 point scales, respectively. Confidence also increased an average of 0.36 and 0.40 in the respective scales.

Conclusions

CHW ECHO sessions were relevant and effective at increasing knowledge and confidence in working with CHWs across disciplines in Maine. There was diverse attendance across sessions, indicating a wide-ranging impact that can improve care of vulnerable patients.