Health Literacy Among Underserved Populations

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Health Literacy and Cancer

Relationship of health literacy and cancer is complex

Examples

- Amish and Non-Amish living in Ohio Appalachia
- Minority and underserved population in Columbus, Ohio

Cancer-Related Lifestyle Study Among The Amish And Non-Amish Living In Ohio Appalachia

Amish

- 427 separate settlements in U.S.
- Estimated: 250,000 individuals in 1,826 church districts (20-35 families/district) and each district is a sub-group of Amish
- Largest Amish settlement is in Ohio
- Low rate of marriage outside the community
- Low cancer incidence rates
Amish Lifestyle
Way of life is to be separate from the desires, intent, and goals of the worldly person

- Wear distinctive clothes
- Live in mostly rural areas
- Limited use of telephones, electricity
- Horse power to farm the land
- Horse and buggy for transportation
- Less use of tobacco products and alcohol

Questionnaire
- Demographics
- General Health
- Cancer History
  (personal and immediate family)
- Cancer Beliefs
- Cancer Screening History
- Reproductive History
- Medical Conditions
- Medications and Supplement Use

How would you know if the participants understood what cancer screening test you were asking them about?

Questionnaire
- Tobacco (Cotinine) and Alcohol Use
- Physical Activity (pedometers)
- Health Literacy (REALM)
- Body Image
- Depression Scale
- Sun Exposure
- Alternative Medical Therapy
- Work History
- Nutritional Information (24 hour recall, 3 day food diary, food storage)

HEALTH LITERACY
Measuring Health Literacy

Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine (REALM)
- List of 66 words
- About 3 minutes
- Medical word recognition & pronunciation

Health Literacy
REALM: < High School

MALES
Percent Reporting Screening Within Guidelines

FEMALES
Percent Reporting Screening Within Guidelines

Patient Activation To Increase Colon Cancer Screening

Communicating to Healthcare providers About Tests for colon cancer

Supervised by a grant from the National Cancer Institute #5U01 CA197577-02
Protection Motivation Theory CRC Screening

Study Schema

Patient Focus Groups
Before and After Development of the Educational Video and Materials

Study Population
- A federally qualified health center in Columbus
- Served 1,637 patients over the age of 50 years in 2000 & 2001
- 60% females and 70% African Americans
- Average monthly income of CNHC patients is $804.00

Participants (n=269)
- Gender: Males: 36%; Females: 64%
- Age: mean=56 years; range=50-84
- Race: Black=72%, White=20%, Others=8%
- Ethnicity: Hispanic=4
- Income: <$20,000/yr=61%
- No health insurance: 56%

Measuring Health Literacy
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Participants

Education

- 20% have less than high school education

REALM

Correct Pronunciation

- 3rd grade: 0-18
- 4-6th grade: 19-44
- 7-8th grade: 45-60
- HS: 61-66

REALM

By Education Level

- Print materials alone is not likely to narrow the communication gap
- Use oral instructions, videos, patient navigators
- Using Community-Based Participatory Research strategies will help
- Health literacy issues across the cancer continuum

Conclusions