



A Community Engagement Flop: Photovoice in the Farm to Health Center Initiative

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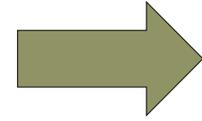


The Farm To Health Center Initiative Model:

CHP:



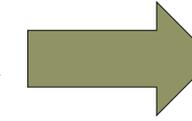
The Community Harvest Project of North Grafton, a nonprofit farm, grows produce to fight hunger in the community



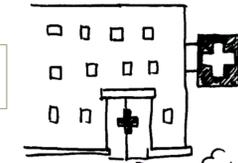
UMMS:



UMMS students and a physician at the Family Health Center of Worcester identified existing patient groups at the clinic and coordinated a distribution that fit with their existing programming



FHCW:



FHCW patients at risk for food insecurity received a weekly supply of vegetables

FTHI BACKGROUND

- The Farm to Health Center Initiative (FTHI) began a new distribution model this year in an effort to make the program more sustainable
- Three patient groups were targeted to receive the weekly vegetables:
 - Prenatal patients participating in group sessions
 - Pediatric patients participating in a Cooking Matters class with their parents at the Family Health Center of Worcester
 - Diabetic patients participating in group sessions
- In an effort to engage the Diabetic Group in a participatory action research activity about their experiences following a diabetic diet using the CHP produce, we piloted Photovoice

PHOTOVOICE

- Photovoice was developed by Caroline C. Wang of the University of Michigan and Mary Ann Burris of the Ford Foundation and originally named “photo novella”¹
- The approach integrates photography and discussion to look at an issue from the perspective of the “resident experts” – the people living, working, playing and praying in a targeted context²

METHODS

- The English and Spanish speaking Diabetes groups were selected to participate in the Photovoice project
- Group members were invited to participate during their pre-distribution survey meeting in late June/early July 2016
- Members were given an overview of the goal of the Photovoice activity: foster a discussion about the successes and challenges of adhering to a diabetic diet
- After speaking to the goal, each participant was shown examples of photos that the presenters had taken (Photo 1 and Photo 2)
- Participants were then asked about their access to a camera
 - If the participant had access to a camera on their cell phone or had a digital camera, they were asked to send pictures to the presenters via text message or email
 - If participants did not have access to a camera, they were asked to draw any scenes or images that came to mind and bring their art to the upcoming group meetings
- Participants were given two weeks to respond to the prompt
- A discussion surrounding the photos was planned for a July 2016 Diabetes Group meeting

METHODS (CONT.)



Photo 1

Photo 1 (Left): Shown to Patients at Introductory Meeting with explanation: “It is difficult for me to follow a prescribed diet because my kitchen has minimal counter space for me to prepare home cooked meals”



Photo 2

Photo 2 (Right): Shown to Patients at Introductory Meeting with explanation: “It is difficult for me to follow a prescribed diet because I live alone and healthy food goes stale so quickly. This cereal is 6 months past its expiration date “

RESULTS

- All 9 members of the Diabetes Groups were invited to participate (5 from the English speaking group, 4 from the Spanish speaking group)
- 1 individual elected to engage in the activity submitted 3 photos via text
- At the meetings where Photovoice was discussed, the 3 submitted photos were incorporated in to a collage with other photos taken by the presenters
- An informal dialog ensued about what each photo meant, how it could relate to challenges of following a diabetic diet, and ideas for improved adherence to a diabetic diet.
- The photos involving food stimulated the most conversation. Group members used them to talk about recipes, meal times, and local restaurants



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

- The above 3 photos were submitted by a participant. The participant expressed that cooking her meals at home helped to promote her adherence to a diabetic diet because she had control of the ingredients
 - The broccoli shown in Photo 3 was timely because participants had just received broccoli through the distribution at their group meeting. The conversation then shifted gears to how participants could prepare the broccoli in a way that is healthy for diabetics.
 - Many participants shared their plans to roast the broccoli with olive oil to add flavor without adding sugar or salt

DISCUSSION

- Photovoice may be a way to engage with an older adult population in a nontraditional format to promote healthy eating and lifestyles
- Barriers to engagement include low confidence in personal photography skills, lack of access to a camera, lack of knowledge on how to use a camera, and confusion over the transfer of photos collected
- Additional explanation of the Photovoice process and a more thorough exploration of participant’s level of comfort in participating is necessary for future community engagement activities
- Diabetes group members were receptive to the idea of incorporating Photovoice into future programming at their meetings

PRESENTERS

- Annika Bannon and Nell Pinkston are second year medical students at the University of Massachusetts Medical School
- Melanie Gnazzo is a Family Physician at the Family Health Center of Worcester and Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School
- Alicia Cianciola is a Program Manager at the Community Harvest Project

REFERENCES

- ¹Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment. *Health Education & Behavior*, 24(3), 369-387. doi:10.1177/109019819702400309
- ²Wang, C. (2003). Using Photovoice as a participatory assessment and issue selection tool: a case study with the homeless in Ann Arbor. In M. Minkler & N. Wallerstein (Eds.), *Community-based participatory research for health* (pp. 179-196). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- This project was made possible through the collective efforts of Kathryn Bailey MD, Rachel Erdil MD, Elizabeth Rosen MSIV, and Blair Robinson MSIII
- We thank the staff and volunteers from the Community Harvest Project for their dedication to harvesting produce to support the initiative and fight hunger in the community
- Suzanne Cashman ScD provided mentorship and guidance
- Funding provided by the UMass Summer Service Assistantship Program by HRSA grant No. 5U77HP03016