Improving refugee women’s health: building self-efficacy through monthly health workshops

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Program/Project Purpose: The Refugee Reproductive Health (RRH) Committee is composed of individuals from state government, refugee communities, and University of Utah researchers. The purpose of the RRH is to build capacity among women in refugee communities to manage their own health and the health of their families through increasing their knowledge of, and ability to access, appropriate services. One aspect of this program is to provide workshops on health-related topics identified by refugee women.

Structure/Method/Design: Our goal is to increase women’s self-efficacy to seek and obtain appropriate services to improve their health and the health of their families. The Utah Refugee Services Office (RSO) initially convened stakeholders from government agencies, leaders from 2 refugee communities (Somali and Congolese), and researchers from the University of Utah. From this group, the RRH Committee emerged and meets monthly, taking on the task of developing and implementing the workshops. In 2014, leaders from the Somali and Congolese refugee communities were employed as Community Specialists by RSO to facilitate having an ongoing relationship.

Outcomes & Evaluation: To elicit refugee women’s views on health topics of interest, we conducted an initial workshop using the 7 Domains of Health (physical, social, emotional, intellectual, environmental, financial, and spiritual). We asked women to express their thoughts about each domain, and whether it was relevant to them. We held two community-specific initial workshops in April 2014, with 40 Somali women and 21 Congolese women in attendance. In both groups, women identified aspects of health related to each of the 7 Domains, and also identified topics for future workshops. They expressed a desire to have monthly workshops, which started in August 2014. At these workshops, additional topics are identified and incorporated into our schedule. To date, we have been able to identify topic area experts who have participated in 2-hour workshops.

Going Forward: Two challenges are transportation to and from workshops, and assuring interpretive services. The Congolese group has been proactive in addressing these problems by organizing geographic pick-up locations for transportation, and has identified community members to translate into Swahili, French, and 2 dialects. These efforts have resulted in participation of over 30 women at each of the August and September workshops. Critical to these efforts has been strong leadership and coordination by the RSO Community Specialist for the Congolese community. Similar support is not yet organized for the Somali community. We have plans to expand the RRH Committee to include Community Specialists from other refugee communities.

Funding: The Congolese Community Specialist (5% FTE) devotes part of her effort to this project; involvement in this project is within the scope of employment of our governmental partners.

Information seeking needs and behaviors for global health: Mapping Welch Medical Library’s global health information services

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Program/Project Purpose: One primary component of the mission of Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions (JHMI) is to improve the health of individuals and diverse communities locally and globally through leadership and excellence in education, research, practice, and service. Activities are currently occurring in 120 countries and involve students, faculty and staff across the university. To align with the mission of the university, Welch Medical Library explored capacity building for a Global Health Information Services Program. The aim of this project was four-fold: 1) establish a baseline measurement for informationist and resource use; 2) develop a conceptual map for capacity building in the context of Welch Library’s Global Health Information Services Program; 3) design a research phase to assess needs for future program implementation; and, 4) use preliminary research results to establish a logic model to identify resources, informationist activities, and measurable outcomes of a Global Health Information Services Program.

Structure/Method/Design: A Global Health Task Force was created by the Welch Medical Library Director to conduct a campus wide needs assessment to identify opportunities to improve awareness of and training in the use of information resources and services. Until now there had not been a unified program dedicated to the faculty, staff and students working in the global health arena. Using the conceptual map and needs assessment, the Task Force defined program objectives and clarified the vision and strategy for a dedicated Global Health Information Services program. Depth and breadth of program opportunities and implementation were guided by the following primary research questions: 1) What are the current information-seeking needs and behaviors of faculty, staff, and students engaging in globally focused clinical, nursing, and public health work? 2) In what ways are those global health information needs and behaviors being met? 3) What other opportunities exist for additional library services? Stakeholders were selected from the Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, hospitals and research centers with a global health focus to insure comprehensive data collection. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each stakeholder to elicit feedback about the services and resources needed to improve capacity to use and access information.

Outcomes & Evaluation: The task force used preliminary research results to establish a service model identifying resources, informationist activities, and measurable outcomes for the Global Health Information Services Program. Library staff time was allocated as needed to accomplish the aims outlined in the conceptual model. On the basis of the data collected, modifications were made to the service model and steps undertaken for program implementation.

Going Forward: Based on the outcomes of this process, the Task Force will expand its scope to include a quantitative survey to be administered to students and staff involved in global health activities.

Funding: None.

Evaluation of Ghana health and education initiative’s neonatal resuscitation training program at delivery facilities in the Bibiani-Anhwiso-Bekwai District, Ghana

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