

**Sean Crites 2022, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
Rutgers Cancer Health Equity Institute**
Funded by CHW under the Princeton Internships in Global Health Program

Introduction

Racial Disparities in Cancer Outcomes

- Black individuals have the highest death rate and shortest survival of any racial or ethnic group for most cancers
- They are less likely to receive precision oncology or personalized cancer treatment, which can significantly improve cancer outcomes.
- Web-based interventions are becoming an increasingly effective means to combat misinformation and provide resources to reduce barriers to care

Internship Objective

- Assist in recruiting and interviewing participants as well as qualitatively coding and analyzing participants' suggestions to improve the website prototype in the Promoting INformed approaches in Precision Oncology and ImmuNoTherapy (PINPOINT) project.

Work Profile

Rutgers Cancer Health Equity (CHE) Objectives:

- “To advance the achievement of equitable access, improved health care quality, and better outcomes across the cancer continuum through research, education and training, community engagement and outreach, and public policy advocacy.”

PINPOINT Objectives

- To develop a website and chatbot to help reduce medical mistrust and help Black cancer patients and their families feel empowered to engage in shared decision making with their providers.

Results

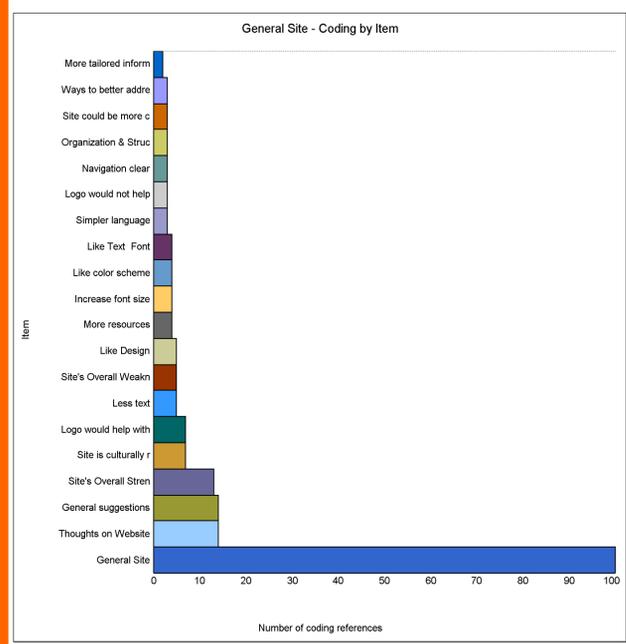


Table 1: Key Informant Population

Type	Patients	Relatives	Providers
Sample Size Target	10	10	10
Sample Size Interviewed to date	10	6	7
Sample Size used for Transcription	9	0	0

Research Contributions

- Attended weekly research team meetings
- Collaborated with vendors to design website graphics
- Compiled precision oncology and cancer disparity statistics
- Wrote a Change of Scope correspondence with the funder
- Completed over 200 participant recruitment calls and emails
- Designed recruitment script
- Implemented data collection framework in RedCap
- Consented participants and conducted interviews over HIPAA-compliant Zoom
- Sent out surveys and study reminders
- Qualitatively coded interview transcripts in Nvivo
- Analyzed patient interview feedback to create a 15-page summary of findings along with a section to send to respective vendors to implement participant suggestions

Thematic Coding Results

- This figure divides the subjects within all patient interview transcripts and arranges them based on theme and frequency. From here, patient testimonials can be referenced by theme to streamline implementing their suggestions.

Positive Reception

- Addresses historical medical mistrust in the Black community
- Provides questions and guides to communicate with providers about treatment options

Suggestions

- Standardize dropdown functionality and interactivity
- Incorporate more patient testimonials
- Include more treatment- and cancer-specific statistics
- Design a PINPOINT logo for recognizability

Participant Demographics

- Due to unforeseen delays in IRB approval, only patient interviews were fully conducted, transcribed, and coded before the internship finished.



Looking Ahead

How this internship has impacted my future plans:

- Solidified my desire to practice as a physician advocate who works with underserved populations to prioritize social determinants of health and combat barriers to care
- Exposed me to how medicine can intersect with clinical research and population science to promote community health

Questions

- How how we not only explain what disparities exist, but why they exist and delineate concrete steps to improve?
- How are cancer treatment decisions impacted by a family history of cancer?
- How can we overcome technological and literacy barriers to serve people from all age groups and socioeconomic statuses?

Reflection

Lessons Learned

- Importance of community-focused and culturally sensitive interventions
- Research is collaboration across a variety of sectors which offers a variety of perspectives
- Have grace for myself as a researcher, acknowledge any mistakes, and adapt to continue prioritizing participant wellness.

Acknowledgements

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to work with the Rutgers Cancer Health Equity Institute this summer.

This would not have been possible without overwhelming support from my PI, Dr. Anita Kinney, my supervisor Julianne Ani, and PINPOINT Team. Additionally, I am very appreciative of CHW and the Global Health Program for sponsoring my internship.