

Improving the Health of Urban Minority Asthmatic Children in Public Housing

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Introduction

- 9-week internship with ongoing PACRI project and Howard University
- Children in low-income households and public housing are more likely to have asthma.
- The Healthy Homes Program was implemented to reduce at-home asthma triggers in public housing.
- The District of Columbia has a child asthma epidemic.

Objective of the Study

- The objective of this project was to investigate how the Healthy Homes Programs are received by residents, especially in meeting the needs of asthmatic children in public housing, to assess program fidelity and resources needed for implementation, and to evaluate the extent to which caregivers understand an asthma action plan for their asthmatic children and what resources they identify as necessary to implement such a plan.

Methods

- This community-based participatory research used a mixed methods approach.
- I was tasked with qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by thematic analysis to compile the preliminary findings.

Data Collection



- Participation in Community Health Event
- Preparation and participation in Asthma Health Information Event
- Interview questions were designed to address at-home asthma triggers, Healthy Home services received, resources needed for reducing asthma triggers, child's asthma symptoms, caregivers' asthma literacy, knowledge, management skills, quality of life, and perceived stress, as well as suggestions for Healthy Home programs and preferred ways of receiving asthma-related information.
- Interviewees were predominantly Resident Council members occupying leadership positions within public housing buildings.

Preliminary Findings

Themes from Thematic Analysis:

1. There is a lack of familiarity regarding asthma and asthma prevention.
2. The Healthy Homes Program policies in place are not enforced or monitored.
3. Feelings of distrust, fear, and inferiority deter residents from requesting maintenance services.
4. Public housing is not fulfilling its responsibilities to ensure safe living conditions for residents.
5. Lack of resources inhibits effective implementation of Healthy Homes.

Observations and from Interviews:

- Building dilapidation, moldy living conditions
- Public housing Resident Council leaders are willing to fight for their residents



Pictured above are Irene Park(left) and Dharmil Bhavsar(right) presenting at the formal workshop at Princeton University on 08/03

Discussion

- Currently, there are not enough financial or educational resources being provided for the Healthy Homes Program policies to be properly implemented.
- Asthma will continue to be an issue for residents and their families in public housing until residents are given the help they need.

Conclusion

- There is still much work to be done to make changes to the current policies in place.
- Moving forward, we can connect public housing residents with existing resources and also provide educational workshops to spread awareness and knowledge on asthma triggers and small lifestyle changes to reduce the triggers.

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