

Community-led Educational Model for Improved Volunteer Communication in Patient Outreach

Crystal Chen, Sophia Pribus

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

LifeMoves

Buena Vista Mobile Home Park

ABSTRACT

Background: The Cardinal Free Clinics are a student-run free clinic offering culturally-sensitive, high-quality transitional medical care for under-resourced patient populations in the Bay Area. Each quarter, we conduct outreach events to share our resources with the community, including flyering, tabling at community organizations and local markets, and conducting blood pressure screenings. However, volunteers reported that they were often underprepared for these events, lacking in knowledge about community contexts and patient backgrounds, hindering informed and compassionate patient care.

Approach: With these issues in mind, we partnered with two local community organizations (LifeMoves and Buena Vista Mobile Home Park) and three Stanford-based organizations (The Bridge Peer Counseling Center, Sexual Health Peer Resource Center, and Peer Educators in the Office of Substance Use) to design a series of community-led education workshops for our undergraduate volunteers. Led by our community partners, these workshops focused on their extensive knowledge and expertise to highlight best practices in engaging their clients and community.

Outcomes: Our final curriculum consisted of ten education events, consisting of trauma-informed healthcare for people experiencing homelessness, mobile home health, mental health, sexual education, substance use, geriatric medicine, and traditional Asian medicine. Analysis of pre/post Likert Scale surveys indicate a significant increase in volunteer comfort discussing difficult topics with patients with a trauma and context driven approach, as well as improvement across a variety of communication-based metrics.

Conclusions: Community organizations are the experts and leaders of our community, and these results highlight the efficacy and importance of bi-directional, community-led education events to improve patient and community-centered care.

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