

National Town Hall Meeting Brings the Cambodian Community Together to Discuss Health, Diabetes and Trauma

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May 7, 2008



The Problem

- Cambodians are dying at a rate six times higher than the general population from diabetes complications.
- Chronic conditions, such as diabetes, are exacerbated by trauma experiences.
- A health crisis has been declared in the Cambodian community due to escalating health problems and diminishing resources.
- The Cambodian Community serves as a geographical challenge. The most vulnerable areas are those that are less populated and more dispersed.
- Technology innovations must be used to bring together geographically dispersed communities to identify community needs, solutions and resources.



Description of the Activity

- Held a national town hall meeting to identify community needs and resources.
- Promoted diabetes awareness.
- Brought together over 400 community members and health experts from 12 different states by using bridged videoconferencing technology.
- Provided a space for community members and health experts to discuss health, diabetes and trauma.
- Planning Time: 4 months planning time
- Meeting Time: 5-hour discussion on health



NATIONAL CAMBODIAN AMERICAN TOWN HALL MEETING



Linked FIVE sites using a videoconferencing bridge and held a five-hour community discussion with over 400 Cambodians and health Experts.

Commissioners in Chicago, IL.
April 17, 2006

National Cambodian American Diabetes Project



Recipe for Success

- Technology innovations
- Community participatory approaches
 - Community and faith based organizations, universities, health centers, national organizations, businesses, etc.
- The dedication of the community
 - The community wanted this meeting and we capitalized on existing resources to promote and implement activity for little cost.
- In addition to NDEP funding, activities were supported by in-kind services.
 - Estimated over 40 volunteers



Key Results

- Utilized technology that brought over 400 community members/health experts together for a national meeting.
- Identified community needs through oral and written testimonies. (Collected 159 written and 40 oral testimonies)
- Found that diabetes was a major health concern of the community, and community members needed the help of Khmer-Speaking Community Health Workers to access care and health education.
- Disseminated 1180 NDEP diabetes materials.



Through this discussion, we found that diabetes, along with mental health issues, are the main concerns of the community.



Of the 159 written testimonies submitted, 7% of community members reported to suffer from stroke, 20% reported having diabetes, and 72% reported needing an interpreter.



What the Community Told Us

- Community Health Workers are vital in improving diabetes care and awareness
- Diabetes is a comprehensive condition, in which cultural, social, family, community, and emotional factors must be addressed.
- Trauma plays a major role in contributing to diabetes within the Cambodian community.
- The community can deliver the best services. The healing process is not dependent on outside experts; instead the community is capable of healing with access to key external resources.



Next Steps

To develop a strategic plan to address the health needs of the community.

To develop health messages and interventions that focus on the needs identified by the community.

Include sustainability activities in program goals (i.e. the development of endowment fund to support Cambodian health programs).



Questions??

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