Reviewer’s report

Title: Role of Community Health Outreach Program "Living for Health"(R) in Improving Access to Federally Qualified Health Centers in Miami-Dade County, Florida: A Cross-sectional Study

Version: 1 Date: 13 January 2015

Reviewer: Rahbel Rahman

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Role of Community Health Outreach Program "Living for Health"(R) in Improving Access to Federally Qualified Health Centers in Miami-Dade County, Florida: A Cross-sectional Study

Peer Review: BMC Health Services Research

Decision: This is a novel article that has great value in the literature on how community outreach centers can improve access to FQHCs. However, the article lacks depth in the background section and the conclusion. Recommendations are stated below. Provided revisions are to be made, this article should be published.

Background Section:

Strength:
• A succinct explanation for why FQHCs need to be utilized.
• The goal of the paper has been clearly stipulated.

Recommendations:
# A few clarifications are required:
• Greater distinction should be made between FQHCs and community health clinics/centers/ programs.
• Line 61 when referring to “effective physician care”, the authors should stipulate why physician care is necessary as opposed to allied health professionals and at what stage. Who does the screening in the community and who refers to the health centers. This seems to be unclear in the background section.
• Is there a reason why cardiovascular morbidity and mortality is discussed as a chronic condition? Statistics justifying that it is a chronic condition in the United States is lacking.
• Line 96-99: While discussing “Living for Health” it is important to discuss what population it serves. The study has an inclusion criterion but does the program do too? Why is the program only focused on cardiovascular risk factors?

Methods/Subjects and Settings/ Data Collection/ Study Variables/ Data Analysis:
# A few clarifications are required:

- Why is a cross-sectional survey more apt rather than a longitudinal study?
- In line 114, what “events” are the authors referring to?
- In line 121, who makes the referrals – a physician, community nurses?
- Subjects and Settings are well-articulated. Although line 137 seems incomplete.
- Data Collection: Why is match rate important for this study? How was the confidentiality of patient information maintained given that the FQHCs had an agreement with FHRI for sharing information? Who was collecting the data?
- Study variables should be in a table format articulating the type of variable – nominal, ordinal.
- Line 154 should state that the authors employed pairwise deletion.
- Data Analysis: What version of SPSS was used? What univariate analyses were performed – frequencies, percentages, etc? What was the purpose of running Chi-Square tests and logistic regressions? Please provide an explanation. What was the significance level?

Results:

Strengths:
- The tables were well articulated.

No changes to be made

Discussion/Conclusion:

# A few clarifications are required:

- Line 224 speaks to the matched rate being 11%? Please provide an explanation as to why the match rate is disturbing? What does this tell the reader about the outreach programs effectiveness?
- Line 234-236 is a generalized statement and should be avoided unless references are supported.
- Other limitations should be considered such as study design, etc?
- Line 265 states that cardiovascular diseases are a killer of men and women without providing statistics in the introduction.
- Line 267: How is the program novel? With a matched rate of 11% is it novel?
- Line 273-275: Implications to research, practice and policy need to be further elaborated.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.