

Community Matters

A Community Research Poster Forum



MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2022

6:00-8:00PM

St. Norbert College, Gehl-Mulva Science Center



Welcome from our Campus Dean



I hope you enjoy exploring the scholarly projects that our medical students have completed in partnership with local community organizations.

The student projects link medical education with the resources and needs of Green Bay-area communities to promote health in northeastern Wisconsin. This unique MCW experience is designed to cultivate medical skills and interests, deepen ties to the community, and provide an appreciation for the physician's potential role and impact on local health needs.

I would like to recognize the partner organizations and community mentors who volunteered with our medical students on these projects. You are a critical element to their medical education and we could not have accomplished this work without your support. ■

Welcome from our Pathway Course Director



Welcome to the sixth annual MCW-Green Bay community research poster forum. Our medical students complete a Community Oriented Primary Care (COPC) scholarly research project, which emphasizes a systematic approach to community and individual health, combining elements of epidemiology, primary care, preventive medicine, and health promotion. Through the Physicians in the Community Pathways Course and other aspects of the curriculum, our students establish relationships with many local organizations directly involved with the health and well-being of our community. Working with our partners, the students identify health needs, design appropriate interventions, and assess the interventions' effects, resulting in a public poster presentation. Our goal is to help students become community-engaged physicians, moving us from the care we have; to the care we need.

We want to thank Chrystal Woller, BSN, RN, St. Norbert College, Senior Director, Health and Wellness Services, for her assistance in working directly with the students to get their projects off the ground. A special thank you goes to Jamie Lynch, Ph.D. associate professor of sociology and director of the Strategic Research Institute at St. Norbert College, for supporting study design and data analysis. We would also like to express our appreciation and gratitude to all our community partners, those represented in the poster presentations, and those who give generously of their time and expertise in countless other ways to help MCW-Green Bay achieve our lofty goals. Please enjoy the surprising variety of community projects on display today. ■

Scholarly Project Presentations

Time Location	Student(s) Project
6:00-7:00pm First Floor Atrium	All Students Scholarly Project Poster Review <i>Engage with the students and their Pathways Posters to learn more about their projects, feel free to ask questions, find out the pros and cons they faced while completing their projects and what path they will take next.</i>
7:00-7:10pm Room 1097	Morgan Kelly <i>Healthy Intimate Relationships</i>
7:15-7:25pm Room 1097	Patrick Vosters <i>Family Physician and Hospital Administrator Perspective on Telehealth Usage and Barriers during COVID-19 and Beyond</i>
7:30-7:40pm Room 1097	Joshua Christensen and Riley Coon <i>COVID-19 Impact on Emergency Front Line Responders in Northeastern Wisconsin</i>
7:45-7:55pm Room 1097	Mariah Arneson <i>Mehameha: The Impact of Intergenerational Communication on Loneliness</i>

THANK YOU!

A special thank you to our many community partners for your time and investment in our students.

Abstract #	Partner
2	Golden House - Jodi Nuthals-Mikulsky, Melissa Lundgren, Kwynn Carter, Tori McNeal
3	St. Norbert College - Tom Doughman, Assistant Director, Counseling and Psychological Services
4	Bellin Health - Michelle Minikel, MD, MPH
5	Primrose Retirement Community of Appleton
6	Green Bay Metro Fire Department - Dave Litton and Ryan Gibbons; Grand Chute Fire and Rescue - Kelly Hanink; County Rescue - Chris Gabryszek; Village of Howard Fire and Rescue - Ed Janke; Appleton Fire Department - Jeremy Hansen; Ashwaubenon Public Safety Department - Nicholas Kozloski; De Pere Fire and Rescue - Alan Matzke; Door County Emergency Medical Services - Steve Weitman; Franklin Emergency Medical Responders - Suzi Sevcik; Crivitz Rescue Squad Inc. - Denise Busse; Pembine-Dunbar-Beecher Rescue Squad - Sandy Bayer; Lakewood-Townsend Community Ambulance Service - Janet Opiela
7	Altrusa House - Annie Bongiorno, Executive Director
8	Paul's Pantry - Craig Robbins, Executive Director; Bob Hornacek, Assistant Executive Director; Leslie Sharkey, Director of Volunteer and Guest Services
9	Bellin Health Emergency Department - Paul Casey, MD
10	St. Norbert College, Counseling and Psychological Services and VAWA Grant Team - Tom Doughman, Meredith Hansen, Carolyn Uhl, Sarah Olejniczak, Crystal Woller, Chris Stewart; Golden House- Marissa Heim, Michaela Polewski
11	University of Wisconsin-Green Bay - Debra Pearson, PhD, Associate Professor
12	Wello, Green Bay - Natalie Bomstad, Executive Director
13	MCW Kern Institute - Gisela Chelimsky, MD
14	Altrusa House - Annie Bongiorno, Executive Director
15	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College
16	Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative - Tim Size, Executive Director Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians - Brandon Wimmer, Deputy Executive Director Wisconsin Psychiatric Association - Sally Winkelman, Maggie Gruennert
17	CROWN Consortium - Amy Koffarnus Green Bay Oncology - Brian Burnette, MD

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Mehameha: The Impact of Intergenerational Communication on Loneliness

MARIAH ARNESON



Introduction

Loneliness is considered the latest global health epidemic. This is especially concerning in the setting of increased social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. The long-term effects of loneliness have been linked to numerous serious health conditions leading to premature death: 50% increased risk of dementia, 29% increased risk of heart disease, 32% increased risk of stroke, and increased risks of anxiety, depression, and suicide. Two populations that have increased loneliness are adolescence-late 20s and older-aged adults.

Methods

I designed the Mehameha program to bring these two groups together to create a grandparent-grandchild-like dynamic with the goal of reducing symptoms of loneliness throughout video chat communications. Participants 18-30 and 60+ were recruited and randomly paired with a participant of the opposite age group. An initial 20 question UCLA Loneliness survey was administered to measure baseline loneliness level. Participants engaged in weekly video chats for 4 weeks with their partner. The same survey was given again at the end of the program to measure a final loneliness level.

Results

Initial and final survey results for each participant were compared via a paired two-tailed t-test. The changes in before and after scores were found to be statistically significant with a p-value of 0.031 and alpha of 0.05.

Conclusions

Overall, participants had a significant change, predominately positive changes, in scores on the UCLA Loneliness scale from before and after participation in the Mehameha program. These results indicate that the Mehameha program could be a tool used to help combat loneliness. ■

Mindful Coloring with Children at Golden House

Introduction

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), including abuse, violence, and household mental health and substance use issues, can affect brain development and how the body responds to stress. ACEs correlate with increased risk of diabetes, asthma, cancer, depression and decreased educational attainment. Mind-body methods attenuate negative symptoms while promoting self-regulation and positive health, social, and academic behaviors. Mindful coloring may be a technique to improve protective factors in at-risk children to minimize the negative impacts of ACEs.

Methods

Six children ages 7-13 at Golden House Domestic Abuse Shelter participated in weekly mindfulness coloring sessions as availability allowed. Participants colored what they visualized during a self-affirming meditation reading. Identical pre- and post-tests administered each session assessed resilience and hope with standardized children's scales, and mood using a novel scale.

Results

There were no statistically significant changes between overall pre- and post-test scores for resilience ($p=0.95$), hope ($p=0.52$), or mood ($p=0.54$), nor over time for hope ($p=0.14$) or mood ($p=0.71$). There was a statistically significant negative change in resilience scores over time between the first half of sessions and the second half ($p=0.0058$), corresponding to the first and second months participants resided at the shelter.

Conclusions

This decline in resilience scores may be a consequence of ACEs and shelter inhabitation during this transitional period, demonstrating the necessity of further support for children experiencing ACEs. Identification of this effect may inform future interventions designed to precisely mitigate the mechanisms of negative ACE-associated outcomes. ■

GENERIKA BERMAN



KHADIJAH ENOH



The COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on Student Academic and Mental Wellness at St. Norbert College

DAKOTA BROOKER



Introduction

The novel coronavirus emerged from China in late 2019 and soon spread into a world-wide pandemic sending Americans into lockdown. College/ university students saw institutional closures which vastly altered their college and learning experiences. The overall prevalence of depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts has increased since the beginning of the pandemic among this population.

Methods

An email survey was distributed to all second year and above undergraduate students at St. Norbert College (SNC). Summary statistics, t-tests and graphs in excel were used to analyze the 169 students who fully completed the survey.

Results

There was a statistically significant decrease in student-reported GPA since March 2020 and most students felt more engaged in a traditional classroom setting versus a virtual environment. Over 80% of respondents felt isolated during the pandemic and felt COVID negatively impacted their personal wellness. Despite these changes, students reported they were no more likely to seek out campus counseling/resources through the office for counseling and psychological services (CAPS) compared to before COVID.

Conclusions

While COVID resulted in decreased wellness and increased loneliness, there was still an overall lack of interest in CAPS resources at SNC despite an understanding of the services provided, so working to understand the disconnect between student needs and utilization of services is necessary. It is crucial for higher education institutions to engage with students to better understand the impacts pandemic restrictions are having on learning and wellness. ■

Differences in Cervical Cancer Screening by Race in Northeast Wisconsin during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, disruptions to health care disproportionately reduced access to routine screenings for patients in underserved populations. The purpose of this study is to identify differences in cervical cancer screening by race during the pandemic.

Methods

iAnalyze, a database containing health records for all patients with a primary care provider in the Bellin Health Care System was used to analyze cervical cancer screening data on a quarterly basis from March 1, 2020 - Jan 1, 2022. Odds ratios (OR) and confidence intervals (95% CI) were used to calculate differences between race groups and time periods.

Results

36,774 female patients with a cervix, ages 21-65 were included in the analysis. Patient age and race categories were similar between study periods. Screening rates were lower among Black (OR=0.63, 0.517-0.78) and Native/American Indian (OR=0.66, 0.513-0.86) patients in March 2020. Differences in screening rates were greatest from October 1-December 31, 2020, with half the screening rate for Black (OR=0.54, 0.45-0.65) and Native/ American Indian (OR=0.51, 0.40-0.64) patients, and significantly lower screening rates for Asian patients (0.80, 0.65-0.99). Screening rates for White patients did not vary significantly during the pandemic (OR=0.97, 0.93-1.01)

Conclusions

Overall, Black and Native/American Indian patients had lower baseline rates of cervical cancer screening which further decreased during the pandemic. iAnalyze software may be useful to track differences and target interventions in the future. ■

ALLISON CARLISLE



THERESE RIESBERG



Technology Use and Loneliness in a Senior Living Facility

DEVAN CHASE



Introduction

Loneliness is a common issue at Senior Living Facilities. It has been associated with increased depression and anxiety. In addressing loneliness, technology use has been found to be associated with higher subjective well-being and fewer depressive symptoms.

Methods

The study was conducted at Primrose Retirement Community of Appleton. Paper surveys evaluating loneliness and technology usage were distributed to residents with instructions and completed privately. Surveys were collected and data was analyzed.

Results

The residents at Primrose scored low on our loneliness scale with an average loneliness of 3.8 on a scale from 3 (least lonely) to 9 (most lonely). New residents (<3 months) had higher levels of loneliness than residents with longer occupancies. A significant relationship was not found between technology use and loneliness ($p=0.886$ using Spearman's Correlation). Residents ages 66-75 used technology more than ages 76 and older ($p=0.034$ using ANOVA). Email, texting, and online chatting was the most reported category with 76% of residents using these at least monthly. Video communication was the least used with 24% of residents reporting usage.

Conclusions

Overall, the residents of Primrose do not report high levels of loneliness. Loneliness was not found to be significantly correlated with technology use. Average technology usage was higher in younger residents (66-75). It would be interesting to further research how technology instruction or assistance would change the type and frequency of technology use by residents. ■

SAM ERB



COVID-19 Impact on Emergency Front Line Responders in Northeastern Wisconsin

Introduction

COVID-19 took the United States by storm in 2020, resulting in over 95 million cases and over 1,000,000 deaths as of September 15, 2022. Even before an infectious disease pandemic, emergency medical responders (EMR) were more likely than the general population to suffer from depression, anxiety, and general psychological distress. Our study set out to determine how the pandemic affected EMR in terms of their well-being.

Methods

A survey with questions regarding mental health and well-being was distributed to several Northeastern Wisconsin EMR departments. Participants were asked to answer questions about three different time periods: Pre-COVID, during COVID, and following widespread availability of the vaccine.

Results

PHQ-9 and GAD-7 data showed increases in the levels of depression and anxiety, respectively, from pre-COVID to COVID time periods, and failed to normalize even after the vaccine rollout. There were also increases in a number of well-being parameters, including fear for personal safety at work, fear for family well-being, and apprehensions towards going to work.

Conclusions

The COVID-19 pandemic has had profound effects on emergency front line responders. Following widespread availability of the vaccine, many measures of well-being and mental health have failed to decline back to their pre-pandemic baseline. There may be many contributing factors to this increase and subsequent failure to normalize but continued research is needed to narrow down the exact cause. ■

JOSHUA CHRISTENSEN



RILEY COON



Effects of Accessing Altrusa House Hospitality Resources on Guest Experience and Perception of Outcomes

ALEX COAKLEY



Introduction

Altrusa House is a healthcare hospitality service that provides affordable housing to patients accessing healthcare in the Green Bay area. Familial or patient proximity to their place of care has shown benefits for patient satisfaction and psychosocial outcomes. Larger healthcare hospitality organizations have showed improvement in patient perception of their healthcare experience. The goal of this study is to assess the impact of Altrusa House (a healthcare hospitality organization) on the perceptions of guest healthcare experience and outcomes.

Methods

Guests of the Altrusa house were emailed surveys 2 days after the completion of their stay at Altrusa House. Surveys had 11 statements that asked patients to response on a scale of 1-5 with 1=poor and 5=very good.

Results

Overall, 42 surveys were collected, and 37 guests came from out of state (WI). The results showed an overall positive experience and perception of outcomes in people who stayed at Altrusa House. The response to 8/11 questions was significantly above a neutral response, demonstrating that guests realized the importance of Altrusa House on their overall care.

Conclusions

This study demonstrated positive experience and perception of Altrusa house and guest's healthcare experience. This study was limited by the number of participants as well as the lack of a "non-Altrusa" house group to compare to. Future studies can look at hospital outcomes of patients staying at Altrusa House compared to a control group. ■

Paul's Pantry Impact on Community Health

Introduction

Housing, transportation, education, food, and exercise opportunities are factors of social determinates of health. Food has a significant impact on cost of living. In Wisconsin, the average adult spends \$2,977 on food annually while the average family of four spends \$8,596 (2). Today, food insecurity in Wisconsin affects 12.4% of people and 20.5% of children.

Methods

Surveys were made available at the front desk of Paul's Pantry. Customers were asked if they would participate in an anonymous survey conducted by MCW Green Bay. Participants completed the survey and deposited it into a lock box located at the front desk.

Results

Surveys showed 26% of customers chose between housing or purchasing food. 21% of attendees had to choose between buying food or utilities. 25% of pantry attendees reported they always rely on the pantry for fruits and vegetables. In times of COVID-19, 55% of customers have increased need for food from the pantry.

Conclusions

Alleviating grocery cost allows customers secure housing and utilities. Utilities such as gas, electricity, and water have an impact on patients' health. Many Paul's Pantry attendees report they had to choose between food and monthly utility expenses. Paul's Pantry provides patrons fruits and vegetables which lowers blood pressure, prevents cancer, and lowers risk of heart disease (1). Customers often or always rely on the pantry for fresh fruits and vegetables. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased customers need for food from the pantry. ■

BENJAMIN DIEDRICH



The Effect of Community Events on Bellin Hospital COVID-19 Admissions in Brown County

ROBERT HACKNEY



Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the everyday lives of people all over the world. To counteract the spread of the virus, various measures were put into place such as guidelines on social distancing, lockdowns, a variety of legislations, and vaccines. The purpose of this study is to determine if social events affected admissions to Bellin Hospital.

Methods

In collaboration with Bellin Hospital through Dr. Paul Casey, we recorded daily admissions for COVID-19. Subsequently, we utilized an unpaired t-test to compare the admissions 2 weeks pre and 2 weeks post events that induce gatherings such as Holidays, Packer games and political events. These 2 week intervals were chosen because hospitalizations would take approximately 7-10 days post initial infection.

Results

A total of 16 events were analyzed using an unpaired t-test. Only the first event on September 7th, 2020 Labor Day displayed a statistically significant increase in admissions from 2 weeks pre to 2 weeks post ($p < .0001$). All remaining events analyzed resulted in no statistical difference between 2 weeks pre and 2 weeks post event ($p > .05$).

Conclusions

Since 94% of events resulted in no statistically significant increase in hospitalizations pre- and post- event, we have concluded that major community gatherings do not directly cause an increase in hospital admissions at Bellin Hospital. ■

ELISABETH OEVERLI



Healthy Intimate Relationships

Introduction

Comprehensive studies have shown alarming rates of dating violence, domestic abuse and sexual assault across the country; however, there is underwhelming research on preventative strategies. This study specifically aims to assess college student's knowledge of healthy versus unhealthy relationship behaviors through an educational workshop called "One Love – Behind the Post."

Methods

Two workshops took place at St. Norbert College during sorority, fraternity, and social group new member orientations. It included a fictional video depicting unhealthy relationship behaviors in a college age couple followed by small group discussion questions. Identical pre and post surveys analyzed the effectiveness of the workshop.

Results

Results showed 108 of the 149 participants have experienced intimate relationships and 35% "somewhat or strongly agreed" that their last relationship was unhealthy. After the workshop, students reported significant changes ($P < 0.01$) in their abilities to talk to friends about relationship issues, help a friend in an unhealthy relationship and find related resources.

Conclusions

Overall, the workshop was successful at improving students' education on healthy intimate relationships. Students noted interest in continuing to improve their relationship skills, and it would be of benefit for future campus workshops to target the unhealthy behaviors reported in the surveys. ■

MORGAN KELLY



Assessing the Nutrition Background, Education, and Perspectives of Medical Students

EMMA LANKEY



Introduction

60% of US adults have >1 chronic disease. The CDC lists poor nutrition as one of the four key risk factors for the development of chronic disease. However, Medicare only covers 10 hours of diabetes training from a dietitian, with only 5% of Medicare beneficiaries utilizing this. The reason for low utilization has many factors, but ultimately results in the physician providing nutrition counseling. Only 25% of medical schools have any nutrition in their curriculum. The Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW) has ~7 hours dedicated to nutrition, with most being biochemically focused to prepare students for USMLE STEP 1. This project is aimed at getting the conversation started to enrich the current curriculum and student experience at the MCW.

Methods

The project was conducted at MCW. A Qualtrics survey was emailed to M1-M4 medical students at the MCW-MKE & MCW-CW campuses.

Results

Students feel nutrition is important in health, but don't feel confident providing nutrition counseling. Despite the lack of confidence, the most common reason reported of why patients aren't referred for nutrition concerns is because the nutrition issues are basic enough to cover in clinic. Students also reported most of their nutrition education is in medical school, not prior.

Conclusions

Most of nutrition education medical students get is in medical school, not before. Most students do not feel prepared to counsel patients in nutrition. More nutrition education is needed in medical school to adequately prepare future physicians. ■

Joy Early in the COVID-19 Pandemic in Brown County Wisconsin

Introduction

The World Happiness Report suggests that early in the COVID-19 pandemic, people globally experienced higher levels of negative emotions, but that joy did not decrease. Differences in educational attainment and income play a role in response to the stressors of the pandemic.

Methods

Brown County residents were surveyed over the course of four months regarding recent emotions using questions established by the World Happiness Report and about the impact COVID-19 would have on their well-being and the well-being of their community. Respondents also answered questions regarding their educational attainment and household income.

Results

According to this research, people in different income groups and levels of educational attainment did not show significantly different levels of positive and negative emotions over the first three months of the COVID-19 pandemic. This demonstrates that the emotions of sampled Brown County residents over the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic differed from the global population. Interestingly, for this sample, educational attainment and level of education were not strongly correlated ($R^2 = 0.08$).

Conclusions

Residents of Brown County Wisconsin experienced similar stressors to populations globally over the course of the pandemic, and regardless of income and educational attainment, levels of negative emotions and positive emotions did not appear to change. The implications of this are that joy and negative emotions do not necessarily counteract one another, and that added income and higher educational attainment are not necessarily protective against the stressors of a global pandemic. ■

JULIETTE LUCAS



Exploring Implicit Bias in Medicine: Continuity of Education

LAUREN SIKORA



Introduction

Many theories suggest individual bias contributes to the persistence of healthcare disparities between different patient populations. To combat the perpetuation of this, first-year medical students at MCW participated in small-group sessions in 2021 that addressed racial, cultural, and gender biases in medicine. Sessions provided tools to help identify and combat their implicit biases in patient-provider relationships.

Methods

A follow-up survey was sent to the same medical students a year after the initial study. The survey consisted of Likert-scale questions and qualitative questions to be completed on a voluntary basis. Our goal was to assess continuity of the original topics and allow reflection on the students' continued learning about implicit bias as they progressed through their second year in medical school.

Results

Majority of medical students felt that implicit bias training was helpful during their clinical experiences. Participants are motivated to continue learning more about implicit bias despite already having learned about some topics. Over half of the participants reported that the pre-clinical courses of their second year did not address implicit biases further.

Conclusions

Training in implicit bias was deemed beneficial and essential for patient-provider relationships by students. Nevertheless, we found based on the feedback, that current curriculum does not provide enough implicit bias education. Despite MCW's incorporation of implicit bias into some aspects of the curriculum, students feel it needs to address implicit bias further through mandatory discussions. ■

Impact of Altrusa House on the Mental Health of Guests

Introduction

Altrusa House is a hospital hospitality house that provides affordable housing for patients and their family. The house prides themselves on being more than just a place to stay and caters to guests' overall wellbeing. The goal of this project is to investigate the effect of Altrusa House on guests' stress and anxiety levels before and after their stay.

Methods

Surveys were distributed to guests after their stay at the Altrusa House. Control surveys were distributed to those that remained on the waitlist and did not stay at the Altrusa House. Surveys used the Likert scale to assess for stress and anxiety levels around the time of their hospital stay.

Results

There were 58 surveys completed in our experimental group but only 1 in the control group. Average anxiety level before the patients' stay at the Altrusa House was 3.172 (on a 4-point scale), which is slightly above "moderate" level of anxiety. The average anxiety level upon checkout of Altrusa House was 1.948, slightly below "mild" level anxiety.

Conclusions

The average of anxiety level of guests before and after their stay at the Altrusa House was found to be statistically different using a t-test analysis. This leads us to conclude that anxiety levels decreased following a stay at the Altrusa House. ■

SAMUEL STAEHLING



KRISTIN TOMCHECK



Rural Northeast Wisconsin Flu Vaccine Perceptions

HAYLEY VANDENBOOM



Introduction

Vaccinations are beneficial for improving public health; however, many people are still skeptical and resistant to receiving them. One vaccine in particular people tend to mistrust is the influenza vaccine, with a population use rate of less than 50% (CDC). This study aims to identify areas of vaccine reluctance in Rural Wisconsin populations.

Methods

A survey was designed to identify rural residents, determine attitudes towards and personal experiences with flu vaccines. These surveys were then electronically administered to students enrolled in agricultural programs at Northeast WI Technical College via an e-mail including the Qualtrics survey link.

Results

Twenty-seven completed survey responses were received where 23 of the responders were determined to be members of the rural population. Of the 23 rural individuals, all respondents found flu vaccines moderately or very accessible, 91.3% perceive flu shots as only somewhat beneficial or less, and only 56.5% stated they receive an annual flu shot.

Conclusions

Based on the survey findings, it can be concluded that this sample population of rural Northeast Wisconsin residents has similar flu vaccination rates compared to the general population. Due to the responses indicating flu vaccine accessibility was not an issue, this is likely not a contributing factor to low flu vaccine rates. The perceived lack of benefit of the vaccine could be an area to improve upon to educate rural individuals of the risk reduction of serious illness and potentially increase public health. ■

Family Physician and Hospital Administrator Perspective on Telehealth Usage and Barriers during COVID-19 and Beyond

Introduction

Telehealth dramatically increased in use with the SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic. This technology presents benefits including increased access and cost reduction; however, barriers remain. This study investigates telehealth usage by visit type and barriers to usage over the pandemic by Wisconsin family physicians and hospital administrators, respectively.

Methods

Surveys were distributed to family physicians and hospital administrators by the Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians and Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative. Family physicians shared their frequency of telehealth usage by visit type during (11/2020-04/2021) and after the pandemic relative to before the pandemic. Administrators ranked potential barriers to telehealth before, during, and after the pandemic.

Results

For all visit types, family physicians reported pandemic-driven increases in telehealth usage. Increased post-pandemic usage was favored relative to pre-pandemic usage only for acute and chronic illness visit types. No differences in responses were found by physician location of practice or age (Chi Square Goodness of Fit, $p < 0.05$).

Difference between barriers was found in barrier rankings by hospital administrators within each time period (Kruskal-Wallis, $p < 0.05$). Clinical and confidentiality barriers were ranked most and least important, respectively, regardless of time-period. During the pandemic, reimbursement declined in importance (Mann-Whitney-U, $p < 0.05$).

Conclusions

The usefulness of telehealth for family physicians is visit-type specific, with acute and chronic illness visit types being especially conducive to telehealth use. Per hospital administrators, clinical and reimbursement barriers are most burdensome on telehealth. The burden of reimbursement was reduced during the pandemic. ■

PATRICK VOSTERS



Identifying Investigator Reported Barriers to Cancer Clinical Trials Enrollment

DANIEL WALGENBACH



Introduction

Clinical trials are essential for advancing cancer care, yet only a fraction of eligible cancer patients engage in clinical trial research. Minimal research has been done to identify barriers from the investigator's perspective and how their attitudes towards clinical trials might impact enrollment. The purpose of our study is to identify what traits and factors allow an investigator to be notably successful with clinical trial engagement.

Methods

A survey was distributed to cancer clinical trial investigators within the CROWN Consortium in Wisconsin and a total of 31 responses were collected. Respondents were grouped into high and low enrollers based on enrollment data from the previous year.

Results

According to 93% of all respondents, clinical trials are important to improving cancer treatments. However, 27% of low enroller investigators proactively identify clinical trials for patients compared to 80% of investigators from the high enroller group. Low enrollers reported being more unfamiliar with the study requirements and protocol compared to high enrollers, 27% vs. 0% respectively. The majority of all respondents reported that their willingness to take part in clinical trials was greatly impacted by a lack of administrative assistance and research coordinator support.

Conclusions

Overall, our study demonstrated investigators who regularly participate in clinical trials are more knowledgeable about the clinical trials open at their site and which patients may be eligible. Defining the investigator's attitudes toward clinical trials can help improve communication and decision-making with the site's administration and such maximize investigator involvement. ■

NOTES:



A series of horizontal lines for writing notes, overlaid with a faint, light gray network diagram consisting of interconnected nodes and lines.



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