Develop an ongoing diabetes education program can continue indefinitely

Avoid development of the diabetes and the extensive complications the disease can cause such as cardiovascular disease, vision impairment, amputation, kidney disease, disability, and mortality

Decrease overall the incidence of diabetes in the East Harlem community

La Clinica del Barrio aims to empower and improve the quality of life of New York City's East Harlem. Such as residents living with and at risk for type 2 diabetes. Along with being one of the poorest neighborhoods in New York City, 38 percent of residents living below the poverty line, its residents are faced with a multitude of barriers and lack of quality resources such as; poor access to healthy foods, lack of safe spaces, education, social support, healthcare, housing, and employment. All of these factors negatively affect the overall health and well-being of the community.

In 2013, Metropolitan Hospital Center performed a community health needs assessment of these factors negatively affect the overall health and well-being of the community. The results of Metropolitan's community needs assessment put forward the strong need to implement an intervention for adults, 18 years and older living in the East Harlem community with type 2 diabetes.

East Harlem residents have the highest proportions of Black and Hispanics residents in all of New York City, which studies have shown to have the highest prevalence of diabetes. Along with being one of the poorest neighborhoods in New York City, 38 percent of residents living below the poverty line, its residents are faced with a multitude of barriers and lack of quality resources such as; poor access to healthy foods, lack of safe spaces, education, social support, healthcare, housing, and employment. All of these factors negatively affect the overall health and well-being of the community.

Objectives

Connect patients to all available resources
Negotiating and coordinating a comprehensive plan of care
Empowering East Harlem residents with the tools to help ease the burden of diabetes on their daily lives to improve overall quality of life

Methods

Recruitment within La Clinica del Barrio's patient population with Type 2 Diabetes, Pre-Diabetes and/or Obesity
Assessment of participant's knowledge base regarding diabetes; medications, diet, complications, exercise, nutrition, prevention, weight loss, BMI, A1C, etc.
Teachings tailored and given for each participant taking into consideration educational level, literacy, disease knowledge base, strengths and weaknesses.
Individual goals set for each participant that range from weight loss, decreased BMI, increased exercise, improved diet, medication adherence, lowering of A1C.
Bi-weekly follow up made via phone calls to each patient to assess progress, address any questions or issues, reinforce teachings provided, provide additional teachings and encouragement.
Post survey and assessment made at the end of program to assess weight loss, BMI, and A1C levels. Provide each participant feedback.

Results

Program results show that 62% of the twenty-one participants had a decrease in weight from their initial visit and also results in a decrease in BMI.
27 out of 21 participants reported English as their second language and 10 participants needed language interpreters.
Majority of participants comprised of Hispanic descent and spoke mostly Spanish.

The data shows that the program was successful but cannot be statistically significant due to the small number of participants, relatively short length of the program and the presence of other factors that could affect weight loss that may not have been identified.

Additionally, based on the post-program surveys, all program participants report an improved understanding of diabetes management.
100% of participants expressed feelings of stress and fear towards the negative health and financial impact diabetes has on their daily lives.

Conclusions

There is an increasing demand for improved healthcare, especially for underserved populations living with diabetes. All interventions, objectives and evaluation mentioned above are to help meet Healthy People 2020 diabetes goals and decrease overall the incidence of diabetes in the East Harlem community.

There are many improvements that could be implemented in future programs but by individualizing care, one can provide better diabetes education and help avoid the extensive complications the disease can cause such as cardiovascular disease, vision impairment, amputation, kidney disease, disability, and mortality.

A individualized approach to the neighborhood diabetes education program shows great potential to improve the health of the community residents by helping them develop the skills, knowledge and self-efficacy to self-manage their diabetes.