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Development and Evaluation of Culturally Competent Tuberculosis Fotonovelas to Increase TB Testing Knowledge and Awareness in the Hispanic Community

Abstract

A needs assessment conducted by the Southeastern National Tuberculosis Center (SNTC) among TB Program Staff across the southeast identified an absence of TB informational materials in Spanish and a need for educational tools to better reach the at-risk community of Spanish-speaking, foreign-born individuals. To meet this need the SNTC developed the ¡Vivir a Todo Pulmón! Project, starting in 2006 with the development of a tool kit to help healthcare providers better serve their Spanish-speaking, foreign-born communities in both rural and urban areas. These individuals represent an especially hard-to-reach community for TB programs in our region.

The ¡Vivir a Todo Pulmón! project will include a new fotonovela chapter called "*Protegernos de la Tuberculosis esta en Nuestras Manos*" (Protecting Ourselves from TB is in our Hands) and will provide TB testing information to foreign-born Spanish speaking persons in the general community and to assist state/local TB program staff in their interactions with clients from this population. The chapter is meant to include information about the TST and IGRAs tests in an attractive, easy to read format.

The materials have been approved by the Project Advisory Committee and each story and design has been reviewed by each member of the committee and their feedback has been incorporated.

Methods: The purpose of this evaluation is to ensure that the materials are well understood by the target audience, the materials are perceived to be culturally sensitive, and that the messages designed to address the audiences' concerns are considered responsive and credible by representatives of the target audience. A focus group of 10 participants representing the target population was conducted and their responses were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for themes. The questions asked were written in order to meet the evaluation objectives of the project.

Results: The participants found the storyline to be interesting and simple to understand, and also stated that they could easily relate to the characters. There was a suggestion given by one of the participants that discusses some of the wording used, which helps to identify the literacy levels of the target audience, as well as a cultural barrier that exists in this population.

Conclusion: Overall, the target audience perceives the fotonovela to be culturally appropriate with the capacity to meet the informational needs of foreign-born Hispanic persons. The fotonovela is clearly understood and identified as relevant, persuasive, and easy to understand. Certain details need to be clarified such as the availability of each test and the scientific explanation behind the tests. Also, some of the words utilized in the fotonovela may not be appropriate for the literacy level of this population.

