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Hypertension Community Education Project

Introduction: The Amed Family Clinic is located along Nolensville Road, serving the large immigrant, refugee, and low-income patient population. In 2020, the clinic began the Hypertension Education Project as a public health intervention to target the high morbidity and mortality of hypertension in the community.



Methods: Health care professionals and medical students train premedical undergraduate students to become community health workers. The students learn about hypertension from a physiological and public health standpoint; the training particularly emphasizes the social determinants of health that catalyze greater morbidity and mortality in the underserved communities. The clinic providers ask student volunteers to speak with patients who are at risk of developing or have developed hypertension. Students have been trained on motivational interviewing skills to facilitate conversations with these patients about risk factors and lifestyle changes. To cue the patient to action, the student provides a card that details recommendations from the American Heart Association, the blood pressure scale, and a log for patients to record their blood pressure at home. The student also provides the patient with an automatic blood pressure cuff and models how to use it.

Results: Since its inception, the project has trained eight pre-medical undergraduates, donated approximately 350 automatic blood pressure monitors to patients, and participated in three health fairs within Nashville's greater Muslim community.

Conclusions: The project has mobilized student community health workers to educate patients about hypertension and prevention. The student community health volunteers are keen to the cultural needs of their community, effectively facilitating conversations with patients about heart health and providing tangible materials as a cue-to-action. Future aims of this project include expanding to other clinical and non-clinical settings and exploring options for a quantitative research study.