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The Sisters are Doing It for Themselves: Putting Knowledge to Use in Bayview Hunters Point

Background

The poster addresses the category of community outreach/engagement, and is the product of collaboration between community activists, public health practitioners, and academic researchers. We focus on Bayview Hunter's Point (BVHP) as a district within the City and County of San Francisco where the residents are predominantly African American and low income; practices of community activism are well-established; there is a long history of hazardous industry and environmental contamination; and elevated rates of breast cancer incidence and mortality have been documented.

Objectives

The objectives of this poster are to:

1. Present case studies based on the work of the Breast Cancer Town Hall Collaborative (1998-2004), the Sisters Network, San Francisco Chapter (founded 2001), and the Bayview Hunters Point Community Advocates (founded 1994);
2. Describe how their community-based projects have applied scientific information from epidemiologic and clinical research on breast cancer, as well as residents' experiential knowledge;
3. Demonstrate the significance of community-researcher-practitioner partnerships in efforts to address health inequalities.

Methods

Using ethnographic field notes, interviews, focus group data, audio-visual records, minutes and reports of meetings, and firsthand accounts, we provide empirically based descriptions of each case study.

Results and Conclusions

Scientific information about breast cancer, including research on environmental exposures, has been effectively utilized through advocacy networks, educational forums, and citizen efforts to change public policy. By combining locally derived information with the results of scientific research, community initiatives in BVHP contribute to the production of knowledge on the social determinants of health.

For support of the projects described in the poster, evaluation of the Community Town Hall Meetings on Breast Cancer, and qualitative research on breast cancer health inequalities in the San Francisco Bay Area, the authors acknowledge funding from: the California Pacific Medical Center Foundation, Friends of Faith, College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Kentucky, San Francisco Department of Public Health, Susan G. Komen Foundation, and The San Francisco Foundation.