D4.4: Former Soviet Union Immigrant Women in Germany and the US Preventive Health Care Practices

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Presentation Preference: Session Presentation

Abstract Categories:
Research Interest Groups (RIGs): Community/Public Health

Abstract:
Introduction: Few studies have examined health care practices of former Soviet Union (FSU) immigrant women in Germany and the US.

Method(s): A descriptive cross-sectional exploratory study was used to examine the preventive health care practices of mammography, Pap smears, and breast self exam among immigrant women from the FSU in Germany and US. Data were collected using a demographic survey and the Language, Identity and Behavior Acculturation Measure. A sample of 15 German women was matched by age with 24 US women.

Results: The findings (Mann-Whitney test) indicated that German women were significantly older than US women (U = 94.50, p < .05); US women were significantly more likely to have a timely mammogram (U = 26.50, p < .05) and a Pap smear (U = 100.50, p < .05), and more likely to perceive their health status as good or excellent (U = 80.00, p < .05). Thirty nine percent of US women said they conducted BSE at least monthly while 9% of German women said they did (X2 = 3.24, df = 1, p > .05). The main illnesses identified by German women were diabetes (20%; X2 = 2.51, df = 1, p > .05), heart disease (13%; X2 = 1.09, df = 1, p > .05), and hypertension (60%; X2 = 15.01, df = 1, p < .01). There was no significant difference in scores on the acculturation subscales.

Discussion & Conclusions: The low use of mammography and Pap smear among German immigrants reflects differences in health care systems. Implications of the study point to the need for health policies that are sensitive to the health care needs of immigrants and especially the cost
of health care. Preventive health behaviors are learned behaviors that can be changed with interventions that minimize barriers and assist immigrants to understand the value of prevention and health promotion activities.

Abstract History:
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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