D5.2: The Impact of a Natural Disaster on Community Based Intervention Research

Author List:
Presenting Author: Elizabeth Reifsnider
Additional Author: Jacquelynn Johnson, Maria Renovato

Presenting Author: Elizabeth Reifsnider
Address: 301 University Blvd
Galveston, Texas 77555
United States
Ph: 409-772-8262
Fax:
Email: elreifsn@utmb.edu
Institution: University of Texas Medical Branch

Additional Author: Jacquelynn Johnson
Address: 301 University Blvd
Galveston, Texas 77555-1029
United States
Ph: 409-772-8262
Fax:
Email: jyjohnso@utmb.edu
Institution: University of Texas Medical Branch

Additional Author: Maria Renovato
Address: 301 University
Galveston, Texas 77555-1029
United States
Ph: 409-772-8262
Fax:
Email: mdrenova@utmb.edu
Institution: University of Texas Medical Branch

Presentation Preference: Session Presentation

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

Abstract:
Introduction: Purpose: This paper will discuss how a natural disaster affected the recruitment and retention of a vulnerable population in an intervention study and the measures that were employed to adjust to those challenges. Background: A research study that focused on obesity
prevention for low income children through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program clinics in the local county was just getting enrollment started when Hurricane Ike hit Galveston County. Several of the county’s clinics were closed due to flood damage and other ones were without power although not damaged. Further compounding the difficulties faced by the population, four low income housing complexes were flooded and all the residents of these complexes were evacuated from the city of Galveston. Many of these residents were enrolled in the WIC program and they were all displaced, many without transportation. Other problems included inability to contact potential subjects because of lack of telephones, no electrical power at many of the homes, loss of vehicles from flooding which impacted ability to get to available clinics, and loss of documentation.

Method(s): Methods: The research team faced a variety of challenges to continuation of the study. The methods employed were varied but included close communication with the local health department authorities, outreach to community groups to locate potential subjects, alliances with similar programs for low-income children such as Head Start, contacts to other WIC agencies with access to additional population, modifications to the research plan to adjust to the need for additional subjects, and assistance from NINR.

Results: It is very important to have all documentation safely stored away from potential flooding and have multiple ways to reach research partners. Maintaining communication with all parties (IRB, funders, recruitment sites, etc) is important and should be fast and clear.

Discussion & Conclusions: Openly discuss needs and potential solutions with everyone who can potentially benefit the research continuation. Be creative in ways to access subjects and utilize research staff when recruitment does not occur in the manner planned.

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

Financial Disclosure:
No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.

FDA Disclosure:
I will not be describing any pharmaceutical and/or medical device.

Non-Exclusive License:

Submitted by:
elreifsn@utmb.edu