P1-19: Photovoice: Women's Stories

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Abstract Categories:
Research Interest Groups (RIGs): Community/Public Health
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Abstract:
Introduction: Low income women on Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) experience greater rates of health issues than other low income women which impacts their transition to work, however, current TANF guidelines do not require States consider the health needs of welfare clients in mandating employment. This project was conducted to provide adjunct personal stories and narrative accounts to existing data from a randomized clinical trial (RCT) with women in a welfare-to-work program (n=432) to augment the RCT findings to advocate for social/political change committed to improving this population's health.

Method(s): The study comprised two parts: a planning focus group, and the actual photovoice project. The latter included an instruction session, photography, individual interviews, and a photo-discussion session. Participants for each study component were purposively recruited from women who had completed the RCT. In total, 12 women participated in the study. Data collection/analysis was guided by the participants. They individually selected which photographs
to share and coded emergent themes as a group during the discussion session. Transcripts from
the interviews and the group discussion session became the data for further qualitative analysis.

**Results:** During the group discussion, seven prominent themes emerged and were further refined
during qualitative analysis: feeling trapped/caged, support/strength, indifference (treatment),
transportation, housing, past experience/present life, and hope/faith/peace.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** This project furthers understanding of how women transitioning off
of TANF access healthcare and cope with the dual demands of managing health conditions and
moving into employment, drawing the public’s attention to images/narratives, providing a
context to the lived experience, and presenting findings to community leaders to teach and
promote social action. The concept of being treated with “indifference” was a novel finding,
while other themes have been represented in various forms in the literature. Overall, the photos
and narratives provide a rich source of personal reflection and meaning of the everyday struggles
of women leaving welfare for employment that cannot be represented in the quantitative findings
of the RCT.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS
or other scientific meeting.
College of Public Health University of Florida Public Health Day

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