



The Role of CHWs in Combatting Lung Cancer

Health Disparities in Lung Cancer

More men and women die of lung cancer in the United States than any other form of cancer.¹ It is estimated that 158,040 lung cancer deaths will occur in 2015, accounting for about 27% of all cancer deaths.¹ Tobacco use is the primary cause of lung cancer in the United States.² While incidence has decreased for most subpopulations since 1999,³ there still exist important lung cancer disparities.

United States	Michigan
In 2011, black men had the highest incidence of lung cancer, followed by white, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic men ³	Lung cancer incidence is higher for black men (106.6 deaths per 100,000) and women (68) than White men (83.8) and women (62.5) ⁴
Among men in 2011, black men were more likely to die of lung cancer than any other racial group (about 79 deaths per 100,000) ³	Lung cancer mortality is higher for black men (88.8 deaths per 100,000) than White men (66.3) ⁴
Rural young adults are 27 percent more likely to smoke than urban young adults, and they have higher rates of smokeless tobacco use ⁵	Lung cancer incidence and death rates are higher in rural areas of Michigan. ⁶ Smoking rates are higher in rural areas (26.2%) than metropolitan areas (22.5%). ⁷
Socioeconomically deprived and rural groups face excess risk of lung cancer and lung cancer mortality for white and black men ⁸	Adult Medicaid enrollees have a higher incidence of lung cancer. Enrollees younger than 65 are more likely to be diagnosed at advanced stages. ⁹

Community Health Worker (CHW) Interventions

Education and Smoking Cessation

CHWs are commonly employed in smoking cessation interventions targeting vulnerable communities such as minority groups and pregnant women.¹⁰ A systematic review found that bilingual lay health advisors can lead to more effective interventions.¹⁰ At the University of Arizona, Spanish-speaking CHWs were trained as tobacco cessation counselors to identify tobacco users and offer counseling. CHWs indicated high confidence in delivering brief cessation interventions.¹¹ In another intervention, CHWs led group sessions to provide smoking self-efficacy and social support to African American women living in public housing, leading to higher likelihood of smoking cessation.¹² Other research has shown that web-based and in-person interventions led by “lay health influencers” also increase self-efficacy and knowledge.¹³

In New York City, a tobacco cessation curriculum was delivered in English and Mandarin by lay health advocates and other partners to Chinese American 7th grade students. Incorporating the cultural views held by Chinese immigrant students on the individual and society was important to successful curriculum implementation.¹⁴

Health System Navigation

CHW navigators are employed in both lung cancer treatment and prevention efforts. Lung cancer patients and their families benefit from community health workers as navigators.¹⁵ A volunteer lay navigation program for patients with newly diagnosed lung cancer found that patients benefit from emotional support, information, and referrals to other services provided by lay navigators.¹⁵ A study of physicians found that a majority of primary care providers are interested in integrating patient navigation models (using lay navigators) into their practice.¹⁶



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Article Title	Year	Target Population	Intervention Type
Tobacco cessation services through community health workers for Spanish-speaking populations	2006	Hispanic populations	Smoking cessation
Activating Lay Health Influencers to Promote Tobacco Cessation	2014	Smoking populations	Smoking cessation
Evidence-based tobacco cessation strategies with pregnant Latina women	2012	Pregnant women, Latina women	Smoking cessation
The effect of a multi-component smoking cessation intervention in African American women residing in public housing	2007	African American women	Smoking cessation
Design and evaluation of a tobacco-prevention program targeting Chinese American youth in New York City	2007	Chinese American youth	Smoking prevention
The experience of people with lung cancer with a volunteer-based lay navigation intervention at an outpatient cancer center	2014	Newly diagnosed lung cancer patients	Patient navigation
Exploring primary care providers' interest in using patient navigators to assist in the delivery of tobacco cessation treatment to low income, ethnic/racial minority patients.	2010	Low income minority populations	Patient navigation
Recruitment, training outcomes, retention, and performance of community health advisors in two tobacco control interventions for Latinos	2010	Diagnosed lung cancer patients	Smoking cessation

Article abstracts available by clicking the hyperlinked article titles above; full citations are below

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