

Health Communication: A Southwest Georgia Health Literacy Project

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Abstract : Introduction: In February and March of 2020, many Black Americans in Albany, Georgia, were impacted by COVID-19 compared to the rest of the country. Due to misinformation and distrust in the community, citizens were not able to make good health decisions regarding COVID-19. The city of Albany applied for a grant with the Department of Health and Human Services, specifically the Office of Minority Health and it was approved. The city of Albany partnered with Albany State University to administer the grant and implementation ensued. Method: An eleven-page electronic and paper cross-sectional survey was given to participants. Albany State University recruited community partners like health care organizations and faith-based organizations to reach the citizens of Albany, Georgia. These partners reached participants through creative community activities to educate participants about COVID-19 and provide incentives to receive a vaccine. Data collection is still in progress because activities are ongoing. Anticipated Results: By December 2023, we anticipate results of the number of participants who accepted vaccines based on participants who stated providers checked their understanding, participants who were satisfied with communication regarding COVID-19 health information about the vaccine, and participants who were involved in decisions regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Conclusion: Health communication is a subsection of health literacy. At this point, approximately 4000 individuals have received information and education about COVID-19 in the Albany area. We expect building trusting relationships played an important part in the increase in knowledge and vaccination in Albany, Georgia.

Keywords : health literacy, health communication, vaccination, COVID-19

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