

OUTREACH OVERVIEW

Out reach strategies for the **FoCaS** Project utilized seven approaches. The seven approaches were: utilization of media, developing educational classes, one on one sessions, direct mail, the inclusion of religion /churches, informational centers, and a community event. Each of these approaches were targeted towards low income African-American women who reside in the housing communities of Winston Salem. Within this population we identified three subgroups (those who are still employed, those who are retired and are engaged in their community, and those who are restricted due to mental or physical illness). Thus, planning for outreach strategies involves a segmented approach to educating the population. As in any successful strategy implementation knowing the segments of your population is very important. Through understanding of the women of the population allows one to closely tailor outreach strategies.

Implementation of these strategies are heavily dependent upon Outreach workers. These workers are the arms and legs of the study. The outreach workers are have become a very important factor in the success of the outreach that involves face to face contact with the women of the population. Through sincerity, care and a fostered trust FoCaS outreach workers have been able to gain the respect of the women. This respect and trust has given the activities and messages that the project distributes credibility.

MEDIA

The media campaigns that were used included: radio public service announcements (PSAs), newspaper articles, newspaper advertisements and bus posters. Media campaigns are scheduled during four months of the year. These months have special meaning for the population and allows the project to “piggyback” on existing media and activities. Through out these months attention is already targeted towards ideas and areas of interest to the black community. The months utilized are: February (Black History Month), April (Minority Cancer Awareness Month), May (Mother’s Day) and October (Breast Cancer Awareness Month). The majority of the advertisements are placed in the local black newspaper. The advertisements are culturally sensitive and use symbols and ideals that are of importance to the targeted population. FoCaS media campaigns have been successful in providing the project with a means of reaching all segments of the study population.

EDUCATIONAL CLASSES

Educational, topic specific classes are held in each of the housing communities. These classes last one hour and are held on the same day of the month each month to provide the population with continuity. The ladies are reminded prior to the class by FoCaS outreach workers that go door to door with colorful flyers. The majority of the educational classes are geared towards educating the population on the importance of the use of mammography and having Pap Smears. To maintain interest levels and continued attendance, non-cancer topics are also used. These are topics that relate to the special interest and needs of the women. Non-cancer topics have included: “How to talk to your doctor”, “Injury and Fire Prevention”, and “God’s will for wellness”. Each class is structured similarly and begins with a brief introduction. Each class topic is demonstrated through the use of visuals, handouts, pamphlets, as well as carefully chosen videos. Classes employ techniques and teaching tools that allows comprehension for

every learning style. The classes are structures to provide participatory learning and are conducted in a relaxed, nonthreatening atmosphere in the housing community. Aside from visuals and games, role playing is also included in the class activities. Educational classes allows FoCaS to reach the segment of the population that is still engaged in daily activities.

ONE ON ONE SESSIONS

Community canvassing of the housing communities that the project serves revealed that **FoCaS** was not reaching all of its targeted population. This canvassing revealed that many of the women in the population are still employed and another portion of the population is restricted to their home due to physical or mental handicaps. It is for this reason that One on One sessions were created. During one on one sessions FoCaS outreach workers go into the home of the women who are unable to attend educational classes due to physical or mental handicap. The **sessions** are previously scheduled at a time that is convenient for the woman. The outreach workers use a specially created flip-chart that is colorful and culturally correct. The flip-chart uses pictures and bullet statements to briefly explain what happens during a Pap Smear and a mammogram. The chart also explains the importance of the clinical breast exam and breast self exam. One on one Sessions last approximately fifteen to twenty minutes and then allow time for the woman to ask questions.

DIRECT MAIL

In order to reach the segment of the study population that were still employed FoCaS employed a direct mail technique. The project utilizes 4X6 postcards that provide basic information on mammography and cervical cancer. The cards are mailed out over a period of months and employ messages created with the Change Theory as its basic framework. The cards are mailed directly into the homes of the women and are easy to read and understand.

CHURCH/RELIGION

It has long been evident that the African-American population holds very strongly to its religious beliefs. These religious belief may manifest themselves in various ways. FoCaS has implemented three strategies that include religious ideals. Initial surveys of the population yielded invaluable information about their religious beliefs. It was found that many of the women had a fatalistic attitude with regards to cancer and their personal health. To oppose these attitudes a segment of the class (Healthy Spirits) was included. Healthy Spirit is a final segment of the class that allows the participants to leave on an inspirational note. Scriptures from the Bible, inspirational poems and positive sayings are used. During this session it is heavily emphasized that medical technology, medicines and other medical treatments are God's way of assisting us toward wellness.

The second method that FoCaS has included religion/churches in its outreach activities is church bulletin inserts. These bulletin inserts are mailed to the churches that surround the participating housing communities. These bulletins use scriptures, religious icons and are printed on colorful paper so as to stand out. To date the project has mailed three different bulletin inserts to over fifty churches.

The third, method of including church/religion in the project outreach is through the

implementation of a church program entitled “Taking Care of Our Sisters”. Each of the churches that surround the housing communities was sent a letter. This letter asked the minister to name a Church Liaison (CL). This CL was given the option as to how her church participated in the program. The options were: set up a informational center in the church, setup and schedule a workshop that project would go into the church and conduct, and the CL could become trained to conduct her church’s session.

INFORMATIONAL CENTERS

Informational Centers are set up in areas that are located both in and near the housing communities. These informational centers operate in a similar manner as a point of purchase display. While a point of purchase display is structured to encourage a last minute purchase our informational centers are structured to increase awareness, to educate and to promote action from the reader. Our centers are located in doctors offices, beauty shops, grocery stores, beauty supply shops, and banks. These centers are checked on a monthly basis and are continually supplied with new information. FoCaS informational centers have been very successful in reaching the segment of out population that is employed, that is still engaged in every day activity. In addition, these centers have also been successful in reaching other females that may not reside in public housing.

COMMUNITY EVENT

Each Spring FoCaS holds a large health\community activity. This event is called “Women’s Fest” and is given to both educate and celebrate the women in our targeted population. Typically, the event is held at a local park and is an all day event. While participating the women are given free food, prizes, health screening, drawings and transportation to and from their community. In addition, the women are entertained and educated through out the day by workshops and gospel singing.