Abstract

Purpose: Faith-based and peer educator approaches are widely used methods for health promotion in African American communities. Additionally, health information technology may be a promising tool in the context of disseminating and sustaining evidence-based cancer control interventions. An online community health advisor (CHA) training program was developed for implementation in African American churches with the goal to develop a disseminable and sustainable method to deliver evidence-based cancer early detection interventions.

Methods: The online CHA training was developed for Project HEAL (Health through Early Awareness and Learning), a community-based implementation trial in 15 African American churches. Seven churches were randomly assigned to complete the online training that allows CHAs to log in, complete informed consent and a memorandum of understanding, and view 13 content-specific presentation videos. After viewing the videos, CHAs take a certification knowledge examination. Following a passing score, CHAs download their personalized certificate and obtain the Project HEAL workshop intervention materials. CHAs are then prepared to deliver a series of three cancer early detection (breast, prostate, colorectal) workshops in their churches.

Results: The presentation will discuss experiences with implementation of the online CHA training program in the context of Project HEAL. Particular focus will be given towards: feasibility and acceptability, technical challenges, implementation, and lessons learned.

Conclusion: An online CHA training program is a novel method for implementation of cancer control interventions in African American churches. While some challenges may influence implementation outcomes, an online training program has the potential
to increase the reach, implementation, and sustainability of these interventions.

*Keywords: Cancer early detection, African Americans, Health information technology, Community-based participatory research.*