Heart Yourself:
Fighting Heart Disease in Women

Presented by:  Cilgy Abraham

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The mission statement for my social action project is to create greater awareness of heart disease in women while also educating nursing students on cardiovascular disease presentation and preventative action with particular attention to women and gender.
The Problem

• Heart disease is the leading cause of death in women
  • Largely a preventable chronic condition
  • Declining quality of life, decreased productivity, higher healthcare costs (AHA estimates $ 818.1 billion/year by 2030).¹

• Misconception: Heart disease is a man’s disease (Moller-Leimkuhler, 2007)

• Women may experience different warning signs of an impending heart attack (Myocardial Infarction)

• Unhealthy Lifestyle Behaviors

Intellectual Foundations: Exploration of Research

- Young Women and Heart Disease Awareness (Greenberger, 2012).
- Stress (Terrill, 2012).
September - October 2015
Spoke with Cardiac patients at St. Peter’s University Hospital. Worked on and created Heart Healthy Educational Brochures.

October 6 & 14, 2015
Held two workshops titled, Women’s Heart Disease: A Clinical Guide for Healthcare Professionals, at St. Peter’s University Hospital, Unit 1D.

October 17-18, 2015
Presented & Won Third place at the 2015 Scientista Symposium held at Microsoft Office in NYC.

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October 29, 2015
Attended the NJCCN Summit on Building a Culture of Health Through Innovation.

December 3, 2015
Presenting Social Action Project at The Institute for Women’s Leadership at Rutgers University.
Heart Healthy Workshops

• Saint Peter’s University Hospital, New Brunswick, NJ

• Participants consisted mostly of Rutgers, Nursing students.

• Workshop Content
  • Prevalence
  • Risk factors
  • Signs & Symptoms
  • Preventative action
  • Nursing Implications
  • Contraindications
  • Practice EKG/Cardiac Rhythm Strips
  • Evidence Based Practice
  • Gender Disparities
Workshop Evaluations/ Impact

How will you use the information presented in this workshop in your clinical practice or in your own lives?

“This information was vital with regards to clinicals and my own life. Heart health is important for everyone to know.”

“Having knowledge about heart disease and EKG strips will help me in nursing because I want to work in a cardiac floor.”

“I will use the knowledge I gained to better help patients with heart disease.”

“Super helpful.”

“The Cardiac Rhythm strip card will be on my future Registered Nurse ID badge FOREVER!”

“Didn’t realize the disparities in women’s heart health until this workshop.”

“It has helped me to identify modifiable risk factors for heart disease and how to measure cardiac rhythm strips.”
Insights regarding Women’s Heart Disease

• Addressing Heart Disease requires a holistic approach

• Challenge and critically analyze existing structures
  • Barriers in Healthcare
    • Biases, Stereotypes, Judgments

• What is the priority for the patient?
Lessons Learned

• Interdisciplinary & Collaborative Leadership

• Networking & Building Partnerships

• The importance of culturally competent care
Partnerships & Impact

• Partnerships
  • Networking with other activists, researchers, nurse scientists, leaders, etc.
  • Symposium
  • NJCCN Summit

• Impact
  • Spreading Awareness
  • Education
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• Fellow RU-Nursing colleagues
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Thank you

Questions?