

206. Tuberculosis among immigrants and refugees at an adult education center: a community-based participatory research approach

Background: Incidence of tuberculosis (TB) infection in the United States has declined over the past decade, but a disparity has emerged whereby infection rates among foreign-born Americans are on the rise. English as a Second Language programmes serve large foreign-born populations in the US with elevated risks of tuberculosis (TB), yet little is known about TB perceptions in these settings.

Methods: Using a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach, we elicited perceptions about TB among immigrant and refugee learners and staff at a diverse adult education center that serves over 2000 new immigrants and refugees per year through 10 focus groups. These results informed three interventions:

- 1) Classroom education and a TB education video created by the adult learners;
- 2) screening of adult learners for TB to establish prevalence at the school; and
- 3) policy change for sustainable education and TB testing at the school.

Results: Focus groups demonstrated that TB education at an adult education center should dispel the most compelling misperceptions about TB transmission while clarifying the difference between active and latent disease. Learners should be educated about TB in the U.S. and that it is curable. Focus groups results informed the creation of a student-produced TB education video that significantly improved TB knowledge and self-efficacy. Screening of student volunteers documented a latent TB infection prevalence of 19% (48 of 259). These findings prompted collaboration with public health officials to implement sustainable TB education and free testing at the school. Conclusions: A CBPR approach to TB at an adult education center that serves large immigrant and refugee populations was successful in creating a TB prevention and control programme.