

Knock Out Cancer

Collaborating Partners: Mel Trotter Ministries, Spectrum Health Cancer Program, Partial Grant from the Susan B. Komen Foundation, Education Materials from American Cancer Society

Project description/outcomes: “Knock Out Cancer” is a collaboration of the Spectrum Health Cancer Center and Mel Trotter Ministries. Mel Trotter is a ministry that provides shelter, warm meals, housing assistance, job assistance, medical and dental care, legal assistance, an inebriant clinic, and transportation. The homeless are identified as a vulnerable population, at risk for many cancers, and underserved in the area of health education. The Spectrum Health Cancer Center asked, how do we bridge that gap? The answer to the question was the was the creation of the “Knock Out Cancer” program, which was introduced in November 2016. This program provides cancer screening education and cancer risk reduction education utilizing oncology nurses and state of the art telehealth technology to meet with guests at Mel Trotter Ministries. The program uses two large computer monitors, one at Mel Trotter and one at Spectrum Health, which was made possible partially through a grant from the Susan G. Komen Foundation. During their stay, homeless guests are encouraged to become active participants in preparing for their return to the community. Mel Trotter offers the “Knock Out Cancer” program as an option for guests interested in learning more about taking charge of their health through minimizing their risk of developing cancer. Interestingly, the cancer risk reduction education parallels education to reduce the risk of developing heart disease and type II diabetes. Using guidelines incorporated from the American Cancer Society, oncology nurses at Spectrum Health developed a script for these interactions. Education is provided on: avoiding tobacco, being active, BMI, healthy eating, using sun protection, limiting alcohol, and knowing their body so they can report changes. As of August 2017, 39 guests, ages 18 to 77 have participated in the program. Nurses also inquire as to the age and family history of the guest and discuss appropriate screening guidelines and recommendations. The majority of guests verbalize their visit and the information provided was helpful. Over 50% verbally indicated they would make a change in their current lifestyle or health behaviors. The “Knock Out Cancer” program is an example of the successful strategy of combining two already effective community based organizations to reach an increased number of people with cancer prevention and cancer risk reduction education.

Learn more:

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