

ABSTRACT: Alma Collazo, LCSW Linkage House NEW PRESENTER APHA

THEME OF APHA 2014 CONFERENCE "Healthography: How where you live affects your Health and Well being".

STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS SOCIAL ISOLATION WITHIN A MULTICULTURAL AND MULTILINGUAL INDEPENDENT LIVING SITE FOR ELDERLY

POSTER SESSION

Aging and Public Health: Area of interest "**Minority Aging**"

Key words: Aging, Social Work (on APHA listing) also E.G. nonstandard key words (older adults, multicultural, multilingual, social integration, social cohesion, independent living)

Learning Areas: Diversity and culture

Learning Objectives: Assess and evaluate social cohesion

Presenting author's disclosure statement:

Qualified on the content I am responsible for because: I have been the Social Work Program Coordinator for this 202 Federally Funded Housing site for the past 13 yrs with emphasis of practice, programming and supervision for the Geriatric population in an urban setting.

Any relevant financial relationships? No

I agree to comply with the American Public Health Association Conflict of Interest and Commercial Support Guidelines, and to disclose to the participants any off-label or experimental uses of a commercial product or service discussed in my presentation.

ABSTRACT # 298087:

Research has shown that measures of social isolation-the number of social contacts and the amount of social engagement-are associated with poor health outcomes. Linkage House, a federally funded Section 202 housing development in East Harlem, New York City, aims to help residents maintain independence while aging in place through on-site Social Work care coordination, recreation, educational and social programs. Among its 84 residents, are 71% Hispanic, 10% African-American, 13% Chinese, 6% Caucasian, and 62% female and 38% are male. A 4-item survey referred to as the Social Integrative Tool (SIT) was developed to assess social cohesion among the residents. The SIT was administered by the onsite social worker to all residents in English, Spanish and Mandarin. The response rate was 61.5% . Positive social cohesion was determined by responding Yes to the first three questions. Among the respondents, 88% - 89% reported living in a close knit community with "neighbors helping neighbors," and were at ease knocking on a neighbor's door in case of emergency and attending Linkage House events. Respondents lacking social cohesion were either, Caucasian and Hispanic males. The SIT tool proved to be a good method to evaluate and measure social cohesion in a multicultural, multilingual independent living facility for elderly by helping to identify those who need targeted interventions to reduce social isolation. Interventions to sustain and increase social engagement and decrease social isolation were designed and tailored to the multilingual and multicultural composition of the residents.