

**There is no Shortcut to Community Engaged Research (CEnR): Ground-up Best Practices in a Patient-Caregiver Intervention for Latina Breast Cancer Survivors**

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Breast cancer is the most common cancer and cause of death among Latinas. With growing numbers of Latinas diagnosed with and surviving breast cancer, attention to quality of life (QOL) after diagnosis has increased. As part of its efforts to enhance QOL in underserved groups like Latinas, a community-centered research project tested and evaluated a patient-caregiver intervention to address QOL improvement. Using ground-up essential and best practice approaches, Nueva Vida (community-based organization) and Georgetown University (academic researchers) engaged a diverse team and describe the impact of the team engagement on the translation of research into practice.

Engagement techniques included building foundations, sharing an understanding of community resources, and managing expectations from proposal planning through dissemination of results. In-depth examples of designing an intervention that considers the cultural needs such as sharing of food and gathering together at the end of each session; important to *personalism* (sense of belonging), will be addressed. Lastly, methods that benefit underserved Latino populations, customized to their culture and circumstance are explored that foster community capacity and commitment to learn from and engage with the community through all phases of research. We thus highlight why “there is no shortcut” in understanding the experiences of community partners and the patients and families to be served. Using a model of working with Latina breast cancer survivors and their families, we aim to provide a model for other teams interested in bringing together multiple community organizations, stakeholder groups and academic researchers to advance the field of community engaged research.

